



Speaking of evil fairies ...

### Arithmetic

Brian went to a job interview. The interviewer noted that he had put on his CV that he was very quick at mental arithmetic. "What's nineteen multiplied by seventeen?" the interviewer asked.

Quick as a flash Brian replied, "Thirty-four." "That's wrong," the interviewer said. "But it was very quick," Brian pointed out.



The breakup with Miss Piggy went bad ...



**WHY DID THE BULLET  
LOSE ITS JOB?  
IT GOT FIRED.**

### Mid Winter Politics!

During June I attended the Veterinary Club conference in Wellington with some of the directors. It was encouraging to hear a series of MPs / politicians talking the talk when it came to the importance of agriculture in the NZ economy. They highlighted the necessity to remove red tape and restrictions that impinge on a farmer's ability to do what they do well. Let's hope they can walk the walk and have more than 3 years to do it! Not something you can bet on when an evil fairy princess is voted the most preferred prime minister.

There was also discussion around the rapid growth of corporate vet practices in NZ. This is a world wide trend. In Britian there is growing concern and this issue is being looked at by their commerce commission. In the last 8 years veterinary fees have increased by 60%, 6 times the rate of inflation for the period (while veterinary salaries have been in line with inflation!).

For NZ farmers, this should be an issue of real concern. Our club remaining a strong and viable business will be a very valuable asset to our farmer members and their business going forward.

### Pre-Lamb Treatments

At this time of the year we field a lot of questions around possible pre-lamb treatments, their benefits and timing. The following are a few brief comments related to this area.

#### Pre-Lamb Vaccination

Ideally this should be carried out 2-3 weeks prior to lambing. If you have your ewes in cycles, you can extend out to 4 weeks if you have to. Vaccination at this stage gives enough time to ensure the ewe responds to vaccination and produces colostrum full of antibodies to pass to her lambs. If you vaccinate too early, antibody levels in colostrum start to fall again.

#### 1ml Hideject Injection

When given to multiple bearing, older ewes (4yrs plus) this treatment can improve ewe and lamb survival by improving the calcium status of the ewe and preventing sub clinical milk fever around lambing. Sub clinical milk fever can interfere with the ewes appetite and ability to graze, muscle strength and ability to lamb freely and quickly.

#### Iodine Treatment

A lack of iodine has been associated with increased lamb deaths around lambing. Iodine deficiency is often worse in dry winters as ewes get more iodine from soil ingestion than actual grass (plants don't need iodine). Over the years we have seen the odd case of iodine deficiency but it doesn't appear to be a widespread issue.

However, if you graze ewes or hoggets on winter brassica crops iodine deficiency can be induced by goitrogens in the crop that interfere with iodine metabolism. We recommend pregnant ewes / hoggets on brassica crops are treated with iodine onto and off the crop.

#### LSD and Other Lamb Survival Drenches

There are a number of these products on the market with limited data on their benefits. If they contain minerals such as iodine, selenium, cobalt or vitamin D and E, they may be of some merit. LSD does contain some of these and we have had anecdotal reports of good responses where it has been used.

#### Copper Treatment

Generally this should have been done earlier in the winter if copper deficiency is a problem however if your ewes are copper deficient, giving copper injection pre-lamb can still be warranted. Contact the clinic for specific advice for your situation.

#### Multimin Injection

This product has been around for some time for cattle. It contains selenium, zinc, cobalt, and copper. There are trials that demonstrate increased lamb survival and growth rates and increased ewe weaning weights when it is used pre-lamb.

## Calving Time

A couple of weeks to go before things crank up on the dairy farm. It is a good time to check your calving gear. Check calving jacks are working and clean. Ensure calving ropes, chains and handles are all clean and disinfected. Each year we see post calving infections in cows that can be attributed to poor hygiene practice at calving. Make sure you have disinfectant at your calving bail. A screw topped container with disinfectant in it is a good idea for ropes, handles and chains.

It is also useful to have a kit on hand to ensure things get done as efficiently as possible. This should contain syringes, needles, oxytocin, pain relief (such as Ketomax), antibiotic and metabolic treatments.

## Lice Treatment On Long Woolled Sheep

This is a problem that pops up at this time of the year. The simple solution is to shear them and treat with a lice pour-on / spray treatment off-shears. Where this is not an option a limited number of dips can be considered. **Zapp Encore** generally works well in sheep with up to 6 months wool. It does have a 56 day meat withhold though.



### Flexolt

This is a completely new type of lice treatment. Sheep are drenched with the product. It is highly effective but expensive at approximately \$4.00 an animal (unless you are a merino farmer).

## Post Whelping Infections

The vast majority of bitches will whelp and raise pups without any issues; however, sometimes things can go awry. One of the more common problems we see is called metritis. This is an infection within the uterus. Signs you may see are a vaginal discharge that doesn't look like the usual reddy / brown discharge normal after whelping. It may be a little smelly, but not always. Your bitch may or may not show signs of illness such as lethargy and going off food. Another sign is pup death. If you have more than one pup die in the days to weeks after whelping, it can be due to an infection.

We can diagnose this with an ultrasound scan of her uterus and also looking at cells down the microscope. Left untreated, it is possible for a whole litter to die off or the bitch to get very unwell, requiring emergency surgery to spey her. As with any medical issue, early intervention often produces the most favourable outcomes!



## Magnesium Supplementation

All dairy farmers are aware that magnesium supplementation is an essential part of pre-calving cow management. Just a reminder not to over do things as too much magnesium can also cause problems. The recommended rate for magnesium oxide is around 50 to 80gms per day if dusting and 30gms per day in feed.

If you are using mag sulphate or mag chloride in the water, cows can require up to 200gms per day. These levels can be difficult to achieve with the above only, so you may well need to use mag oxide also.

A reminder to consider taking pre-calving blood samples from your cows. This is the best way of assessing the magnesium status of your cows and can also be used to check other minerals and vitamins such as phosphorous, selenium and vit B12.

Where grass staggers has been a problem in beef cows, pre-calving magnesium blood tests can also be very useful in determining if magnesium supplementation is necessary.

## Bad News

Bloat capsules will not be available this year. Just what you want to hear when you have \$2500 plus steers and a paddock of clover!!

Unfortunately these capsules are produced by a multinational company very much focused on their bottom line. Basically they don't see enough capsules being sold to warrant production. Although they do claim they are worried about poisoning dogs, I haven't seen a case of poisoning. Maybe we should stop producing slug baits as well.

If this situation causes you nightmares please give us a call to discuss other possible options.

At a wedding ceremony the pastor asked if anyone had anything to say concerning the union of the bride and groom, as it was their time to stand up and talk, or forever hold their peace. The moment of utter silence was broken by a young beautiful woman carrying a child. She started walking toward the pastor slowly. Everything quickly turned to chaos. The bride slapped the groom. The groom's mother fainted. The groomsmen started giving each other looks and wondering how best to help save the situation. Flustered, the pastor asked the woman, "Can you tell us why you came forward?". The young woman replied, "We can't hear at the back."

## 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)**