



HUNTERVILLE VETERINARY CLUB NEWSLETTER—FEBRUARY 2014



Grazing Crops—(Keep It Constant)

Just a reminder that ruminants take several days to adjust to dietary changes. Over this period live weight gains are reduced, consequently it is not a good idea to chop and change diets.

This is important to bear in mind when grazing crops. It makes little sense to graze crops with lambs or calves for short periods (less than 3 weeks) if at all possible. So when stocking crops try to use numbers that ensure the stock will be on the crop for at least 3 weeks (more stock can be added if the initial stocking rate is too light).

Lambs that are close to slaughter are often best kept off crops if good quality pasture is available and longer term lambs targeted for crop grazing.

Note that this advice does not normally apply to chicory or plantain / clover pastures, or poor brassica crops with a lot of grass in them. Stock adjust rapidly to these types of crops.

Contact the Clinic if you need help with calculating stocking rates and grazing periods.

P.S. A reminder that good crops especially cultivated ones should be **low worm environments**. Lambs should be drenched onto the crop but worm reinfection rates are normally low. It should not be necessary to drench lambs again in 4 weeks. This can be confirmed by doing faecal egg counts at 4-5 weeks. Low egg counts will confirm a low worm challenge and drench intervals can be significantly extended.

Is It Poisonous??

Once again in relation to crops, we frequently get asked about the toxicity of various weeds in crops. Here is a summary of the common ones in this area.



Redroot / Amaranthus—can cause kidney damage especially in lambs but does require the lambs to eat it in preference to the crop. Problems can occur in unpalatable crops or crops with a lot of redroot.



Staggerweed—has caused lamb deaths on several properties (cattle are also susceptible). Problems occur where stock selectively graze the weed in heavily contaminated crops with poor palatability (usually pasja or rape).



Fat-hen—Poisoning never seen in this area and I cannot find any other cases in NZ.



Nightshade—while poisoning is theoretically possible we have not seen any deaths. (Stock have to be bloody hungry to eat it in big quantities.)



Chickweed—No poisonings reported (has been implicated in bloat cases in cattle).

However—whatever your wife / partner / husband throws over the fence from the garden seems to be like ice cream for kids. Cattle especially will try it out. So DO NOT throw anything over the fence unless you are very sure it is safe!!!

Crop Field Day Follow-Up

For everyone who wishes to follow up on the Field Day held in December or if you want to see and discuss hill country crops and stock performance, a tour of the crops visited last time will take place on 19 February, 2014.

Please RSVP to the Clinic.

Scottish Wedding

At the Scottish wedding reception the D.J. yelled...

“Would all married men please stand next to the one person who has made your life worth living.”

The bartender was almost crushed to death.

Pallets for collection

We have plenty of pallets available to give away if anyone would like to come and collect them. If they can be of any use to you please feel free to pay us a visit.

That Itchy Feeling

Fleas seem to be a real issue at present and we have fielded several enquiries about the best way to combat the problem and why 'things aren't working'.

In Summary:

- Frontline and Advantage work very well if applied at the correct dose rate and according to instructions. Seeing fleas on the dog or cat does not mean the treatment is not working!! In high flea environments fleas are continually hopping on for a feed. Death is not immediate but as Rachel Hunter says, it won't happen overnight, but it will happen!!!
- Fleas will not just be around the kennels, they will be wherever the dogs have been. (eg. Areas where the dogs are tied up at work, in / under the house, etc.)
- One off spraying of kennels etc with ripcord or permoxin will not kill all the fleas. Repeated spraying will be necessary to deal with further 'flea hatches'.
- Flea collars are available again, however the level of flea control is significantly inferior to the modern topical products but may be useful in some situations.
- Just as the mild winter seems to have helped the tick problem, fleas seem to have benefited also. (Another threat from global warming for the believers!)

Are Your Replacements On Target??

It is generally accepted that having well grown replacement stock at mating and calving sets up their life time production.

Good growth rates for weaner dairy cattle over the late summer and autumn are essential for meeting these liveweight targets. It is very good management practice to weigh weaners now. This will allow you to:

- **Identify weaners that are behind target and selectively feed them. (Perhaps making meal available.)**
- **Build up 'the picture' of the growth rates you can expect over summer and autumn.**
- **'Panic' if significant numbers of weaners are behind target and do something about it sooner rather than later.**

If you don't have your own scales we have a platform and scales that can be used.

When I was young I decided to go to medical school. At the entrance exam, we were asked to rearrange the alphabets ...

P N E I S

and form the name of an important human body part which is most useful when erect.

Those who answered SPINE are doctors today, while the rest are on Facebook.

Medicine of the Human Kind

I have received a letter from Massey University requesting the help of pregnant rural woman in a study they are conducting on asthma and allergies in New Zealand infants. If you are interested in assisting Massey with this study please contact Heather Duckett on 0800 000 544. They will be extremely grateful for your assistance.

A wee note from Anna...

If we leave any messages with you on your answer phones, please endeavour to reply. This is very helpful especially when it comes to confirming vet calls and organising our vets days.

Also please remember our carpet and take your BOOTS OFF.

Thanks :)

Eczema Threat??

I'm treading on very thin ice here but in general terms, climatic conditions have been too cool for significant spore development in most of our patch to this point. Pasture covers are high and most stock are grazing well off the ground so there is no immediate eczema threat.

We will need a significantly warmer February and more moisture to raise the threat levels. Where pasture quality and control is poor, dead rotting grass, a necessary component in spore development, will be present. If you have such pastures be a little more concerned.

BVD Tests On Bulk Milk

Many of our dairy clients have opted to pay for this test. However there seems to be some misunderstanding as to what the results mean for this very complex disease. If you are paying to get the tests done make sure you understand the implications of the results!!

Most of the results we have seen indicate that BVD is present on most dairy properties. If you have weaner replacements that are failing to thrive then BVD could be the cause. Blood testing such calves can be a very good policy. These animals will never be any good and are a source of infection for their herd mates, reducing growth rates and increasing susceptibility to worms and other diseases.

After Hours Vet

Emergencies: Phone 06 322 8058

Shop Hours: 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Email: huntermvillevetclub@xtra.co.nz

Website: www.huntermvillevetclub.co.nz

