

HUNTERVILLE VETERINARY CLUB

NEWSLETTER—JULY 2015



Poorly Grown In Calf Heifers Are High Priority

In calf dairy heifers that have failed to meet target weights should be a high priority on any dairy farm.

It has been clearly demonstrated that such animals:

- *Produce less milk in their first and subsequent lactations.*
- *Are slow to cycle and get back in calf or fail to get in calf.*
- *Have more calving problems.*
- *Are lost to the herd at a greater rate.*



You still have some time to improve this situation.

- *Don't treat these animals as part of the mature pre-calving herd.*
- *Preferably feed them energy and protein dense feeds to maximise growth (the heifer needs to grow skeleton and muscle as well as the calf inside her). Pregnancy restricts rumen fill so heifers can not eat enough of high bulk feeds such as silage to achieve this. PK and other relatively high protein feeds are the best option. Maize silage / fodder beets contain a lot of carbohydrate but little protein so heifers will get fat rather than grow out.*
- *Limit stress on heifers. Get them used to the milking routine etc by running them through the shed well before calving. I recently read an article suggesting that on farms that are winter milking it may be a good idea to run heifers with the milking herd.*

Note: While this article was written for dairy heifers, the same sentiments apply to 2 year old beef heifers. These animals need to be grown out. Don't starve them. If you have used a good low birth weight bull they can be fully fed without calving complications. However it does pay to keep them fit by running them on the hills rather than break feeding on flat paddocks until calving begins.

Wairarapa Drench Capsule Trial Results

Several articles have appeared in recent farming publications following the release of the Wairarapa drench capsule trial results. The information published to date in my opinion is not surprising and certainly does not mean that long acting drench treatments, be they capsules or injection, should not be considered by sheep farmers in our area. (Although some involved in this trial would appear to be advocating this.)

Much has been made of the findings on some properties that treatment was not seen to have resulted in the benefits that are widely claimed. However the average response was still an economic gain of \$5.86 incl / head and the highest gain was a massive \$40 / head.

In our opinion on many sheep farms there are pregnant ewes or hoggets that will benefit from long acting drench treatments. It is all very well to advocate the 'better feeding' of ewes but after 30 years of giving that advice there are many farms where this still does not happen. (In some cases this is not a result of poor management but rather a reflection of our pasture growth curves, and seasonal variations, etc.)

We still stick to our previous recommendations that treatment decisions should be based around:

- **Pre-lamb ewe condition and scanning percentages.**
- **Pregnancy status: triplets vs twins vs singles.**
- **Sheep to cattle ratios.**
- **Ewe genetics and age.**
- **Winter and lambing feed covers.**
- **Winter faecal egg count results from ewe flocks.**
- **Autumn worm challenge history and trading lamb policy.**
- **Previous treatment or non treatment responses.**
- **Labour availability and costs.**



So if you would like to discuss the use of these products on YOUR farm in our area (not the summer dry Wairarapa) give us a call.

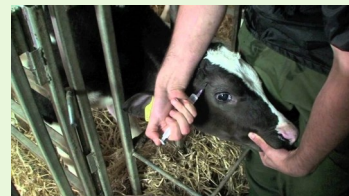
PS. Interestingly the trial did demonstrate the importance of ensuring the trace element requirements of your ewe flock are met. Drench capsules also contain cobalt and selenium. On some farms these trace elements gave significant responses. Make sure trace elements do not limit your flock performance this spring.

An Interesting Trial Result

I recently attended a veterinary seminar where the results of a trial on dehorning calves was presented.

Calves were dehorned by disbudding either with or without local anaesthetic. Calves dehorned without anaesthetic showed more abnormal behaviour post dehorning, milk intake was reduced, and on average these animals grew 107 grams / day slower for the next 30 days.

So as well as being kinder on calves (have you considered having a hot iron stuck in your head) it would also appear that there is an economic argument for using local anaesthetic.



Winter Egg Counts

Following on from our article on capsule usage, doing faecal egg counts from 2.2th and mixed age ewes is a very good management policy at this time of the year.

These counts give you:

- *Some indication as to the worm challenges occurring in your ewe flock.*
- *Valuable information when making decisions around drench treatments.*
- *Indications as to liver fluke threats. Liver fluke counts can also be done (a different process from egg counts but the same faecal samples can be used).*

Scabby Mouth Vaccine Availability

Scabine will not be available this season. As a result we expect there to be some issues with our ability to supply all scabby mouth vaccine orders. (we have ordered as much of the other 2 scabby vaccine brands as possible.)

To avoid problems please place your vaccine orders as soon as possible. An order form is enclosed with this newsletter.

Staff Wanted

We are currently looking for more staff to work on our sheep conveyor. This is casual, seasonal work to operate along side our current conveyor staff.

If you are interested in learning more about this work, please contact the clinic and speak to Kerin.

“Can I take the dog for a walk”, a little girls asks her mum.
Her mum replies 'No, because she is on heat.'

'What does that mean?' asked the child.

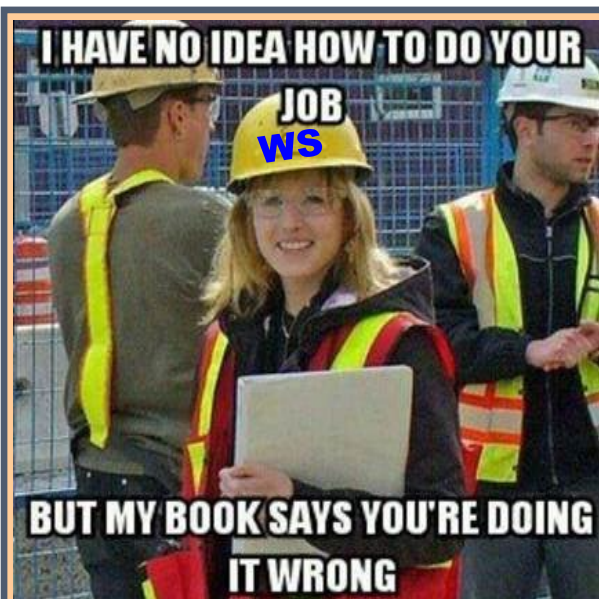
'Go and ask your father. I think he's in the garage.'

The little girl goes out to the garage and says, 'Dad, can I take Lulu for a walk around the block? I asked Mum, but she said the dog was on the heat, and to come ask you.'

He took a rag, soaked it in petrol, and scrubbed the dog's backside with it to disguise the scent, and said 'Ok, you can go now, but keep Lulu on the leash and only go one time around the block.'

The little girl left and returned a few minutes later with no dog on the leash. Surprised, Dad asked, 'Where's Lulu?'

The little girl said, 'She ran out of petrol about halfway round the block, so another dog is pushing her home.'



EID Reader

Now that we have ironed out the system for doing EID transfers for you and considering the time involved, the fee will now be \$15 per transaction regardless of the stock numbers involved.

Copper A Problem In Your Flock??

Don't forget to get ewe liver biopsies done before it gets too late and talk to us about your individual situation.

Changes In Your Details

Please remember to let us know if any of your details change. This helps us to keep our records correct and improves our services to you.

For example:

- * *Phone numbers*
- * *Email address*
- * *Staff*
- * *Dog numbers for worm pills*

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