

ACCURATE DRENCHING

A rapidly growing number of clients are now faced with using Zolvix. This drench, apart from being expensive, is also a low dose product, 1ml per 10kgs. As such, it is very easy to waste drench through overdosing or worse still, under-dose if drench guns are not very accurately calibrated. This should happen each time before drenching begins and, if large numbers of lambs are to be processed, it also pays to check drench volume accuracy during the day. We have plenty of syringes etc available if you require something to measure drench volumes; just get some when you are in the clinic.

Also remember, lambs have to swallow all the drench for it to work!! Coughing and spitting drench out is a good sign of poor drenching technique. At more than \$1 per dose it pays to ensure the drench gun nozzle is over the back of the tongue before squeezing the trigger!!

WEANER TREATMENTS

Weaning and purchasing of weaners is in full swing. It is important at this time that consideration is given to animal health issues. There are a number of things to consider, in no particular order.

Drenching—weaners are generally drenched at weaning. Ideally a combination drench should be given. This may be oral (Matrix / Turbo Advance / Alliance), injectable (Turbo Injection or Eclipse E), or pour-on (Eclipse Pour-on or Boss Pour-on). The choice will depend on facilities, size and temperament of the weaners, and personal choice. All products work well if applied correctly at the correct dose.

Clostridial Vaccination—This is generally recommended for all weaners and especially weaners that will be grazing high quality pastures and crops. 10 in 1 vaccine is the best option in most cases with 2 shots given, 4 to 8 weeks apart.

Selenium Supplementation—This should be considered by most of our clients. Long acting selenium is generally the best option when they will be on the property for some time. A 4-5ml treatment will give 12 months supplementation. Don't worry if you are using an oral drench with selenium in it, the slow release nature of LA means toxicity will not be a problem.

Copper Supplementation— On many farms copper supplementation should be given. We prefer copper capsules, generally 20gm for copper treatment. In most cases we do not recommend the use of copper injections in weaners. Capsules should see copper demands met through winter and spring on most farms.

BVD Vaccination—If you are vaccinating heifer replacements with BVD vaccine, programmes can generally be started from weaning.

IT'S GETTING DRY!!!

While early rains in March were great we need a good follow up now if feed covers going into winter are close to targets. Cooler nights and dry days have generally seen spore counts drop or stay at moderate levels. If this continues for a couple more weeks we should be through an eczema challenge.

Many clients are struggling to finish lambs at acceptable weights, especially where crop options are limited or don't exist. While feed quality and availability has been part of the problem in virtually all cases we have investigated, emerging or in some cases rampant drench resistance has been identified. As we have been advising for several years now, checking how drenches are working should be part of the programme on any well managed farm.

For some, as well as incurring greater costs from having to drench with Zolvix and Startect, significant changes in farm stock policies will also be necessary. The days of solely using a drench gun to control worms have well and truly gone!

HOLIDAY MUSINGS

Once again this year I was lucky enough to be able to make the trek north for a few days fishing. This year there was even more time to dwell on the meaning of life on my trip north and home again due to a further proliferation of road cones! In fact, as you can see in the picture, it would appear road cones are now breeding progeny I have identified as 'road sticks'!!

As I dwelt on the carbon footprint of the average road cone it came to me! Woollen cones could be the saviour of the wool industry!!! They would be biodegradable, able to be dyed any colour, and on a cold day could be used by the 1000s of stop-go men / women as head, arm and foot warmers, and lunch boxes to keep their pies and drinks warm.

I also noted the further proliferation of pot holes. Some of these are now so big they must surely be classed as SNAs, and being small lakes, be eligible for possible treaty claims.

And no, just in case you want to know, I didn't catch a marlin so I can head back again next year.



TAIL DOCKING AND DEW CLAW REMOVAL

Dogs – Tail docking has been banned in NZ now for a few years and we are only allowed to remove part or all of a dog's tail if it has injured itself and there is no alternative treatment. Owners/breeders are never allowed to remove part or all of a dog's tail. It is a reportable offence.

Dew claws – Pups under 4 days old can have hind only dew claws removed if there is no bone under the skin. Over this age, by law, they are required to be done by a vet who provides pain relief. If there is any bone under the skin, dew claws are not legally allowed to be removed by a vet unless there is a medical reason to do so, i.e. they keep catching and causing pain. Removing dew claws by an owner after 4 days and especially if there is bone involved, is a reportable offence.

As vets, we are obligated to report cases of welfare breaches, and the fines for the above breaches can range from \$3000-\$15000.



TEXTING

A woman sends a text to her husband.

Wife: "Honey, don't forget to buy bread when you come home from work - and your girlfriend Valerie says hello."

Husband: "Who is Valerie?"

Wife: "Nobody, I just wanted you to answer, to have confirmation that you saw my text."

Husband: "But I'm with Valerie right now, I thought you saw me."

Wife: "What? Where are you?"

Husband: "Near the bakery."

Wife: "Wait, I'm coming right now!" After 5 minutes his wife sends a message, "I'm at the bakery, where are you."

Husband: "I'm at work. Now that you are at the bakery, buy the bread, xx"

DRENCHING BEEF COWS

I often get asked about the merits of drenching beef cows at this time of the year. In general, well fed, healthy, mature beef cows should not require drenching. Adult cattle have good immunity to worms and in line with current advice for adult sheep, drenching should be minimised where possible.

There may sometimes be benefits in drenching light cows or rising second calvers, especially if they have been mated as yearlings. Just don't overlook other things that can affect cow condition—copper, selenium, etc.

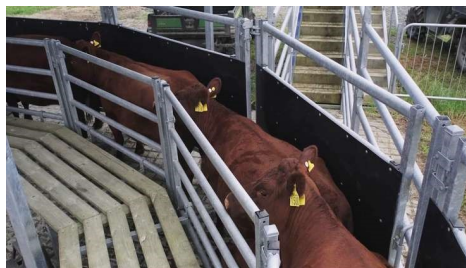
For properties where liver fluke is a threat, drenching cows to control fluke can be necessary.

NITRATE POISONING

A reminder, as you start to graze new grass paddocks and crops, to consider the risks of nitrate poisoning, especially for cattle. Recent dry conditions will have seen nitrate levels build up. Warm autumn rain could see new grasses take up a lot of nitrate and reach dangerous levels. As we have recommended in the past, if any risk exists, the best option is to run a nitrate test. Simply take a sample of the grass or crop and drop it off at the clinic for same-day testing.

REMINDER TO CHECK YARDS, WALKWAYS, ETC

We are well in to the pregnancy testing season and we have noticed a few sets of cattle yards that could do with some TLC! i.e. making cat walks less slippery, tidying up hazards that are lying around and dealing to wasps nests in the vicinity of the yards. Please check these out and fix up any problem areas BEFORE the vet comes to visit .



CULL, CULL, CULL

With dry off just around the corner, the management of high cell count cows needs addressing. As we state every autumn, the best option for high cell count cows that have a history of mastitis and treatment, is culling.

Treating these HCC cases, especially in older cows or when *Staph. aureus* has been identified as a problem, always gives disappointing results.

If you are drying off or culling cows before your autumn dairy consult, please contact the clinic with any questions you might have.

BLACKSMITHS APPRENTICE

An old blacksmith realized he was going to have to retire soon, so he picked out a strong young man to become his apprentice. The old fellow was crabby and exacting. "Don't ask me a lot of questions," he told the boy. "Just do whatever I tell you to do."

One day the old blacksmith took an iron out of the forge and laid it on the anvil. "Get the hammer over there. When I nod my head, hit it real good and hard."

The town is currently looking for a new blacksmith.

DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENTS

Just another reminder to everyone that you are now able to pay your account by direct debit. This is certainly our preferred payment option and is very easy for you. We will email out a direct debit form to everyone with an email address in our system (if that is not you and you would like one, please call the clinic and let us know). Just fill in this form and return it to us, we will take it from there. No more having to remember to pay your accounts, more time for...

AFTER HOURS VET

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