

MATING HOGGETS

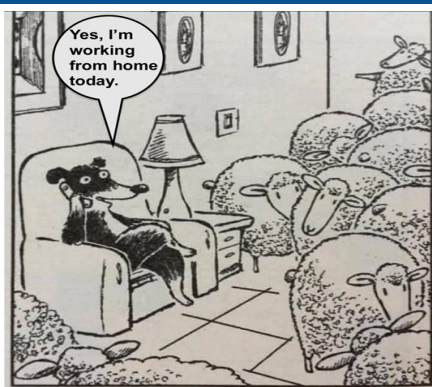
I have had discussions with several clients about the pros and cons of mating hoggets this year. There isn't always a simple answer to this question and you do need to know the current live weight of your hoggets.

For some it is an easy answer as their hoggets are a long way behind minimum live weight targets at mating (38 kgs??) and they have little ability to preferentially feed hoggets.

For those whose hoggets are better, mating is still an option but if covers going into winter are low the demands of pregnant and lambing hoggets in late winter and spring may create issues. Nitrogen (see elsewhere) or organising to graze hoggets out may be solutions to this problem,

Mating a portion of hoggets only may also be an option.

Just remember the true value of a hogget lamb is what the lamb is worth at weaning, not what you end up selling it for as you can always go and buy a store lamb next year to finish if you need more lambs!! The profitability of hogget mating revolves around weaning good lambs and having good hoggets at weaning!!



TRYING TIMES CONTINUE

I hope everyone is enjoying their time in their bubble and bubbles aren't being popped as they tend to as the pressure inside rises!!! As I write this newsletter we have received the first significant rainfall for some time which has put a green tinge in pastures. A good piece of news among the challenges we face.

Closure of sale yards, reduced killing capacity and feed shortages are all issues we need to face but on the upside at least we are part of an industry that is still functioning albeit with restrictions. At the end of all this let's hope the point gets home that once again agriculture and horticulture has kept the country going and people still have to eat!! Maybe having a third of your income based on discretionary expenditure such as tourism isn't such a good idea after all!!

For anyone who would like to discuss any issues or on farm challenges they are facing please feel free to give us a call. As you can imagine things are a little quieter than normal so there is plenty of time to talk!!

Out of all of this so far there are some good points:

- Chick pea supplies are reported to be running low. Vegans may have to look for another protein source!! (I can think of one in particular.)
- Covid-19 can contaminate hair so it is a great advantage being bald!! (and I guess some households a saving large sums on reduced hair dressing expenditure and this might extend to shoes and fashion purchases as well. 😊)
- It is great to have family home and it seems like a lot of sheds and yards are being tidied up and lists of 'jobs to do' attacked.

And best of all, I haven't had to read an article about water quality, greenhouse gasses, or global warming for a fortnight. Interesting what really becomes important when the sh*t hits the fan.

Stay healthy and safe.

NITROGEN NO BRAINER

Feel free to read the following if you believe in science and don't see nitrogen as evil!!

With the current feed shortages that virtually every farmer we deal with faces going into winter and the likely value of capital and trading stock going forward the targeted use of nitrogen would seem to be a no brainer!!

Here are some facts to consider:

- Urea this year can be applied from \$575 to \$800 a tonne (price dependent on cost of application).
- If grass is growing and not limited by moisture a minimum 1 to 10 response could be expected (proven over many trials).
- Urea contains 460 kgs of nitrogen per tonne.
- At a 1 to 10 response that's 4600 kgs of dry matter grown per tonne of urea.

- Which means each kg of dry matter grown costs 12.5 to 17 cents / kg DM depending on purchase cost and application cost.

Compare this to:

- Baylage @ \$100 / bale delivered (40 to 50 cents / kg DM).
- Grain \$460 / tonne delivered (53 cents / kg DM).

A 35kg lamb growing at 1.4 kg / week requires around 8.5 kgs of dry matter— 8.5 kgs at 17 cents costs \$1.44 to grow using urea. What is 1.4 kgs of lamb live weight going to be worth?? At \$3.50 (about an \$8 schedule) that's \$4.80!!

I could keep producing examples that demonstrate the same type of outcomes. Call the clinic if you would like to discuss the merits of nitrogen in your farming system this autumn.

PS. If you have read this article but believe nitrogen is not for your system I am very interested to know your reasons and any science / facts you might have to support them.

STAFFING CHANGES

While we are sad to have lost our receptionist Sarah to the South Island and wish her all the best for this next chapter of her life, we are extremely pleased to welcome Sophie Hamilton to our Staff. Sophie has moved to the area with her partner and has settled well into our environment. Introduce yourselves to her next time you are in the clinic.

HEIFER TARGET LIVEWEIGHTS

There isn't too much argument around the idea that having well grown dairy heifers is critical to how these heifers perform over their lifetime.

Given current conditions over recent months R1 heifers on many farms are likely to be behind their target live weights. Best advice is not to turn a blind eye to this situation. Weigh your heifers now and work out just what sort of problem you might be facing and come up with a plan to correct the problem. While you still have plenty of time to rectify the situation.

OPERATING HOURS DURING COVID-19

The Vet Club is classed as an Essential Service Business during this Level 4 lock down and as such we are remaining open but with a somewhat different staffing procedure.. Our shop hours have not changed however we ask that where possible you phone in your orders ahead of time so that they can be put aside for you to collect when you get here as no client is allowed in the building.

Our vets are still operating also for essential animal health cases and emergencies only. Please ring as early as possible to make appointments so that we can meet required operating standards (which does not involve backwards and forwards trips from the clinic if at all possible).

We will endeavour to keep you up to date as changes arise so check your email and Facebook for updates.

Thank you for your co-operation.

YERSINIOSIS & LEPTOSPIROSIS IN DEER

Just a reminder, if you have not started your vaccination programmes in your weaner deer you ought to get onto it! Both Yersiniosis and Leptospirosis can cause outbreaks of disease or in the case of lepto reduce live weight gains. Outbreaks occur most commonly following stressful events such as weaning. Each programme requires two doses of vaccine (Yersiniavax and Ultravac 7-in-1) and can be started pre-weaning.

Call us to discuss the use of this vaccine if you have any queries.



LEPTO PROGRAMMES

With the dry forcing many dairy farmers into target drying off some cows early please ensure you think about lepto vaccination boosters so cows are not missed out. One way is to vaccinate all cows as you dry them off.

Alternatively plan to vaccinate the herd once drying off and culling has been completed.

Also ensure weaners have had at least 2 vaccinations and R2 heifers get their booster vaccination before calving.

BLOOD POISONING / PULPY KIDNEY DEATHS

We have had reports of unvaccinated lambs presumably dying of clostridial disease when shifted from dried out pasture to brassica crops and chicory.

These unvaccinated lambs are probably more at risk of pulpy kidney like clostridial diseases given the significant change in the nature of their diets.

The best advice is to ensure lambs have received 8 in 1 vaccination before such changes occur. (Remember any protection they may have got from colostrum as lambs is well gone by this stage!)

CAMPYLOBACTERIOSIS IN DOGS

We have been seeing a few cases of Campy in dogs. This is a bacterial cause of diarrhoea and occasionally vomiting in dogs. Most adult dogs will get a mild, self-limiting bout of diarrhoea but some can get dehydrated.

The biggest risk is to puppies as they can suffer a much more severe form and it is also possible to be spread to humans so please use gloves and disinfectant when cleaning up diarrhoea! It generally comes from uncooked meat, chicken and raw milk but some dogs can be asymptomatic carriers. Treatment is in the form of injectable antibiotics and electrolytes/fluids.

Faith Healer... Tony asked Jo, "How did you get on at the Faith Healer last night?"

Jo replies, "He was absolute rubbish. Even the guy in the wheelchair got up and walked out!"

The Rabbi... A man tells a rabbi, "I have a strong desire to live for eternity. What shall I do?"

"Get married," replied the rabbi.

"It's that simple? Will that allow me to live forever?"

"No, but it will get rid of the desire!"

Day 21, no one suspects a thing.



AFTER HOURS VET

Emergencies - 06 322 8058

Shop Hours - 8am to 5pm

Monday to Friday

Email - huntervillevetclub@xtra.co.nz