



HUNTERVILLE VETERINARY CLUB NEWSLETTER—NOVEMBER 2013



Pre-Weaning Drenching Of Lambs??

I recently read an article from an 'expert' suggesting that although milk lambs can have quite high faecal egg counts, drenching them before weaning is not necessary as the milk in their diets allows lambs to do well despite the worms.

I have some great reservations with this advice for real world farmers which includes:

- *If un-drenched these lambs, while they may grow well, can contribute huge numbers of worm eggs to our late spring / summer pastures which manifests as increased worm challenges later in the season.*
- *Within the ewe flock by 70 days of lactation milk production is varying greatly. Lambs on ewes where milk production is declining will be more susceptible to worms.*
- *Farm performance and profitability is greatly affected by lamb growth rates to weaning and the subsequent weaning weight, why would you risk compromising this.*
- *There is very little reason to suggest that on our type of farms with high sheep ratios and large worm populations that drenching lambs at this time has a significant impact on drench resistance development if a 100% effective drench is used.*

If you manage the perfect farm don't drench before weaning. For the other 95% of you I would argue that this practise still makes good sense.

Take Care With Calf Drenches

Over recent times we have dealt with several cases of toxicity from the over-dosing of lighter calves or young cattle due to double dosing or not paying attention to actual body weights.

Many of you following our recommendations are using combination drenches that contain abamectin or levamisole. Both of these drugs can cause problems if young stock are over-dosed.

When drenching calves this season ensure your dose rates are accurate for the size of animals whether using oral, pour-ons or injectable drenches. If there is a wide variance in stock size which can often be the case with young calves, draft them into lines for treatment.

While the correct dose is good, a double dose is not better and could in fact cause death!

PS. If using injections that are to be given subcutaneously, please ensure this is the technique used. Giving the product into the muscle can cause problems with rapid uptake and toxicity issues as well as meat residue issues.



Congratulations to Edward Sherriff who won this motor bike in our recent Virbac promotion.

Congratulations

The following people have been successful in the draw for returning their Docking Supplies and Calf Rearing order forms.

*Richard and Mary Lourie
Shane Hurley
Kevin Inskeep
Rod McCaughan
Ruth and Jim Rainey*

Last Chance This Month

**This month is your last chance to get free faecal egg counts done of ewes / hoggets that have received long acting drench injections or drench capsules.
Get your samples in to us!!!**



I think I am quite good at preventing disease in my own stock but any advice in preventing these types of problems would be appreciated!!!



Calf Issues

Over the last month we have dealt with a couple of health issues in calves that are worth mentioning.

Coccidiosis—This is a disease that causes intestinal bleeding and scouring in calves. It is normally seen in hand reared calves being reared in environments where high numbers of calves have been reared over the years.



Many of the meals fed to calves contain a coccidiostat that will generally prevent coccidiosis if the calves eat enough meal from an early age, however on occasion some calves within a group of meal fed calves can still develop coccidiosis.

We have also seen big problems with this disease when hand reared, meal fed calves have been purchased and farmed on areas that have historically had large numbers of calves grazed on them and feeding coccidiostat containing meal has not been continued.

Treatment for coccidiosis is possible by drenching with a product called Baycox.

If you observe four week or older calves doing poorly, scouring with blood in the scour, think coccidiosis and contact us for advice.

White Muscle Disease—This condition causes the death of calves at birth or in the immediate days after birth. It is due to selenium deficiency which leads to damage to the heart or skeletal muscle of the calf (or lamb).



The problem presents itself as perfectly normal looking calves dead in the paddock for no apparent reason.

The problem is easily solved by having good selenium supplementation programmes in place for the cow herd where selenium deficiency is an issue.

Thiamine/B1 Deficiency/Polioencephalomalacia—
(a big word for a headache!!!)



At this time of the year as calves are weaned off milk and meal this problem can rear its ugly head. Ruminants make their own Vit B1 in their rumens. Occasionally, especially in young animals, sudden feed changes alter the rumen balance in such a way that thiamine production fails. This results in brain swelling and the death of brain cells often affecting the areas of the brain involved with sight.

As a result affected animals appear depressed, blind and hanging their heads (much like a hang over). Prompt treatment with Thiamine injections will save animals if carried out before too much permanent brain injury occurs.

On occasion older animals including sheep can be affected. Dave recently dealt with the problem in yearling heifers grazing a kale crop. Twelve animals were affected in a 24 hour period. In this case high sulphur content, greater crop allowance and a short spell of bad weather are thought to have conspired to cause the problem.

Watch out for this problem, especially in the next few months if you have hand reared cattle.

PS. I have also seen this problem in dogs and cats fed thiamine deficient diets. These animals don't make thiamine and rely on getting sufficient intakes from their diets.

Joke of the Day

Bob stood over his tee shot for what seemed like an eternity. He waggled, looked up, looked down, waggled again, but didn't start his back swing.

Finally his exasperated partner asked, "What the hell is taking you so long?"

'My wife is up there watching me from the Club House', Bob explained. 'I want to make the perfect shot.'

"Good lord!", his partner exclaimed. "You don't have a snowball's chance of hitting her from here".

Laugh Out Loud...

Q: What did the elephant say to the naked man?

A: How do you breathe through something so small.

Q: Why does a chicken coop only have two doors?

A: Because if it had four, it would be chicken sedan.

Q: How does a cow sneak off a farm?

A: Right pasteurize.

After Hours Vet

Emergencies:

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