Animal & Plant Health Agency





SRUC

Great Britain small ruminant quarterly report, disease surveillance and emerging threats

Volume 29: Quarter 2 – April to June 2026

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Introduction and overview

This quarterly report reviews disease trends and threats for the second quarter (Q2) of 2026. It is compiled using data available at the time of writing. It contains interesting cases, and analyses carried out on disease data gathered from APHA, SRUC Veterinary Services division of Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), and Surveillance Pathology Partners; and intelligence gathered through the Small Ruminant Expert Group networks. This report is based on the data as available at the time of writing. In addition, links to other sources of information, including reports from other parts of the APHA and Defra agencies, are included. A full explanation of how data is analysed is provided in the annexe available on GOV.UK.

APHA's Emerging and Endemic Disease Alert System (EEDAS)

This is a component of the communications from our scanning surveillance network and a system that the APHA uses to keep you up to date with significant disease alerts and information, projects, publication of reports and other items. This is independent of the notifiable disease alert system.

To receive these notifications please respond to siu@apha.gov.uk, providing your preferred:

- email address you would like us to use
- mobile telephone number if you wish to receive text alerts

We hope that you find this EEDAS messaging system to be beneficial, and any suggestions or feedback are welcome.

Issues and trends

Weather

Details can be found at the Met Office climate summaries and the Met Office UK temperature, rainfall and sunshine anomaly graphs.

Lamb sector update

Prices: Great Britain (GB) deadweight lamb prices were historically strong through the second quarter, moving into their seasonal downward trend through June to July. The new season lamb standard quality quotation (SQQ) dipped to 724 pence per kilogram (p/kg) in the week ending 15 August, down 30p on the same week a year ago but still showing strength historically.

Lamb throughput remains constrained, export performance has been strong, but volumes fell away in June, likely linked to European summer holidays and extreme heat. Domestic demand has been resilient through the key periods of Easter, Ramadan and Eid festivals but has been subdued more recently year-on-year in volume terms. Average prices remain elevated across categories, which is impacting shopper choices.

Production: The United Kingdom (UK) produced 134,000 tonnes of sheep meat in the first half of 2026, steady year-on-year. Similarly to cattle, lower sheep slaughter throughputs have been offset by heavier average carcase weights. 5.5 million clean sheep were slaughtered during the period, down 2% year-on-year.

Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) forecasts a smaller lamb crop for the 2026 to 27 seasons, but forecast figures are subject to change upon receipt of validated flock inventory data from Welsh Government. Current forecasts are likely to be shifted downwards. Risks remain around the impact of Bluetongue virus and drought on the sector, concerning decisions to offload stock due to lack of grazing, and indeed decisions to restock breeding flocks.

Trade: UK sheep meat exports have shown positive performance in 2026, with 45,300 tonnes shipped during the first six months, up 4% year-on-year (including fresh, frozen and processed). 97% of UK sheep meat export volume goes to the EU. However, resistance has been felt recently; export volumes dropped sharply in June, likely reflecting weaker demand amid summer holidays and extreme heat on the continent.

Imports meanwhile have shown muted growth for the period, up 1.5% year-on-year to 37,100 tonnes. This has nearly all been driven by growth in Australian product, as volumes from New Zealand have fallen amid tighter supply. Australia made up 35% of imported sheep meat volume during the period, up from 29% in 2025.

Demand: Lamb retail products saw a 1.4% decrease in volumes purchased, accompanied by a 5.9% increase in spend year-on-year. Average prices paid increased by 7.4%.

Total primary lamb cuts saw a 6.9% volume decrease during the 12-week period. Lamb leg roasting saw the largest decrease of 31.8% (-683 tonnes) driven by a decrease in number of buyers and volumes purchased per trip. Processed lamb saw a 3.8% decrease in volumes year-on-year. This decline was driven by burgers and grills, which had a decrease in buyers.

Update provided by Hannah Clarke, Lead Analyst (Red Meat)
Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board

Bluetongue

The new 2026 to 2027 vector season started on the 1 July 2026.

There were 348 cases of bluetongue in Great Britain in the 2025 to 2026 bluetongue season. In:

- England, there were 324 cases of bluetongue – including 311 cases of only BTV-3, 5 cases of only BTV-8, 7 cases with both BTV-3 and BTV-8 and 1 case of BTV (serotype unknown)
- Wales, there have been 24 cases of BTV-3
- There were no cases in Scotland

These cases were confirmed between 11 July 2025 and 23 June 2026.

There were 5 confirmed cases of BTV-3 in Northern Ireland.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of confirmed cases from July 2025 to end of June 2026. These interactive maps can be found at Bluetongue Cases and Zones.

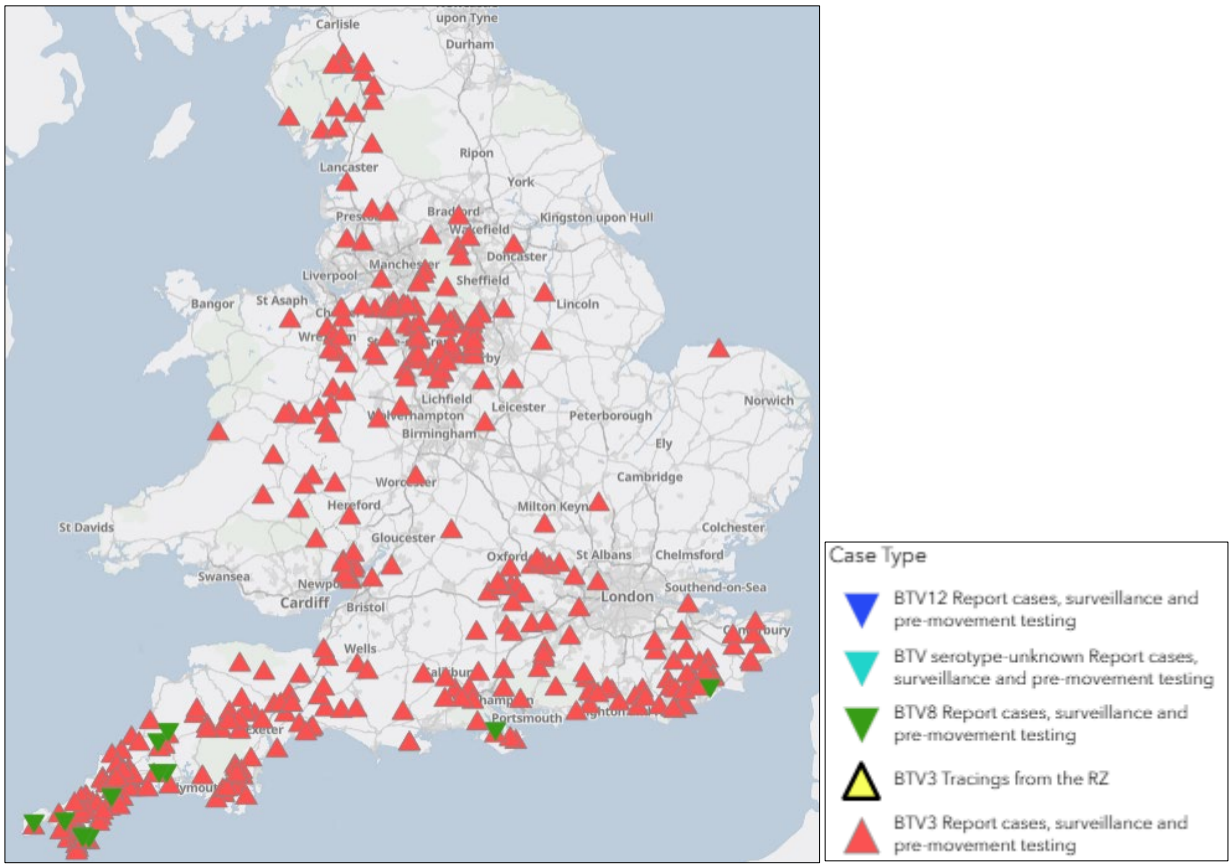


Figure 1: Map of England and Wales showing the confirmed bluetongue cases between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026

Images of the clinical signs can be found here: Clinical signs of bluetongue | AHDB

Bluetongue virus is a notifiable disease. Suspicion of bluetongue virus in animals must be reported to the Animal and Plant Health Agency on 03000 200 301 in England, on 03003 038 268 in Wales, and to the local Field Services Office in Scotland. Further guidance and information are available on the Ruminant Health & Welfare site, Bluetongue: information and guidance for livestock keepers (GOV.UK) and on Bluetongue: how to spot and report it (GOV.UK).

Unusual diagnoses

Congenital anomaly of the heart involving dextroposition of the aorta and a high ventricular septal defect in a lamb

A three-and-a-half-week-old Texel cross lamb was submitted to Penrith VIC. The history provided was limited, but the lamb was found dead unexpectedly.

At postmortem examination, the heart was visibly enlarged, occupying most of the chest cavity and compressing the lungs dorsally (Figure 2). A copious amount of serous pericardial fluid was present. The intestinal contents were dark red in colour.

The entire heart was submitted for histopathological examination and had a cleaned weight of 147g, representing 1.5% of the lamb's total bodyweight. The right ventricle was enlarged, with hypertrophy. There was dextroposition of the aorta over a high ventricular septal defect.

Ancillary testing revealed a coccidial burden of 169,000 oocysts per gram (opg) with 20% pathogenic species. There was light growth of pure *E. coli* on the spleen and liver on bacterial culture.

The lamb died due to a congenital anomaly of the heart characterised by right sided ventricular hypertrophy, dextroposition of the aorta and a high sided ventricular septal defect. This was considered a likely isolated incident resulting in cardiac failure. The coccidial burden was likely a result of debilitation caused by the pre-existing cardiac disease, similarly with the light growth of *E. coli*, a likely opportunistic pathogen.

The farm was advised this was a likely isolated incident, but that if future cases occurred, review of genetic involvement and parental lineage should be considered.

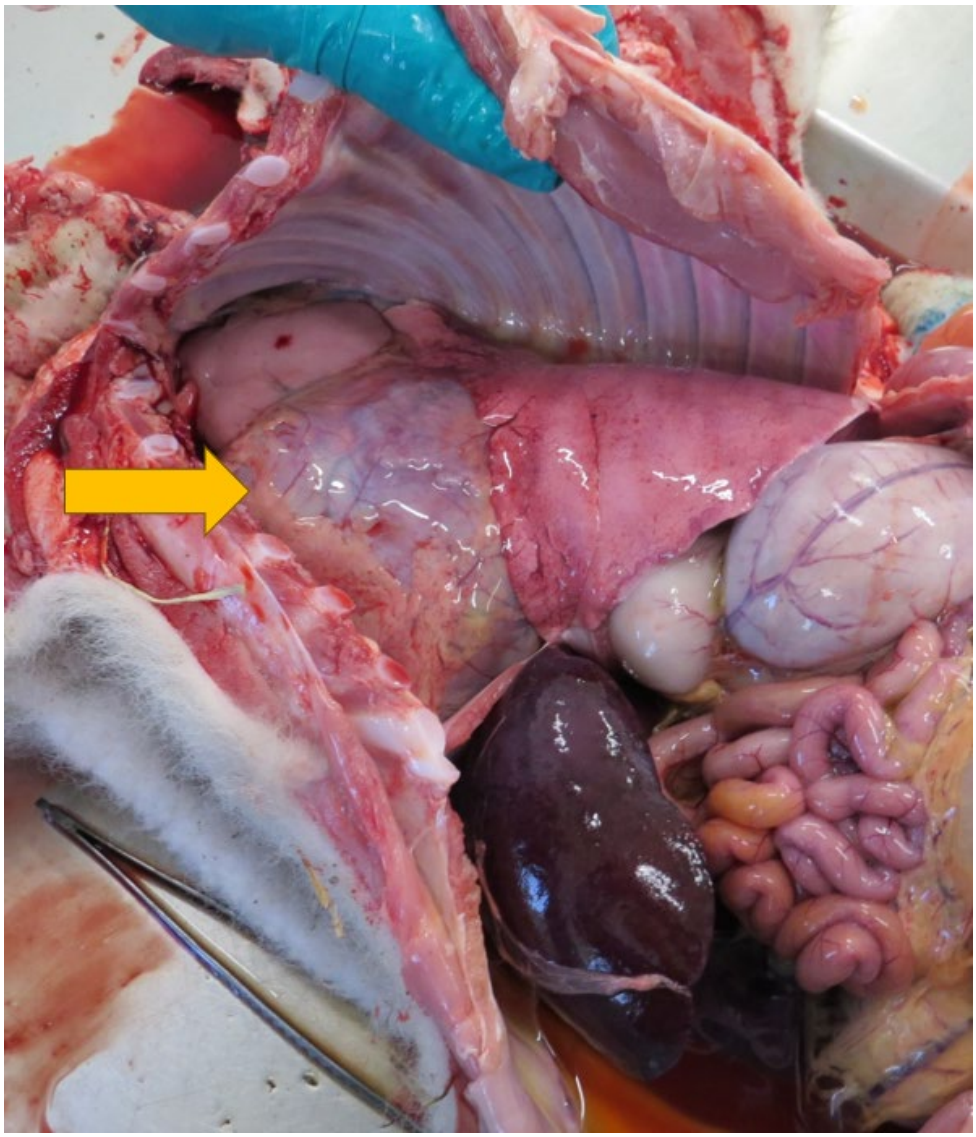


Figure 2: Markedly enlarged heart indicated by the orange arrow in a three-and-a-half-week-old Texel cross lamb with a congenital anomaly of the heart

Goat disease surveillance dashboard outputs

The most frequent diagnoses from goat submissions made in quarter 2 (Q2) of 2026, compared to Q2 in 2025, and Q2 for 2017 to 2026 inclusive, through the Great Britain (England, Wales, and Scotland) scanning surveillance network, are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Great Britain scanning surveillance five most frequent goat submission diagnoses in (Q2) of 2026, Q2 of 2025 and Q2 for 2017 to 2026

	5 most frequent diagnoses Q2 2026	5 most frequent diagnoses Q2 2025	5 most frequent diagnoses Q2 2017 to 2026
1	**Johne's disease**	Parasitic gastroenteritis	Parasitic gastroenteritis

2	**Parasitic gastroenteritis (PGE)**	*Clostridium perfringens* type D disease	Johne's disease
3	***Clostridium perfringens* type D disease**	Johne's disease	*Clostridium perfringens* type D disease
4	**PGE - Haemonchosis**	PGE - Haemonchosis	PGE - Haemonchosis
5	**Hypocupraemia or hypocuprosis**	Coccidiosis	Coccidiosis

Parasitic gastroenteritis (PGE) excludes PGE due to Haemonchus and PGE due to Nematodirus.

Sheep disease surveillance dashboard outputs

The most frequent diagnoses from sheep submissions made in Q2 of 2026, compared to Q2 in 2025, and Q2 for 2017 to 2026 inclusive, through the Great Britain (England, Wales, and Scotland) scanning surveillance network, are illustrated in Table 2. These can be interrogated further using the interactive Sheep Dashboard | Tableau Public.

Table 2: Great Britain scanning surveillance 10 most frequent sheep submission diagnoses in Q2 of 2026, Q2 of 2025, and Q2 for 2017 to 2026

	10 most frequent diagnoses Q2 2026	10 most frequent diagnoses Q2 2025	10 most frequent diagnoses Q2 2017 to 2026
1	**Parasitic gastroenteritis (PGE)**	Parasitic gastroenteritis (PGE)	Parasitic gastroenteritis (PGE)
2	**Pneumonia due to *Mannheimia haemolytica***	Pneumonia due to *M. haemolytica*	Pneumonia due to *M. haemolytica*
3	**Fetopathy due to *Chlamydia abortus***	*Clostridium perfringens* type D disease	Coccidiosis
4	**Tick-borne fever**	Coccidiosis	*Clostridium perfringens* type D disease

5	***Clostridium perfringens* type D disease**	PGE due to Haemonchus	PGE due to Nematodirus
6	**Coccidiosis**	PGE due to Nematodirus	Fetopathy due to *Chlamydia abortus*
7	**PGE due to Haemonchus**	Tick-borne fever	Pneumonia due to other causes
8	**PGE due to Nematodirus**	Fetopathy due to Toxoplasma	Tick-borne fever
9	**Systemic pasteurellosis**	Pneumonia due to other causes	Intestinal torsion (red gut)
10	**Pneumonia due to other causes**	Fetopathy due to *Chlamydia abortus*	Systemic pasteurellosis

Parasitic gastroenteritis (PGE) excludes PGE due to Haemonchus and PGE due to Nematodirus.

Pneumonia due to other causes, includes abscessation and other bacteria not specifically described.

Changes in disease patterns and risk factors

Syndromic analysis for sheep

Syndromic alerts were raised this quarter, in comparison to the quarter average of the previous 5 years for England and Wales, for the following diseases:

Increases

- Fetopathy due to *Chlamydia abortus*
- Tick-borne fever
- *Bibersteinia trehalosi* septicaemia
- Mastitis due to *M. haemolytica*

Decreases

- Border disease
- Nephrosis
- Caseous lymphadenitis

Parasitology

GOATS

Parasitic gastroenteritis (PGE) is a common recorded VIDA diagnosis in goats and cases due to Haemonchosis were among the 5 most frequent diagnoses this quarter.

SHEEP

Parasitic gastroenteritis

Parasitic gastroenteritis (PGE) remains the most common recorded VIDA diagnosis in sheep, accounting for 7% of all the VIDA diagnoses in quarter 2 in 2026 and showing a consistent trend over recent years (Figure 3).

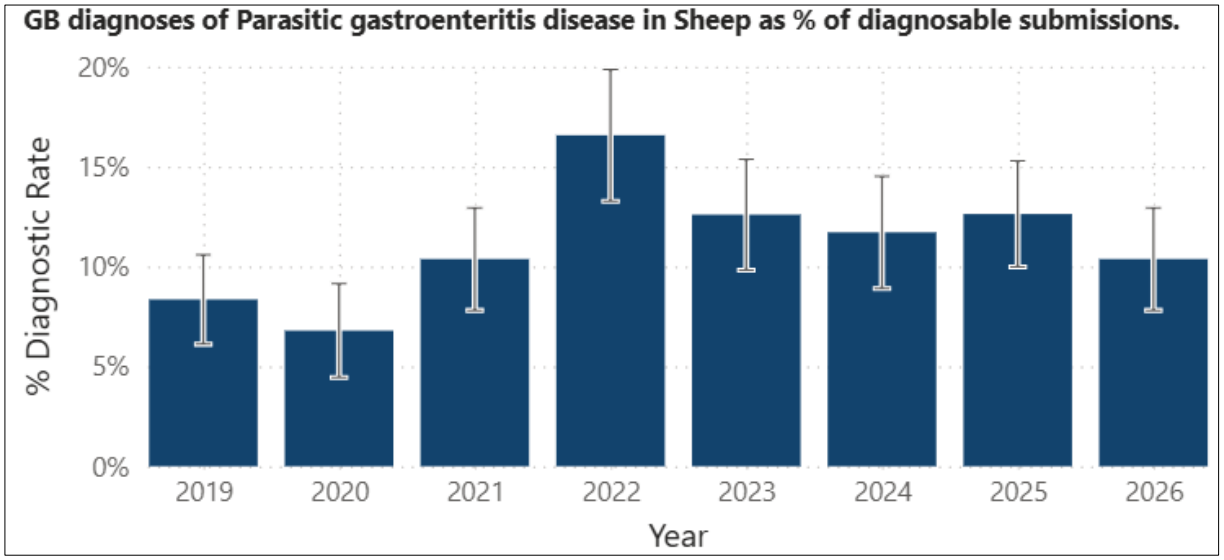


Figure 3: GB diagnoses of parasitic gastroenteritis in sheep in Q2 as % of diagnosable submissions, showing consistent high levels over the past few years. The error bars indicate a 95% confidence interval.

Parasitic diseases often predispose animals to, or occur concurrently with, other conditions, as in this case of pleuropneumonia in an 8-week-old lamb. Concurrent coccidiosis and PGE were diagnosed.

A well-grown eight-week-old lamb was submitted for a postmortem examination (PME) to investigate sudden death of eight lambs from 70 over recent weeks, including five that were found dead immediately after a storm. The lambs were turned out with the ewes in early March and moved to rented ground at least six weeks previously. Grass conditions were good and ewes were in good body condition with sufficient milk. Ewes and lambs had been vaccinated with a multi-valent clostridial and Pasteurella vaccine. Lambs had received their second dose eight days prior to the submission. Some scour had been noted in a different lamb group, and affected lambs had received toltrazuril in mid-March. Lambs had also been wormed once with a white drench.

The PME revealed extensive right-sided fibrinous pleuropneumonia, but cultures were unrewarding. Multifocal, chronic, suppurative bronchopneumonia and pleuritis, suggestive of a bacterial aetiology, were detected on histopathology.

A trichostrongyle-type egg count of 700 eggs per gram (epg) was detected and worming of at-risk lambs was advised. A high coccidial oocyst count of 322,000 opg was also detected, 72% of which were the pathogenic species *Eimeria ovinoidalis*. Treatment with a coccidiostat was also advised. The storm that preceded the death of five lambs was also likely a significant stressor.

Haemonchus

Diagnoses of haemonchosis remain at the high level seen over recent years as shown in Figure 4.

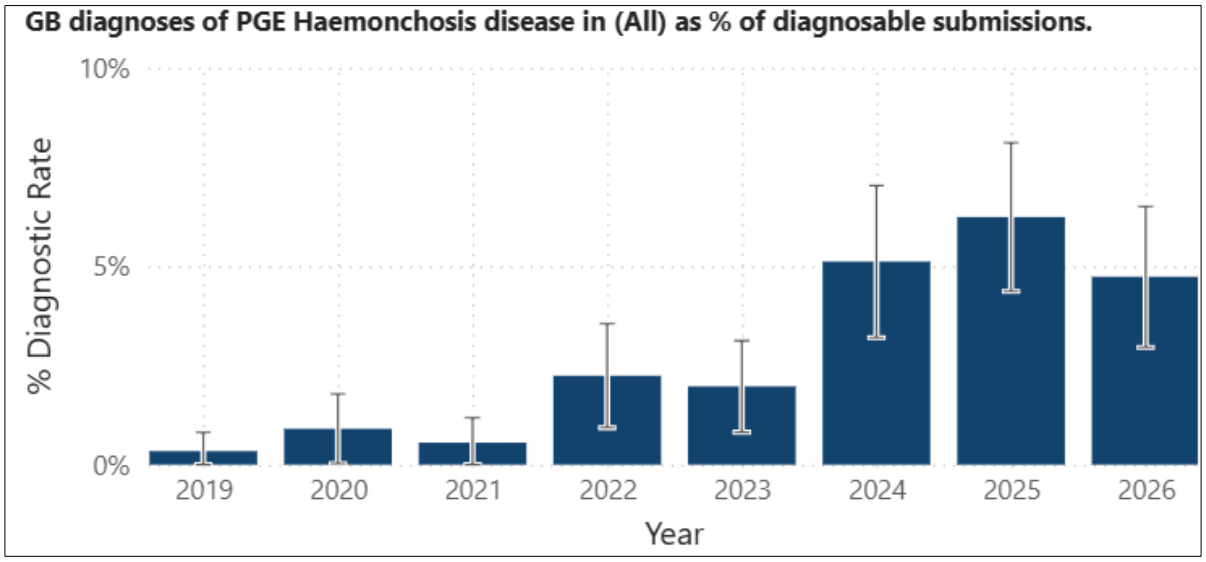


Figure 4: GB diagnoses of haemonchosis in sheep in Q2 as % of diagnosable submissions, showing consistent high levels over the past few years. The error bars indicate a 95% confidence interval.

Listeriosis and haemonchosis were diagnosed in an adult ewe submitted to investigate death after a period of malaise of two to three days. Significant PME findings included red-brown liquid in the abomasum with live *Haemonchus* worms, pale meninges and a pale liver.

Although a significant burden of *Haemonchus contortus* (2700 adult worms) was detected, cloudy meninges were suggestive of concurrent disease. *Listeria monocytogenes* was isolated from direct brain cultures, confirming listeriosis. Both listeriosis and haemonchosis likely contributed to illness, malaise and death in this ewe.

Fluke

There were no confirmed cases of acute fasciolosis in GB for this quarter, and 7 recorded cases in chronic fluke, continuing the low trend seen over the previous few years with acquisition of infections later in the season.

Systemic disease

Border disease

The diagnostic rate for Border disease during quarter 2 of 2026 was lower than the same quarter for the preceding 7 years (Figure 5). Only 2 diagnoses were made during this quarter, equating to a diagnostic rate of 0.36%. Both were made in Scotland.

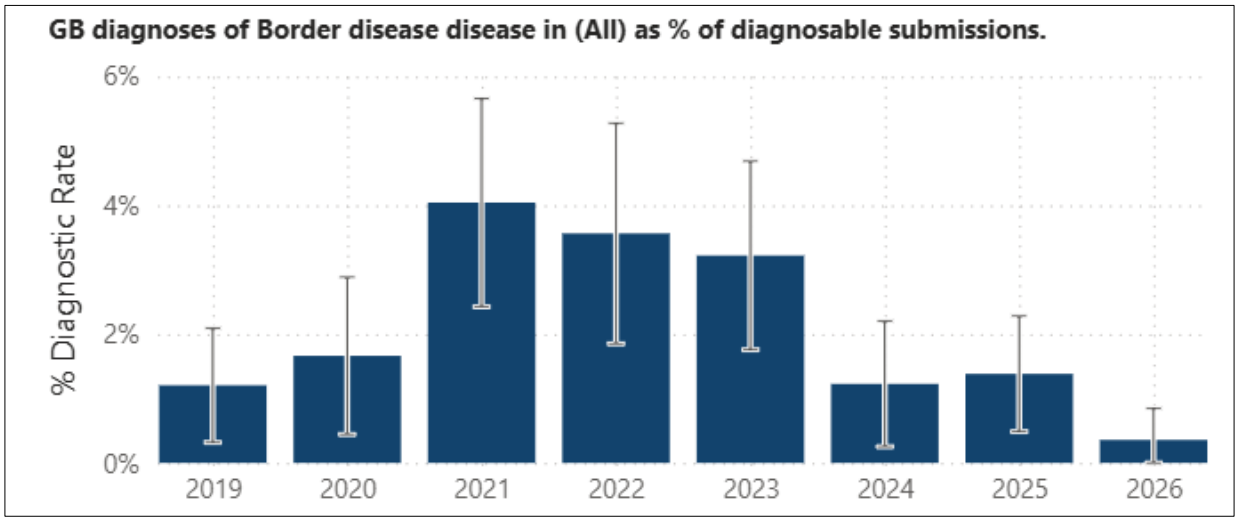


Figure 5: GB incidents of Border disease for quarter 2, as a percentage of diagnosable submissions indicating a decline over the years from a peak in 2021. The error bars indicate a 95% confidence interval.

Figure 6 shows the frequency of presenting signs in cases where Border disease has been diagnosed over all quarters of the previous 5 years, with the most common being abortion.

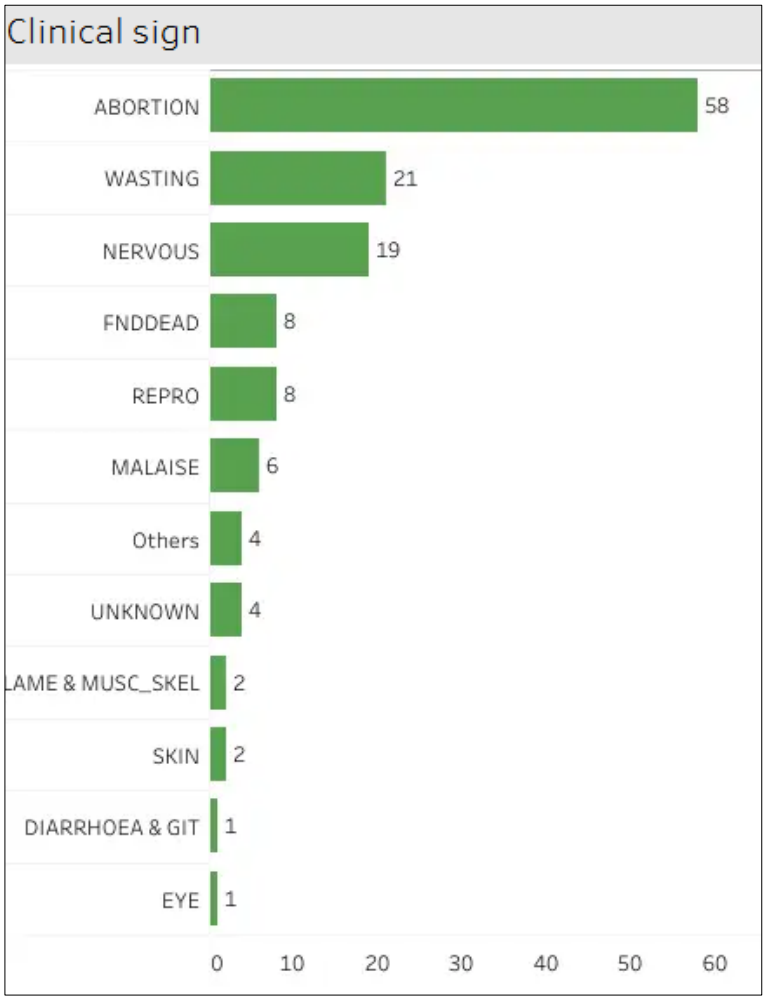


Figure 6: Most common presenting clinical signs associated with diagnoses of Border disease during the previous 5 years, showing abortion as the most common presentation, followed by wasting, nervous signs and animals found dead.

Congenital Border disease virus infection in a lamb

A single-born lamb, from a ewe scanned as carrying twins, was submitted to investigate recent abortions and the birth of approximately 7 small, weak lambs that died within 24 hours of birth. The scanning percentage for the group was as expected. However, after housing, several animals scanned in-lamb appeared to be empty. No signs of abortion had been observed. Yearlings joining the breeding flock are vaccinated against enzootic abortion in ewes (EAE) and toxoplasma six weeks prior to tupping.

At PME the fleece appeared abnormal, containing more straight hairs than normal curly wool fibres. There was evidence of aspiration pneumonia, likely secondary to attempts to tube-feed a weak lamb with poor swallowing reflex. Bilateral hydronephrosis was also present.

Border disease virus (BDV) was detected by PCR on thymus and serum samples, and was considered the likely cause of the small body size, weakness and abnormal fleece. The diagnosis was confirmed by immunohistochemistry which detected BDV in vascular

endothelium, some glial cells and other cells in the germinative layer. No abnormalities were detected on histology of kidney.

BDV may be introduced to a flock by the purchase of a persistently infected (PI) animal. Infection then spreads within the flock by direct contact typically involving nose to nose contact with infected animals. BDV can also cross the placenta to infect the foetus and can be detected in semen. PI animals result when foetuses are infected with Border disease in the first half of pregnancy. They shed virus continuously throughout their life acting as a source of infection to other sheep. The reproductive losses in this flock, including ewes appearing empty after scanning and the birth of weak lambs, are consistent with the recognised effects of BDV infection during pregnancy.

Selenium deficiency in store lambs

Several ten-month-old Romney store lambs were reported to be going off their legs and in poorer than expected condition. An intention tremor was seen on attempts to rise and those that could rise had a stiff, stilted gait. The feet appeared to be normal, and no swelling of the joints was seen, and the lambs were reported to be otherwise bright. Blood samples from four lambs were submitted to Axiom Veterinary Laboratories, and testing revealed low GSH-Px levels, indicating selenium deficiency. Hyposelenosis was the likely cause of the musculoskeletal signs and possibly the poor body condition. A pooled liver fluke serology sample from the lambs was positive for antibodies to *Fasciola hepatica,* indicating exposure to liver fluke which could have been a further contributing factor.

Atypical presentation of mannheimiosis in young lambs

There were several atypical presentations of mannheimiosis reported this quarter in lambs aged 2 months and under:

Epicarditis and pericarditis caused by *Mannheimia haemolytica* infection

A two-month-old ewe lamb presented with respiratory signs that had persisted for 2-3 weeks. Clinical signs initially improved following antimicrobial treatment but subsequently relapsed. No other lambs in the group of 50 were affected. Postmortem examination at APHA Carmarthen revealed extensive pericarditis and epicarditis (Figure 7). *Mannheimia haemolytica* was isolated on bacteriological culture.



Figure 7: Extensive pericarditis and epicarditis in a lamb due to *Mannheimia haemolytica*

***Mannheimia haemolytica* associated fibrinonecrotising abomasitis in lambs**

Several 4 to 5-week-old lambs were submitted to Carmarthen VIC for postmortem examination following sudden death. There was extensive reddening of the abomasal mucosa, thickened oedematous rugal folds (Figure 8), fibrinous peritonitis, ecchymotic haemorrhages affecting the thoracic pleura, splenomegaly and lymphadenopathy on postmortem examination. Bacteriology demonstrated a pure systemic distribution of *Mannheimia haemolytica*. Histopathology identified a severe, diffuse, acute, fibrinonecrotising and suppurative abomasitis with oat cells and intralesional coccobacilli, supporting the diagnosis.

Reference:

Pérez E, Uzal FA, Ricardo de Miguel, Rodríguez-Largo A, Raúl Reséndiz, Streitenberger N, et al. *Mannheimia haemolytica*–associated fibrinonecrotizing abomasitis in lambs. Veterinary pathology. 2024 Mar 5.



Figure 8: Fibrinonecrotising abomasitis due to *Mannheimia haemolytica* infection in a four–five-week-old lamb.

Mannheimiosis (including umbilical infection), colisepticaemia and hypogammaglobulinaemia in a neonatal lamb affected from 12 hours after birth

A lamb was submitted to Shrewsbury VIC for postmortem examination, to investigate lambs fading from 12 hours of age, despite being born bright and strong. Six lambs had been similarly affected, in a 120-ewe flock. Postmortem findings included dark discoloured lungs covered with fibrinous exudate, and fibrin within the peritoneal cavity, consistent with bacterial septicaemia. *Mannheimia haemolytica* and *Escherichia coli* were isolated from multiple sites. Heavy growths of *Mannheimia haemolytica* from the umbilical vessels and the urachus suggested navel ill as the likely route of introduction. A zinc sulphate turbidity (ZST) result of just 0.92 units (where adequate transfer would be >14) indicated severe failure of passive transfer. This, together with umbilical infection, was considered to have predisposed the lamb to this unusually early presentation of mannheimiosis.

Intestinal disease

No significant changes.

Respiratory disease

No significant changes.

Circulatory disease

Tick-borne fever (TBF)

The number of diagnoses for this condition continues to increase with a total of 43 incidents diagnosed in GB in quarter 2, 2026, compared to 34 in the equivalent quarter 2025. The following are details of some of the diagnosed cases this quarter.

Underlying Tick-borne fever immunosuppression associated *Bibersteinia* sp. septicaemia deaths, in Pasteurella vaccinated, late gestation ewes

The carcase of a ewe was submitted to Starcross after the acute death of two recently housed, late gestation ewes, and pyrexia and recumbency in a further three. PME revealed lesions suggestive of a septicaemia, including widespread haemorrhages in the subcutaneous tissues, salivary glands and pleura, together with patchy discolouration and haemorrhages on the liver; stable froth within the trachea and congested lungs. *Bibersteinia trehalosi* was isolated from both lung and brain on bacterial cultures, despite both ewes being fully Pasteurella vaccinated. PCR testing for TBF proved positive; and immunosuppression associated with this organism may have contributed to the outbreak.

Sudden death of a pre-weaned lamb, potentially due to acute TBF infection

A three-month-old pre-weaned lamb that had been in a good body condition was submitted to Carmarthen for PME to investigate respiratory signs and death. Ticks were present on the farm, and all members of the flock had been topically treated. Dark, mottled, heavy swollen lungs were found on PME, and the spleen was enlarged and oedematous. Tick-borne fever PCR was positive, and no other infection was identified following bacterial culturing of tissues. Histopathology did not provide any evidence of another infection causing death of this lamb, identifying only non-specific, subtle changes in the liver and kidney, suggestive of a systemic inflammatory process.

In the majority of TBF cases a co-infection occurring secondary to immunosuppression is found to be the cause of death. When identified, primary infections typically occur in lambs aged between 1 and 6 months of age, as in this case.

Musculo-skeletal

No significant changes.

Urinary disease

Urolithiasis in a goat

A two-year-old castrated male pet goat was submitted to investigate the cause of illness and death. The goat was first noticed to be off-colour a week previously and was not

eating. Due to a high worm egg count, the goat was treated with a combined ivermectin and clorsulon product, but no improvement occurred and the goat became visibly bloated. The goat was euthanased on the morning of submission. There had been no signs of diarrhoea or previous illness. The goat was kept on pasture with two other goats, which were unaffected, and they were fed a goat mix concentrate daily. No vaccines were used.

At postmortem examination (PME) the goat had multiple urinary calculi in the bladder and urethra (Fig 9). One of these had fully occluded the narrow urethra at the sigmoid flexure which had eventually led to the gross pathological changes detected in the bladder and bladder rupture, resulting in leaking of a large volume of urine into the abdominal cavity. The serosal surface of the bladder was thickened and necrotic and covered in fibrin strands. The mucosal surface was thickened, haemorrhagic and necrotic (Fig 10).

Early castrated male goats are more susceptible to this condition as urethral and penile development is affected by castration.

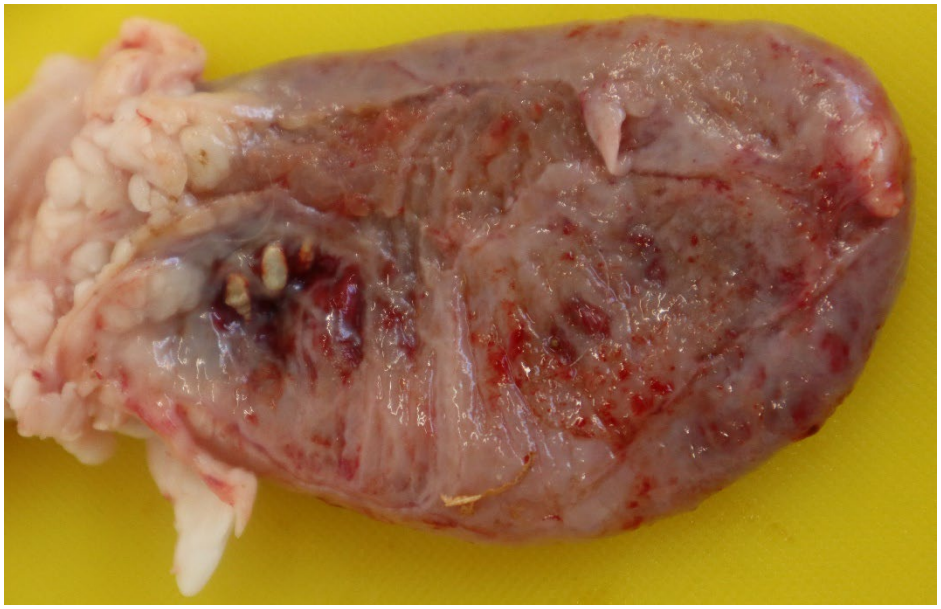


Figure 9: Reddened serosal surface of the bladder in a goat with urolithiasis showing calculi within the ruptured bladder wall.

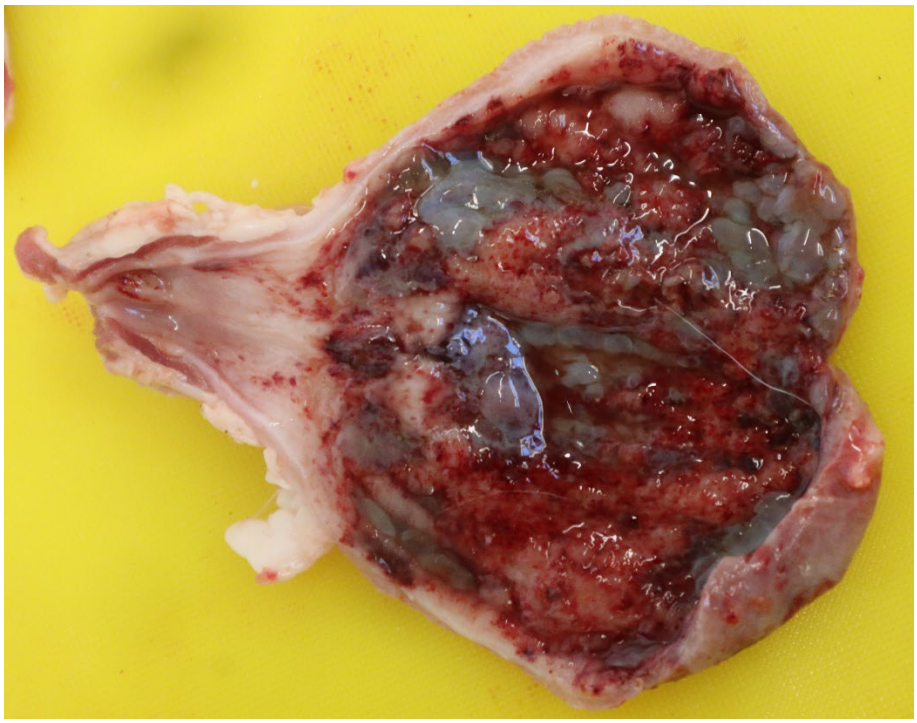


Figure 10: Thickened, haemorrhagic and necrotic mucosal surface of the bladder in a goat with urolithiasis.

Nervous disease

No significant increases.

Swaledale Encephalopathy

A one-week-old Lonk lamb was submitted as a representative case to Penrith VIC to investigate the cause of neurological signs in young lambs from a flock of 400 breeding ewes. Five lambs had been affected at the time of submission. Clinical signs were reported as progressive and eventually resulted in death. They included generalised tremors, appearing to gallop on the spot, and falling over. There was concern about an inherited congenital problem as all affected lambs were linked to a single tup.

PME was grossly unremarkable. Brain cultures remained sterile and PCR testing for Border disease gave negative results. Fixed brain was submitted for histopathological evaluation which revealed moderate, multifocal, symmetrical, polioencephalopathy, with astrocyte hypertrophy and degeneration. The nature and distribution pattern of the observed lesions were consistent with that described by Scholes et al 2007 as subacute necrotising encephalopathy. The cause of the condition has not been established, but as the pathology resembles Leigh syndrome, a mitochondrial disorder of humans, a genetic basis is suspected; however, investigations so far have been inconclusive.

As the name suggests most cases occur in the Swaledale breed, but other breeds can occasionally be affected including Badger-faced Welsh Mountain, Scottish Blackface, and Lonk. Affected lambs typically develop neurological signs in the first two-to-three weeks of

life, characterised by stiffness and head tremor – often following stimulation or exercise – progressively worsening over several days.

Reference:

Scholes, S.F.E., Higgins, R.J., Holliman, A., Watson, P.J., Hutchinson, J.P. and Daniel, R. (2007), Subacute symmetrical necrotising encephalopathy in young lambs. Veterinary Record, 160: 775-775. https://doi.org/10.1136/vr.160.22.775

Hypoglycaemic encephalopathy in neonatal lambs

Twin, 2-day old lambs were submitted for PME to VIC Carmarthen from a hill flock reporting neurological signs in newborn lambs. Issues were only occurring in the hill flock of 450 ewes which was managed separately to the lowland flock. Approximately 20 lambs had died with similar clinical signs. All were from twin-bearing ewes and had been ataxic and unable to stand and suck at birth. Both twins had been affected in approximately half of the cases, while only one twin had been affected in others. The submitted lambs were convulsing at birth, then became weak and recumbent. Both were stomach tubed. One twin was submitted alive and euthanised by barbiturate injection whilst the second twin had died the day previously. Ewes were at pasture until mid-February on wet, hilly and old open cast ground. Silage, hay, fodder beet and concentrates were supplementary fed. Ewes were then housed on ad-lib silage. Concentrates were only fed 2 to 3 times a week and condition loss in the ewes had occurred.

On gross examination both lambs were noticeably small. No other gross abnormalities were detected.

Histopathological examination of the brain from the submitted live twin found multifocal, segmental, subacute, marked, superficial and mid laminar to lesser deep laminar, cerebrocortical neuronal necrosis with astrocytosis, astrogliosis and multifocal Purkinje cell necrosis. These findings were consistent with a diagnosis of hypoglycaemic encephalopathy likely due to maternal undernutrition. There were also changes consistent with hypoxia possibly as a result of placental insufficiency providing further evidence for underlying poor maternal nutrition. The fact that only lambs born to twin bearing ewes were affected also supported the diagnosis. This condition has been previously described by Scholes and Watson, 2004.

Unfortunately, autolysis hindered histopathological examination of the brain from the second twin.

A full review of the nutritional management of these ewes was recommended, including:

- Ensuring that fodder of sufficient quality and quantity was provided
- Separation of single and multiple bearing ewes with provision of sufficient concentrates, fed at regular intervals
- Assessment of ewe energy status three-to-four weeks prior to lambing with changes to the ration as required

- Assessment of the ewes for other disease issues, for example endoparasitism and liver fluke

Reference:

Scholes SF, Watson PJ. Congenital necrotizing encephalopathy in lambs. Vet Rec. 2004 Jan 3;154(1):32. PMID: 14725433.

Cerebrocortical necrosis in a goat following turn out to pasture

Cerebrocortical necrosis (CCN) was determined to be the cause of the neurological signs and death in a one-year-old female goat. The clinical presentation was characterised by seizures, sternal recumbency, and inappetence. Although a transient improvement was noted following antimicrobial therapy, the neurological signs rapidly recurred, and the animal deteriorated, culminating in death five days after the onset of clinical signs.

The herd had been turned out to pasture about a week before the submission and was supplemented with minerals, including cobalamin (vitamin B12), cobalt, and selenium. The most notable gross findings at postmortem were confined to the central nervous system, consisting of congested meningeal blood vessels and fine fibrin strands over the surface of the brain.

Histopathological examination of the brain revealed moderate, multifocal, laminar neuronal necrosis. In goats and sheep, cerebrocortical necrosis is most often linked to disruption of thiamine metabolism, which may arise secondary to a sudden dietary change or to altered rumen microflora with increased thiaminase activity. The recent transition to pasture may have contributed to disruption of thiamine metabolism in this case. The distribution of lesions also warranted consideration of indirect salt toxicity or water deprivation, but a corroborative history was not available to support this as a cause. Listeriosis, clostridial enterotoxaemia and lead toxicity were excluded through laboratory investigation. Bacteriological testing of the brain and selected systemic tissues did not identify any significant pathogenic organisms.

Reproductive

Fetopathy analysis for the 2026 lambing season

The most common fetopathy diagnoses for GB, in comparison to the same periods for the 2 previous years, are shown in Figure 11. This shows that fetopathy due to EAE was the most common diagnosis for the 2025 to 2026 lambing season, followed by Campylobacter and then Toxoplasma.

Schmallenberg fetopathy cases have declined significantly from the peak in 2024.

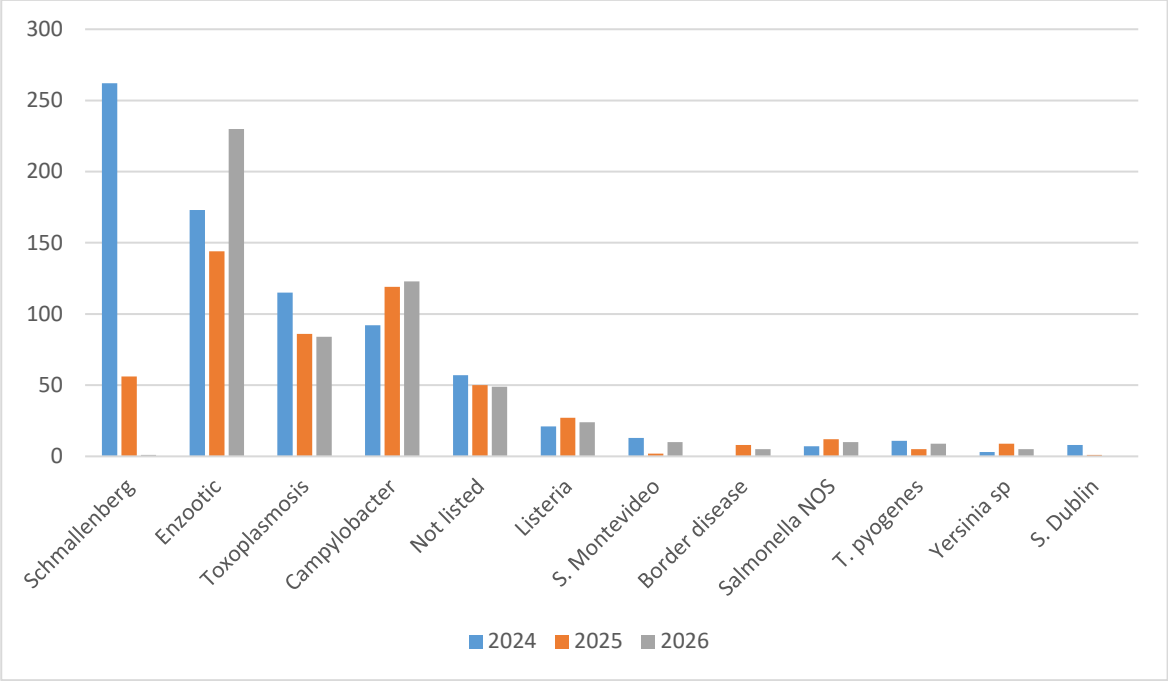


Figure 11: The number of annual VIDA diagnoses for common sheep abortion causes from 2024 to 2026

A specific code for Fetopathy due to Border disease was first introduced for the 2025 season, hence there are no recordings for this code for 2024 in this graph.

Fetoathy in goats due to *Chlamydia abortus*

A set of twins and a single kid were submitted to investigate the cause of fetopathy affecting 12 primiparous does out of a batch of 200. The affected does were due to kid on 20th April and had been aborting sporadically for two weeks prior to submission. The animals had been treated with oxytetracycline 48-hours prior to submission. The previous batch kidded without issue in September and October. Animals were vaccinated against toxoplasmosis and clostridial disease. The animals were housed and fed a TMR consisting of silage, brewers' grains, soya and rape meal. The unit breeds its own replacements but bought in milking animals two years prior. There was evidence of a placentitis grossly, with intercotyledonary thickening and a creamy purulent exudate over the surface of the placenta. Acid-fast intracellular organisms were identified on MZN smears.The submitted placenta tested negative for Q-fever but positive for *Chlamydia abortus*.

Mastitis due to *Mannheimia haemolytica*

This condition was diagnosed in 19 incidents this quarter compared to 4 in Q2, 2025. Dry conditions in some areas and a resulting lack of good grazing may have played a contributing role. Inadequate ewe energy and protein or poor body condition can inhibit milk production, encourage over-sucking and predispose to mastitis.

Mannheimia haemolytica toxic mastitis causing sudden deaths in a flock of Cheviot ewes

A dead Cheviot ewe was submitted for PME to determine the cause of sudden death. Five ewes had been found dead out of a group of 80 Cheviot ewes that had been bought-in the previous September. The affected animals were mature ewes of about 5 years of age that had lambed outdoors about 3 weeks before; there had been no losses in the Cheviot yearlings. The ewes were relatively fat, and most had a single lamb at foot. PME revealed carcase fat with a dark yellow/brownish tinge, subcutaneous tissue of the neck and ventral jaw that were dark red and oedematous, some ecchymotic haemorrhaging over the cranial trachea and an enlarged spleen. Half of the right side of the udder was dark red and had fibrinous clots within the parenchyma and milk contents, and there was oedema between the udder and the caudal ventral body wall. Severe acute, toxic mastitis due to *Mannheimia haemolytica*, was diagnosed as the cause of death, with a very heavy pure growth of *Mannheimia haemolytica* confirmed from the udder. A marginal liver selenium concentration suggested that inadequate dietary selenium may have contributed to disease susceptibility; however, blood sampling others in the group was recommended to determine flock selenium status. The yellow-brown discolouration of the carcase was most likely considered to be associated with toxaemia in this case; kidney and liver testing for copper ruled out copper toxicity and dipstick testing of aqueous humour proved negative for nitrites.

Skin

No significant changes.

Ichthyosis fetalis in a lamb

Skin samples were received by Axiom Veterinary Laboratories from the third lamb born dead in a flock with a skin condition where the wool was compacted into soft clumps and peeled off the skin easily (Figure 12). Histopathology detected severe, diffuse, hyperkeratosis with hair follicle dysplasia, suggesting a diagnosis of ichthyosis fetalis, a non-epidermolytic ichthyosis. Ichthyosis is a heterogeneous group of rare congenital, often autosomal recessive, disorders affecting skin cornification and keratinisation, characterised by an excessive accumulation of superficial scales on the skin.



Figure 12: Ichthyosis fetalis in a lamb, characterised by wool compacted into soft clumps that can be easily peeled from the skin. Photo courtesy of Emily Haydon and Violeta Lazaro Alvarez, Drove farm vets.

Salmonellosis

No significant changes.

Reports of salmonella in livestock, dogs, birds and wildlife in Great Britain can be found on GOV.UK.

Chemical food safety

Chemical Food Safety Reports can be found on GOV.UK.

Toxicity

Antimicrobial use and resistance

The Veterinary Antibiotic Resistance Sales and Surveillance (UK-VARRS) Report published by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD): VARSS Report - Home

The latest RUMA Targets Task Force report can be found at: Reports – RUMA

The Medicine Hub, a voluntary industry initiative, developed and managed by AHDB, was launched in 2021 and provides a central location for the collection of medicine data, including antibiotic use: Medicine Hub for dairy, beef and sheep farmers | AHDB

Centre of Expertise for Extensively Managed Livestock (COEEML)

The COEEML was developed by APHA to address potential surveillance gaps for extensively managed animals. Extensive management of livestock potentially makes regular or close inspection for disease detection more challenging. The Centre is based at the APHA Veterinary Investigation Centre in Carmarthen; however, it is a Great Britain-wide resource and forms part of the wider veterinary surveillance system operated by APHA. For more details, see the Animal disease scanning surveillance pages on GOV.UK.

TSE

Surveillance for transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs) is conducted in the United Kingdom in animals susceptible to the disease. This includes cattle, sheep, and goats. The main aim is to monitor trends in disease incidence and prevalence, to evaluate the effectiveness of TSE disease controls.

There are 2 categories of surveillance – passive and active.

Passive surveillance

This is when an animal with clinical signs suspicious of BSE or scrapie is reported to an APHA Office to be investigated. Such cases are slaughtered, and the examination of the brain determines whether the animal was affected by a TSE.

APHA has been recording and analysing data from reported cases in cattle since the start of the BSE epidemic in 1986, and for scrapie in sheep and goats since this disease became notifiable in 1993.

Active surveillance

The UK carries out active surveillance for TSEs.

The UK has:

- tested cattle since July 2001
- tested sheep and goats since January 2002

- conducted a survey in 2007 and 2008 of farmed and wild deer

View the updated TSE statistics on GOV.UK.

Horizon scanning

International Disease Monitoring (IDM) horizon-scanning activities monitor for major, notifiable, or new and re-emerging animal disease outbreaks worldwide. This is done to provide an early warning and to assess the risks they may pose to the United Kingdom (UK), particularly for those diseases which impact on animal health and welfare, international trade, public health, or wider society. IDM also assess the risk that animal diseases might come into the UK through the trade in animals or animal products (legal or illegal), through movements of wildlife, or through the movement of fomites and vectors such as insects which may carry infectious disease. These outbreak assessments are used to guide decisions on how to manage or reduce the risks and are published on the web: Animal diseases: international and UK monitoring.

Links to specific diseases:

Peste des petits ruminants in Europe - GOV.UK

Bluetongue virus in Europe.

Epizootic haemorrhagic disease in Europe

Sheep and goat pox in Europe - GOV.UK

Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD):

Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in Cyprus - GOV.UK

Links to information on differential diagnoses can be found here:

Differential diagnosis of diseases causing oral lesions in cattle - Holliman - 2005 - In Practice - Wiley Online Library

Differential diagnosis of oral lesions and FMD in sheep

The **Biothreats Emergence, Analysis and Communications Network (BEACON)** is an open-source informal surveillance program designed to revolutionize global biothreats surveillance and response. Leveraging advanced artificial intelligence (AI), large language models (LLMs) and a network of globally based experts, BEACON rapidly collects, analyses, and disseminates information on emerging infectious diseases affecting humans, animals, and the environment.

Publications of interest

APHA Surveillance Reports on GOV.UK

Monthly APHA disease surveillance reports

APHA focus articles published in the Veterinary Record

The latest edition of the *Salmonella* in animals and feed in Great Britain (previously called *Salmonella* in Livestock Production in GB) has been published and is now available here: Salmonella in animals and feed in Great Britain

SRUC-VS Surveillance Reports

Scottish Government Veterinary Services Programme

SRUC Veterinary surveillance blogs

Veterinary surveillance blogs

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