

## What is HiHealth Flockcare?

**HiHealth Flockcare** is a membership scheme launched in June 2015. It offers sheep farmers and their vets access to specialist veterinary advice on testing and laboratory fees at a discount.

It can be challenging to integrate laboratory diagnostics into a flock health plan to improve productivity and profitability, but the HiHealth Flockcare team has considerable expertise in working with farmers and their vets to do just this. We aim to offer useful packages that align with key times of the sheep calendar to make it easy to get the most from lab diagnostics.

Biobest currently offers a range of testing in farmed and companion animal species including parasitology, biochemistry and infectious disease diagnostics but is a relatively new player in the area of sheep health monitoring and disease investigation.

Biobest already runs a successful cattle health scheme, HiHealth Herdcare, offering CHECS accreditation for important cattle diseases. HiHealth Flockcare aims to offer a service that will build on the close working relationship between sheep farmers, their vet and our team of vets to offer tailored advice to address important health concerns. These include ill thrift in lambs, thin ewes, abortion and poor scanning results, worm and fluke control, and testing to establish disease status and keep disease out of your flocks.

The scheme manager, David Kay, has a farming background and a wealth of experience acquired during almost 10 years of running the HiHealth Herdcare scheme for cattle.

Leading the HiHealth Flockcare veterinary team is Rebecca Mearns. Formerly a Veterinary Investigation Officer at Penrith Veterinary Investigation Centre, she holds the postgraduate RCVS Certificate in Sheep Health and Production and is an RCVS Advanced Practitioner in Sheep Health and Production. She is a longstanding member of the Sheep Veterinary Society (SVS) and current committee member. She represents SVS on the Sheep Health and Welfare Group (SHAWG), is an external member of the Small Ruminant Expert Group of the Animal and Plant Health Agency (formerly AHVLA) and keeps her own small flock of sheep. Rebecca is collaborating with colleagues at the Moredun Research Institute on a pilot study, funded mainly by AHDB, to assess the application of the OPA PCR test to detect infected sheep in thin ewes. She is always happy to discuss sheep related problems with vets and producers and offer advice to improve flock health, productivity and profitability.

