



## In the New Year...

### Control sheep abortion

If abortion occurs:

- Remove aborted lambs, placenta and contaminated bedding. Dispose safely and disinfect.
- Isolate aborted ewes until vaginal discharges have stopped (ideally for 3 weeks).



- Do not foster onto aborted ewes.
- Mark aborted ewes – they may need to be blood sampled later.
- There are many possible causes of sheep abortion. If more than 2% of ewes abort then investigation is required – put lambs and placenta in a clean bag and *ring for more advice*.
- Many abortion agents can cause human illness – use gloves, wash hands.

Pregnant women and immunocompromised people must not have any contact with lambing ewes, lambs or clothing/equipment.

### Vitamin A deficiency in housed cattle

Vitamin A and its precursor carotene are present in green feeds – deficiencies can occur in housed animals fed on straw, cereals or sugar beet pulp. Other factors such as Vitamin C and E levels, phosphate content and how the feed has been prepared and stored are often involved. Signs include:

- Calves can be born blind or show nervous signs after birth
- Brown, bran-like scales in the coat (fast-growing animals)
- Reduction in growth rate (often other deficiencies too)
- Occasionally thickening and whitening of the cornea is seen
- Nervous signs – ataxia and weakness of hind then forelegs
- Collapse and convulsions
- Night blindness (most often in yearlings)