

GWYBODAETH ~ INFORMATION

CULL EWE HEALTH MONITORING POSTMORTEM EXAMINATIONS

The Wales Veterinary Science Centre is now offering a **Cull Ewe Health Monitoring PME Service** for those proactive farmers and vets who wish to investigate the presence of 'iceberg diseases' and other potential health problems in their flocks.

Iceberg diseases, as the name suggests, refers to those chronic infections which for every sheep presenting with obvious signs, many more remain undiagnosed in the flock. Early identification of these diseases is key to ensuring effective control measures can be put in place.

The UK sheep industry has identified five significant iceberg diseases:

- **Ovine pulmonary adenocarcinoma (OPA)**
- **Ovine Johne's disease (OJD),**
- **Border disease (BDv)**
- **Maedi Visna (MV)**
- **Contagious lymphadenitis (CLA)**

For further information on these diseases, please check out the following article:

Iceberg diseases in sheep (Hannah Kenway, Veterinary Practice, 12/10/2018) <https://veterinary-practice.com/article/iceberg-diseases-in-sheep>

There are a variety of diagnostic tests available to identify and monitor disease presence on farm, however just testing clinical cases is not sufficient. By the time clinical cases occur, disease is often widespread throughout the flock. **Active surveillance**, if done well, can become an early warning system to alert you before a disease becomes established. It is also useful to understand which diseases are not present to help maintain a healthy flock.

In active surveillance, a representative sample of animals are tested for disease. Yet for some diseases there are no reliable tests to make a diagnosis and postmortem examination (PME) is the only option. Whilst clinically 'healthy' cull ewes are not eligible for government subsidised diagnostic PMEs, the WVSC now offers the option for Cull Ewe Health Monitoring PMEs.

The Cull Ewe Health Monitoring PME of up to three sheep will investigate the presence of iceberg diseases, but also check for other common production limiting disease (e.g. **liver fluke** and **chronic pneumonia**) and potential public health issues such as **tapeworm cysts**.



Included in the Cull Ewe Health Monitoring PME:

- Gross examination to look for signs of:
 - Icebergs: OPA, OJD, MV, CLA
 - Production limiting disease
 - Public Health Issues
- BDv Antibody Tests (if blood/serum submitted)
- Smear test (if OJD suspected)

Further testing at additional cost*

- Confirmation of disease diagnosis by histology and/or bacteriology if required (e.g. first case)*
- Other samples can also be taken on request (e.g. trace element testing)*

All **Cull Ewe Health Monitoring PMEs** must be pre-arranged with the WVSC by the veterinary practice responsible for the farm health. On completion of the PMEs, the practice will receive the results via email.

The cost of this service is £95.00* + VAT for up to three cull sheep (plus £16.00/sheep disposal).

**Further charges may apply if further testing has been requested or is required to confirm disease.*