



# HUNTERVILLE VETERINARY CLUB

## NEWSLETTER—FEBRUARY 2015



### Hot Dry Weather Improves Feed Quality

While the recent very hot sunny weather probably isn't what most farmers were hoping for, one cloud has a silver lining. At the time of the sunny spell's arrival most farms had pretty good pasture covers with a 'good bottom' in it. The heat has essentially 'snap dried' this feed meaning the feed quality to some extent has been retained (as opposed to a wetter year where this feed starts to rot and break down). While it remains hot and dry this feed will retain quality and stock, even lambs, will do better than you might otherwise expect.

However with time and depending on stocking rates pastures will become picked over at which point stock performance will decline and we will all start to really pray for rain!!

The other very important point is that this grass is very dry so stock will require a lot of good quality water to best utilise this feed and maintain dry matter intakes.

As we have seen in recent years, worms don't like this dry weather either. On most farms worm challenges can be expected to be lower than normal.

Certainly lambs seem to be staying very clean at present. With tupping approaching many ewe flocks will currently have very low worm burdens. In these flocks drenching will best be delayed until later after enough rain has fallen to kick start worm activity again.



### Spore Counts

While a hot, dry January meant that spore counts have been very low, rain in recent days could potentially kick start spore count rises, if further moisture is accompanied by warm temperatures. Pastures that are now short with some dead matter in them that is breaking down will pose the greatest risk.

To check spore counts visit [www.huntervillevetclub.co.nz](http://www.huntervillevetclub.co.nz) and look under **Blog**. We will post details of spore counts there as we carry them out.



### Palm Kernel and Copper

Just a reminder that palm kernel is an excellent source of copper. If you are feeding PK to your stock (a common practice currently with the reduced price of PK and the dry weather) do not treat cattle with copper before testing them to check their copper status.

Giving copper to cattle with good copper levels ready can result in copper toxicity and death as has been widely reported in NZ over the last 3 or 4 years.

### EID READER

We have purchased a Gallagher EID reader that is available to our members to borrow. If you are interested please give us a call at the Clinic and we can answer any questions you may have regarding it.

### Pre-Tup Selenium

Within our practice low selenium levels can be found in many ewe flocks. Low selenium levels over mating can lead to poor embryo survival resulting in more dry ewes / hoggets or late lambers.

If you are unsure about the selenium status of your ewe flock, [blood tests](#) are recommended before mating. Ewes can be supplied with selenium where necessary by:

- Injecting ewes with selenium.
- Oral drenching either
  - as a selenium and water solution.
  - incorporated with anthelmintics.
  - using one of the pre-tup vitamin / mineral brews that are available.

*NOTE: Ensure they actually contain enough selenium before use.*

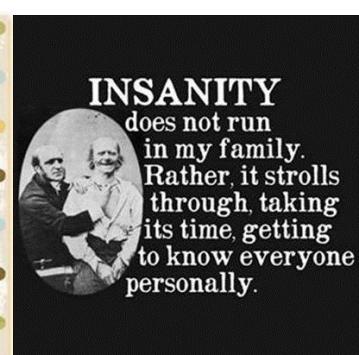
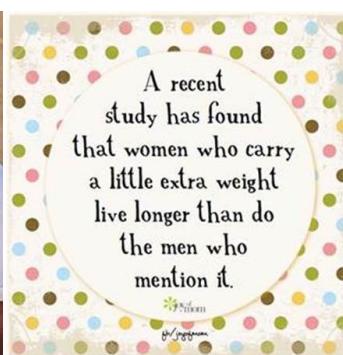


# Look After Vaccines

Many farmers will be administering vaccines to 2.2ths or hoggets over the coming weeks. With the very hot sunny conditions that we have experienced over recent weeks it is worth reinforcing the point that vaccines must be handled carefully to avoid the damage to vaccines that heat and sunlight can cause.

- a. *Keep vaccines cool, store in reliable fridges, transport around the farm in chilly bins with cooler pads.*
- b. *Minimise exposure to bright light, especially for toxovax which is a live vaccine. If working in uncovered yards use old socks etc to keep vaccines covered and away from sunlight.*
- c. *Return unused vaccine to fridges immediately after use and try to only take out of storage as much vaccine as you expect to use.*
- d. *Never freeze vaccines.*

As the recent problems with scabby mouth vaccine have highlighted, damaged or inactive vaccines **don't work** and cause **BIG** problems!!!



## Once A Day Milking Has Merit

This may be an option for some or all cows in your herds and could be considered especially when production has dropped below 1.4 kg MS / day.

Cows on once a day should not necessarily be fed less!! If you can continue to feed them relatively well then you can expect them to hold or even gain weight meaning you can milk for longer. (Which is especially useful for heifers and younger cows). You can expect daily milk production to drop by 10-20%.

Cell counts are important, high cell count cows are not good candidates for OAD milking.



## Anna's Corner

**Vaccine:** It's not too late to get your orders in, but the sooner the better.

**Boots:** Take them off, don't make me name names Murray Ramsay!

Cheers, Anna ☺



## Check Your Drenches

As we continue to emphasise each year, checking the effectiveness of the drenches you use is a good idea. As you all know, emerging drench resistance is widespread. Using an ineffective drench will not only reduce the productivity of the animals treated but accelerate the build-up of resistant worm populations on your property.

Take faecal samples 10 days after you drench your lambs or calves to check that drenches are working. Waiting until you become suspicious that your drench is not working will be 2 to 3 years too late!!

## **Recent prize draws ...**

**Eukanuba BBQ :** Andy Hurley, Papanui

**Nestle (Tux) Tents:** Justin Vennell  
Bill Parkes

**Vaccination order form draw:**

Andrew Lambert  
Phillip Harris  
Richard Lambert  
Richard Lourie

**Congratulations to you all.**

## **After Hours Vet**



**Emergencies:** Phone 06 322 8058

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

**Email:** huntervillevetclub@xtra.co.nz

**Website:** www.huntervillevetclub.co.nz