**Herd Health Plans**

**Why have one?**

It is mandatory to have an up to date health plan for certain regulatory bodies

e.g organic and FAWL.

The benefits include improved animal welfare and production and therefore most importantly increased financial gain.

**What is involved in having a health plan drawn up?**

Generally speaking, you will need to set aside a few hours to sit down with your veterinarian and go through your farm details. This includes:

* Biosecurity
* Routine management procedures
* Herd/Flock reproduction numbers
* Health problems

The plan can be done online as a working document or on paper.

It will finish with discussing any targets you may have e.g. increased weight gain in lambs or a tighter calving pattern. Recommendations will then be put together to help you achieve these targets and to prevent any new health issues from occurring.

It is a great opportunity to get an overview of the farms yearly performance and to assess if any management changes have been worth while.

**What costs are involved?**

There is often funding available for health plans.

You can apply to FARMING CONNECT to subsidise the cost.

In addition there is often funding available for subsequent investigations e.g screening for presence of certain viruses, trace element testing.

With financial margins becoming ever tighter in the farming sector and with the emergence of new diseases we would HIGHLY RECOMMEND every livestock producer to have a health plan and to review it annually.