

## MARGINAL COBALT LEVELS??

A number of clients have carried out liver biopsies or had samples collected from dry ewes at the works in recent weeks. A theme across the results of these tests is that of lower Vitamin B12 / Cobalt levels than we would have expected. While the majority of results were lowish but adequate, in a small number of cases supplementation with cobalt or B12 was likely to be beneficial. Soil science suggests that cobalt levels will fall slowly under livestock farming systems. In our area, the initial cobalt levels were good, so we haven't encountered a lot of true deficiency to this point; however, it may be something that needs to now be watched a little more closely. It is also possible that the wet summer we experienced has had some effect on cobalt levels in grass and legumes.

Young lambs require adequate Vit B12 levels for good growth and vigour. Cobalt is the vital ingredient in the formation of Vit B12 by rumen microbes. Where cobalt levels are low or marginal, supplementation of lambs at docking time is good practice. If you have concerns about lamb growth rates (that cannot be explained by a lack of grass, milk or feed quality!), checking soil cobalt levels and / or sheep B12 levels may be warranted.

PS. For those using Bionics or Extender capsules these contain cobalt and selenium to supplement the ewes and the lambs. Some trials on capsules have suggested a bigger response to the trace element supplementation than actual parasite control where cobalt and / or selenium levels are marginal.

## IT'S CHALLENGING OUT THERE!

The continued wet weather is certainly creating some challenges on farm. Getting pre calving and lambing tasks carried out with minimal stress to man and beast is difficult!! Pasture damage, slips and fencing damage are a real problem for many. In the case of heavily in lamb, multiple bearing ewes, try to avoid any prolonged yarding. We have already had several cases of milk fever in ewes following yarding that would not generally be considered as prolonged.

Wet conditions are presenting challenges when it comes to calving and lambing. Mastitis will be a greater threat on dairy farms especially where teat seal has not been used. We can also expect to see a lot more navel ill and arthritis in lambs and calves.

In conditions like this, low magnesium levels in grass can be a big threat to both Dairy and Beef cows. Blood testing cows to assess magnesium levels should be considered for cows calving in August and September.

Let's hope the next bit of 'climate change' for August and September starts with a warm, dry spell for a month and a little wind to help dry things out!!

## CASES IDENTIFIED

Unfortunately we are now seeing cases of **Cowowna Virus**. The disease is spreading rapidly through the country. The disease has the potential to affect all owners of cows or cattle and is especially detrimental to the most efficient, productive farmers.

The cause of this disease is still somewhat unknown but has been associated with types of parasites known as politicians, bureaucrats and tree huggers. Some of whom wear greenstone around their necks.

New Zealand is the first country in the world to be identified as willingly infected with **Cowowna Virus**. It will prove to be difficult to treat the condition as it is not based on the sound scientific principles of most diseases.

At this point it appears there are few ways this affliction can be avoided or treated. Suggestions have been to sub-divide the farm and sell lifestyle blocks so people replace cows. Or continuing on as normal until a condition occurs, known as Global Warming. This is suggested to go hand in hand with **Cowowna Virus**. Then plant bananas, pineapples and coconut trees, build a hotel and turn the farm into a tropical holiday destination. 😊

## TECHNOLOGY!!!

### DEAR NEIGHBOUR TEXT MESSAGE

Hi, Morris

This is Saul, next door. I've been riddled with guilt for a few months and have been trying to get up the courage to tell you face-to-face.

When you're not around, I've been sharing your wife, day and night, probably much more than you. I haven't been getting it at home recently. I know that's no excuse. The temptation was just too great. I can't live with the guilt & hope you'll accept my sincere apology and forgive me. Please suggest a fee for usage and I'll pay you.

Morris, feeling enraged and betrayed, grabbed his gun, went next door, and shot Saul dead. He returned home, shot his wife, poured himself a stiff drink and sat down on the sofa. Morris then looked at his phone and discovered a second text message from Saul.

### SECOND TEXT MESSAGE:

Hi, Morris. Saul here again. Sorry about the typo on my last text. I assume you figured it out and noticed that the darned Spell-Check had changed "wi-fi" to "wife." Technology, huh? It'll be the death of us all...

## DAIRY FARMER SEMINAR

Thanks to those who attended our pre-calving seminar. Although it was fairly low level, there was some good discussion and a few take home messages.

1. The use of drugs such as Ketomax for pain relief and it's anti-inflammatory affect should be part of every dairy farmers treatment arsenal. The early use of anti-inflammatories has been linked to better outcomes for a wide range of conditions such as mastitis, pneumonia, lameness, downer cows, and difficult calvings.
2. A number of alternative milking regimes to traditional twice a day milkings have either been studied or are currently being trialled in NZ. The results indicate that there is not necessarily a great deal of productivity loss for some of the milking regimes that fall between once a day and twice a day milking, and better suit milkers lifestyles!! <https://www.dairynz.co.nz/news/milking-efficiency-through-extended-milking-intervals/>
3. Downer cows take time and effort and for welfare reasons cannot be neglected. If or when they can not be looked after adequately, speedy, humane euthanasia should be carried out.
4. Many downer cows are suitable candidates for the BSE Surveillance scheme. Farmers who submit cows heads for brain examination will be paid \$330 by MPI limited to 2 per farm.

A man dies and arrives in Heaven  
As he's standing at the Pearly Gates,  
he notices a huge wall of clocks  
behind St Peter.

He asked, "What are all those clocks?"

St Peter replied, "Those are lie clocks,  
every time someone tells a lie, the  
hands on their clock move."

"Oh! Whose clock is that?" He says  
pointing.>

"That's Mother Theresa's clock, it's  
hands have never moved."

"Wow! And whose clock is that?"

"That's Abraham Lincoln's clock, it's  
hands have only moved twice."

The man asks, "Where is Jacinda  
Arden's clock?"

St Peter replies, "We're using it as a  
ceiling fan"

## DRENCH SHORTAGES

Boehringer Ingelheim, formally Merial, has decided to discontinue the manufacture of certain lines of drenches and dips. This means as we start the new season we have limited supplies of some lamb drenches and dips (including things like Ivermatrix Tape, First Drench, and Cyrazin Spray-on). We will be able to source products from other companies but if you want to stick to products you know this year, please fill out the 2022 Docking Season form ASAP so we can allocate stocks we have on hand.

## VACCINATING LAMBS WITH A CLOSTRIDIAL VACCINE AT DOCKING

We often get asked as to whether it is necessary to vaccinate lambs at docking time. There is no simple answer to this question because:

1. The threat from clostridial disease like pulpy kidney is far higher on high quality pastures and specialist finishing forages (ie chicory, plantain, etc).
2. Correct pre-lamb vaccination boosts antibody levels in the ewe which are passed from the ewe to the lamb via colostrum. The amount passed depends on the correct timing of ewe vaccination, the ewe making plenty of colostrum and the lamb getting this colostrum. In a perfect world a lamb can get 12 weeks protection that takes it through to weaning.

So if you:

1. Don't get your vaccination timing right (for maximum protection it should be 2-3 weeks before the start of vaccination for ewes lambing over 2 cycles)
  2. Have high quality feeds (not brown top!) for your lambs
  3. Have unexplained or high lamb losses between docking and weaning
- vaccination at docking time may be appropriate (at 32 cents per lamb not many deaths need to be prevented to justify the expense and effort of vaccination).

## WHELPING BITCHES – WHEN TO CALL THE VET

Many of our clients breed their working dogs and are also increasingly breeding their pet dogs. It is important to have an idea about what to look out for and what to do when you think things may be going wrong.

Maiden bitches and older bitches with large litters can sometimes get low in calcium during whelping, slowing down contractions and increasing time to more than 2 hours between puppies. Having something on hand that is high in calcium is very handy; i.e. full cream ice cream or an oral calcium supplement (we do sell one here).

Active pushing for longer than 20 minutes can signify a pup may be in an awkward position that can't get through the birth canal. Green or black discharge without a pup being produced can signify the placenta is being prematurely detached.

Bitches that have pups that are born dead (especially smelly ones) or have multiple pups that die soon after birth should be checked for signs of infection in the uterus (potentially life-threatening for the bitch).

All of the situations above warrant a phone call to talk to a vet. Bitches that are happy and eating and have had live pups but may still have more pups in them can often wait to be seen in the morning.

Calling us for advice in a timely manner can save costs and sometimes even lives; getting your dog to the clinic while staff are still on site will prevent the added and significant costs of calling back vets or nurses to help with surgery if required.

## AFTER HOURS VET

**Emergencies - 06 322 8058**

**Shop Hours - 8am to 5pm**

Monday to Friday

**Email - [huntervillevetclub@xtra.co.nz](mailto:huntervillevetclub@xtra.co.nz)**