

## VACCINATING LAMBS AT DOCKING

We have had a few questions around vaccinating lambs with clostridial vaccines (Ultravac / Multine / Coglavax) at docking time.

If ewes were vaccinated at the correct time pre-lamb and made plenty of colostrum, lambs should have received sufficient antibodies from the colostrum to protect them from Pulpy Kidney and Tetanus. This protection should last through until weaning. Consequently, in most situations, vaccination at docking should not be necessary. Vaccination at weaning or at a pre-weaning drench are probably better options.

From weaning the major clostridial threat is Pulpy Kidney / Enterotoxaemia. Death from this is far more likely to occur where high quality feeds (ie clover, chicory, plantains, new grasses, and brassicas) are fed to lambs. Where these types of feeds are likely to be fed having lambs vaccinated is good practice.

Pre-weaning vaccinations will mean lambs are protected from prior to weaning. If you vaccinate at weaning there will be a period of time after weaning, before protection kicks in. You really have to make decisions based on your farm's previous history with the timing of clostridial deaths and past vaccine use.

Remember also that although 1 shot of vaccine will confer some protection, a second booster shot is required 4 weeks later to ensure full protection.



## WHO NEEDS A WINTER HOLIDAY??

I'm starting to like this global warming gig, if the last 2 months are anything to go by!! Sunny days and the odd shower of rain have seen what must almost be record grass growth for July. Some cockies must be thinking along similar lines given current prices for store stock! It must be among the fastest rise in prices for a long time. We can only hope things hold up as we head toward times of higher stock flow and availability.

I observed an unusual sight last week. A plane putting on fertiliser!! Many farmers have deferred or radically reduced fertiliser expenditure in the last 18 months. While grass may continue to tick over in the short term, especially where the weather plays ball, repeating the 'cost cutting measure' next year will result in significant reductions in the quality and quantity of grass grown and productivity will decline. Hill country farms need fertiliser and most need at least \$7.00 / kg for lambs or \$6.00 / kg for beef to make budgets work so fertiliser can be applied and paid for! 2024 / 2025 must be better than 2023 / 2024 for this to happen!

## THANKS

To all those (over 100!) who attended our parasite / drench resistance field-day. We probably created more questions than answers but the way things are moving in the drench resistance space it is something that all farmers should be aware of and questioning how to deal with the problem.

As we summarised on the day, there is no one answer that fits all properties. But you do need to know your current drench status and have a basic understanding of worm life cycles and the concept of 'good refugia'.

Videos of the presentations can be viewed via our Facebook page and have been emailed to all of our members. A summary of the days points will be made available and sent out in the same way in the near future.

## NEW PURCHASES

Unfortunately, some of our equipment has had to have an upgrade. Like some of the staff, this equipment has been here since the dark ages!

Sadly, we have had to retire our ancient x-ray machine as the technicians are now unable to get parts for it when it breaks down.

We have also replaced one of our autoclaves (these sterilise our surgical equipment) as it has an unrepairable fault. We needed to get two autoclaves to keep up with the increased demand for surgeries here in Hunterville.

These pieces of equipment aren't cheap so luckily we don't have to replace them often. The added running costs may be reflected in some of your invoices, although, as it is spread across our many loyal members and account holders, this will be minimal.



## THE DIAGNOSIS

A patient was anxious after a prolonged bedside discussion by a team of hospital doctors. The head doctor came over to see him. "There must be a lot of doubt about what is wrong with me," the patient told the doctor.

"Where did you get that idea?" the doctor replied.

"All the other doctors disagreed with you, didn't they?"

"To some extent, but don't worry," said the doctor consolingly, "in a similar case I stood firm on my diagnosis - and the post mortem proved me right."

## NO GOOD FOR DOGS (OR CATS)

Many milk powders and meals formulated for calves and lambs contain a coccidiostat. Compounds aimed at preventing coccidiosis in young animals. Unfortunately they are toxic to dogs and cats. Hungry dogs and most Labradors are more than happy to clean up milk or meal that they can access!!

Ensure your dogs don't get access to a feed containing coccidiostat. Symptoms of poisoning may include vomiting, diarrhoea, loss of appetite, and in some cases, neurological signs (tremors, seizures, etc).

If, despite your efforts, you are concerned dogs have managed to eat milk or meal or are showing symptoms consistent with poisoning, contact the clinic immediately as early intervention will improve the chances of full recovery.

## LOW MAG AND DEATHS IN BEEF COWS

We recently dealt with an unusual situation where a client had 2 beef cows die suddenly. These cows were a good 8 weeks from calving but the nature of the sudden deaths of these cows suggested low magnesium / grass staggers could be a possibility. Blood tests of older cows revealed low magnesium levels. A decision was made to treat older cows with magnesium boluses.

This case highlights the seasonal variation that can occur with magnesium. The property concerned had not experienced this problem before. Where beef cows are calving in August and September, or if problems with magnesium have been encountered in the past, checking the magnesium status of beef cows can be warranted. Blood testing 6-10 cows will give a good indication of magnesium status. Where levels are found to be low supplementation options to address the problem can be considered.

## AVOID THOSE EFFLUENT PADDOCKS

Most years we will deal with a 'metabolic' incident where someone lets in-calf cows or fresh calved cows graze the effluent paddocks!! If at all possible this situation should always be avoided. Effluent paddocks will be high in K or N, both of which have the potential to cause real problems in cows around calving.

So ensure everyone knows the grazing plan especially when it comes to effluent paddocks!!

## 4 TO 6 WEEK POST-CALVING CHECKS

Most dairy farms will have cows calved for 4 weeks or more in August.

Don't forget to consider checking the mineral and energy status of your cows to ensure the herd is not facing challenges that will limit milk production and reproductive performance as the season progresses.

Book in testing if required.



## SCOURING WEANERS

In the last month we have dealt with 2 cases of scouring weaner cattle that the owner initially put down to worms despite drenching. In these cases the scouring was actually due to **Yersiniosis**. This is a bacterial disease more commonly seen in young deer that can also cause enteritis and scouring in young cattle. In cattle deaths can occur but fortunately affected animals respond rapidly to appropriate antibiotic therapy. The disease is highly infectious.

Yersiniosis can also affect humans so handle suspected cases with caution and maintain good hygiene.

If you notice sudden scouring and weight loss in weaner cattle, Yersiniosis is worth considering. Contact the clinic to discuss your options.

## STONE BRUISE / WHITE LINE INFECTIONS IN HORSES

Winter and spring are common times to get lameness in horses. Mud and wet conditions tend to be the cause of the problem. Not really the conditions we have been experiencing to date this winter but we have still dealt with a number of lame horses.

Stone bruises and white line issues need to be treated by opening up and draining the foot over the affected area. Just giving the horse antibiotics will not solve the problem. In many cases where the problem is addressed relatively early and correctly, antibiotics will not be necessary if good drainage of the abscess / bruise is achieved. Once drained the foot should be bathed with Epsom Salts once or twice a day to draw out the infection. Between bathings, the drainage hole can be plugged with cotton wool soaked in iodine. Foot abscesses are a great environment for the clostridial organism that causes tetanus so it is important your horse is protected with vaccination or antitoxin.

## LEVITICUS CHAPTER 28

A preacher is coming to the end of his sermon and he tells the congregation, "In preparation for next week's sermon, everybody please read Leviticus chapter 28."

Next week when everybody comes in the preacher follows up, "Now who read Leviticus chapter 28?" Almost everybody raises their hands. The preacher says, "Okay, good. There is no Leviticus chapter 28. I'd like to begin my sermon on lying."

## 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)**