Welcome to the Team

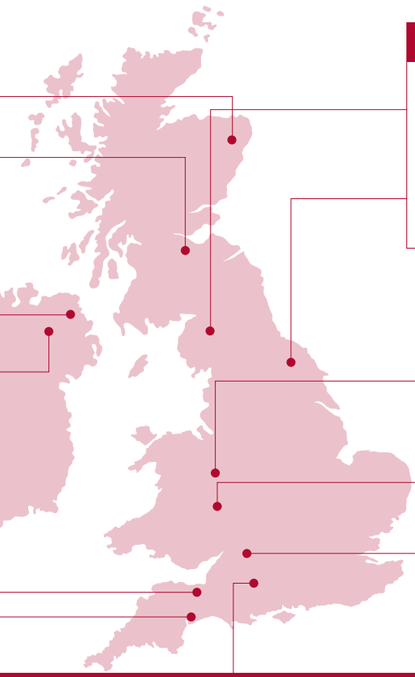
Kate Ings
BSc BVSc (Hons) MRCVS


Kate Ings

Kate joined St David's Poultry Team as a veterinary intern in Exeter and is now working as a full-time poultry vet covering the Shropshire area. Kate grew up in London, keeping rare breed poultry and working on a rare breed poultry farm. She then went on to achieve a degree in Immunology and Cancer Biology at Bristol University. Kate decided on a career in the poultry industry following time spent with St David's Poultry Team. In her spare time, Kate is very active and enjoys swimming, cycling, running and cooking.

If you are interested in using biological fly control, with parasitic wasps, rather than conventional chemical fly control, you may be interested in having a look on our web pages for more information: www.bioflycontrol.co.uk

If you wish to place an order for wasps, we are ordering now. Please call Alison on 07769710855.



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ST DAVID'S POULTRY TEAM
VETERINARY SURGEONS

Layer Newsletter Spring 2017

"The national practice working locally on a farm near you"

www.stdavids-poultryteam.co.uk

Managing Feed in Layers

Injurious pecking behaviour and cannibalism is a perennial problem in laying hens. Flocks require careful management to prevent exacerbating this inherent behaviour or to prevent it from escalating in the first place.

Helen Errington
BVMS Cert SHP MRCVS

We have built up data from flocks that have suffered excessive feather loss or cannibalism and have found that ration changes can be a risk factor in these flocks predisposed to pecking. After a ration change (ie to help control egg size), there seems to be a lag period of 2-4 weeks before feather loss, pecking behaviour and/or mortality rates rise.

With this in mind, it is important to anticipate when ration changes are likely to occur and manage them accordingly:

1) It is a good idea to make feed change gradual so ordering 1-2 mixed feed loads can help make the change less sudden.
2) Administering multivitamins or other supplements such as Herbivit or Amino Plus, which contain amino acids, given in the water supply can help support the birds through the changes.
3) Making sure that environmental enrichment in the shed is adequate. Use pecking blocks, extra grit or toys to provide distraction.
4) Reducing the light intensity (within acceptable levels of lux) can have a calming influence on the hens.
5) Making sure that the environment is optimal for the birds' needs such as; the water quality, red mite control and litter quality, especially as a dry substrate is necessary for the birds to dustbathe to keep feathers in optimal condition.

Ration changes do not always cause an increase in injurious pecking behaviour, but it is important to consider that they may be a potential stressor and therefore manage the flock accordingly to limit damage as well as economic loss.

Introducing Dergall® for red mite control

St David's Poultry Team are excited to announce we are now UK distributor for Dergall, an exciting new treatment for killing red mite which has been four years in the making.

Alison Colville-Hyde
VN PG Cert

Dergall is unique. It has a physical mode of action, therefore no concerns with resistance or toxicity from harmful chemicals. Many red mite treatments are insecticidal, killing red mite systemically as the product is absorbed into the mite's body. When Dergall is sprayed onto a surface it creates a three dimensional immobilizing polymeric structure (3D-IPNS) which is air permeable. It is effective on all internal equipment and surfaces including wood. Dergall mechanically immobilizes red mites and blocks the mites' spiracles (through which they breathe), the mites subsequently suffocate and die. This action continues for 2-4 days after the initial application.

- Dergall can be sprayed onto the house and the birds.
- Dergall does not penetrate into the birds' organs or eggs.
- Dergall is safe for humans and the environment.
- Dergall does not cause resistance.
- Dergall has anti-bacterial properties.
- Dergall kills red mites and red mite eggs.

For best results, use as follows:

- Apply using a knapsack or compression sprayer, ideally at night when the lights are off.
- Mix solution fresh and use within 12 hours of preparation.
- Mix at the rate of 10ml per litre of water (1%).
- One application should suffice, a repeat application at half strength can be used 5-7 days later in extreme outbreaks of red mite populations.
- 1x1 litre of Dergall makes 100 litres of solution ready to spray at 10ml/litre/1%.

£130 per litre of concentrate. If 10 or more litres are purchased, the price is £117 per litre.

For more details, please call Alison Colville-Hyde on 07769710855.

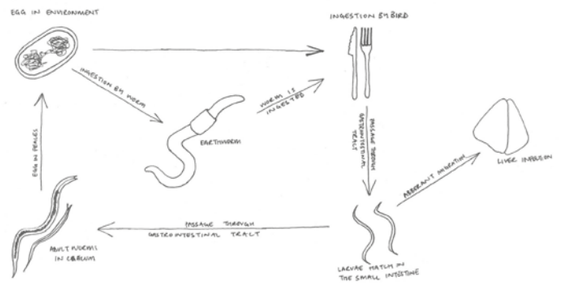
Ceacal Worms – A Case Study

A flock of 40 week old Free Range Lohmann Brown birds had failed to reach peak production and were producing under target. The birds looked bright and active and reasonably even, they were in good to lean body condition and there were a number of birds with pale combs.

On post-mortem examination they had high levels of Heterakis gallinarium in their caeca (Figure 1). The birds had not been wormed for 9 weeks and no recent faecal egg counts had been performed.

Figure 1

Heterakis gallinarium is otherwise known as the caecal worm, these thin, white worms are 0.7-1.5 cm in length. Female worms are larger than the males. Their lifecycle involves a period of time in the environment: embryonated eggs are excreted in the bird's faeces and are able to survive for extended periods in the soil (reports of up to 5 years!). The eggs are then either ingested by the bird, or by an earthworm which is subsequently eaten by the bird. In either case, worms live in the caeca, feeding on caecal secretions. They produce eggs that are excreted in the bird's faeces. It takes male worms 14 days from ingestion to reach sexual maturity, and females 24-36 days. Therefore, faecal egg counts or an anthelmintic for Heterakis control should be performed every 6 weeks.



Heterakis tends to cause subclinical infection (the birds are not overtly ill), but can be associated with reduced production, failure to reach peak production, unevenness and poor weights. High burdens may cause thickening of the caecal walls, which will have a detrimental effect on digestion and absorption of nutrients. In rare cases, the larva may migrate to the liver and cause granuloma formation. In addition, Heterakis is the host for Histomonas meleagradis, the causative agent of Blackhead. Blackhead causes lesions in the liver and caeca, it can be a significant cause of mortality and is very challenging to control. Heterakis treatment is a vital part of any Blackhead control programme.

Control of Heterakis is by regular testing (via caecal worm egg counts), although it is worth noting that whilst a positive result confirms the presence of worms, a negative result does not rule this out as sexually immature worms may be present in the caeca but not producing eggs yet. As such, we recommend testing every 6-8 weeks along with a course of wormer where deemed necessary from the worm egg counts. Either a 7 day course of Flubendazole (either in feed or water) or a 5 day course of Fenbendazole in the water should be used. Your vet will, of course, advise the best approach at the time.

In the case discussed, 7 day treatment with Flubendazole in the feed resulted in production reaching target.

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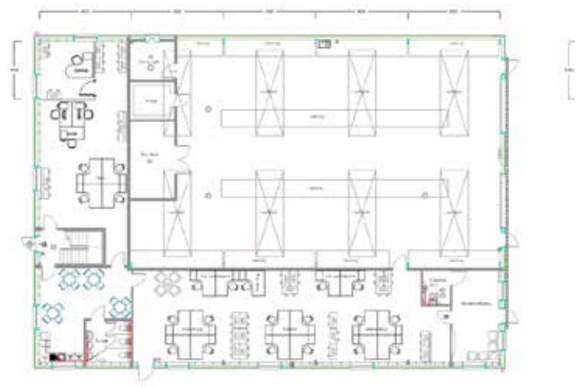
The Dispensary is Moving!

Our Dispensary is moving from Topsham to the Nutwell Estate, home of our Head Office, which will centralise the business and make our services more efficient.

Our Dispensary was moved off site three years ago to allow us to hold a larger stock of medicines and nutraceutical products. It has always been our aim to build a new bigger facility and we are delighted to announce that this build has now been completed.

Some of our staff will also be benefiting from the new building and it will become the home of our Marketing, Finance, IT Support and Dispensary teams.

Here's a look at the design of our new Dispensary:



New Leominster base now open

Not only do we have a new Dispensary, but we have also recently opened a new practice base in Leominster, Herefordshire. The office is available for post-mortem examinations and medication collection.

The address of our Leominster office is:
Business Unit 1A, Wharton Court, Leominster,
Herefordshire HR6 0NX.

You can contact the office on 01568 615967
or info@stdavids-poultryteam.co.uk