



HVC
YOUR CLUB

Oct 25

Salmonella Outbreaks

MPI has contacted us in recent weeks informing us of what appears to be a significant increase in the number of farms having Salmonella outbreaks in the lower North Island. They do not know the reason for this and are interested in following up on any new outbreaks.

Worryingly, some of the Taranaki cases are caused by Salmonella Brandenburg. This strain of Salmonella has been responsible for the serious abortion outbreaks in sheep seen in the South Island.

Fortunately a large portion of our dairy herds and sheep flocks are vaccinated against Salmonella. If you don't vaccinate it may be worthwhile asking the question, why not?? With the current value of our dairy cows and ewes to me it seems a bit of a no brainer!

Grass Staggers In Sheep

This problem seems to be about at present. As with cattle, magnesium deficiency in ewes (normally ewes that are milking well with cracking twins on them) will result in neurological symptoms, staggers, excitement, collapse and death.

If you have good ewes die for 'no reason' it could well be staggers. Often the ewes will struggle and kick before death which may be evident from the state of the ground around the ewe.

Magnesium levels in grass at this time of the year are lowered by cloudy, overcast days especially where grass is short and growing. Ewes will respond to treatment with magnesium if found in time.

The problem can be confirmed by blood testing affected ewes or 8-10 ewes from the flock for magnesium levels.

Is There Any Common Sense Out There or Just Nonsense?

I'm not sure where NZ is heading but this week I'm pretty sure it's not in the right direction! As many of you are probably aware, the Club is building a shed for storage. The idea was that this shed would also be used by the Shemozzle as well rather than spending \$15,000 on a marquee, and possibly for other local events.

Evidently if you let people into your shed it becomes a commercial building and so the building must be built to level 2 standard! This will stop people being injured or killed if it suddenly fell down! Fortunately it appears that our shed, for minimal cost, could be made level 2 compliant.

But it gets worse! I pick up the paper and read that Mount Taranaki, being a 'living entity', is taking court action against the consortium wanting to take iron sand from the seabed off Taranaki. As some of you might be aware, I quite like fishing and I'm not too keen on this mining but I don't need a mountain or river taking court action for me.

No doubt the Whanganui River will be backing up the mountain. And guess who will be paying for all this nonsense?

I could go on, 5 million spent on monuments on the Saddle Road. But what's the point? Don't worry, be happy the prices for meat and milk are great, and even wool is showing signs of life. (More life than a mountain anyway!)

Opened Vaccines

We have had reports in recent weeks of cases of calf deaths following vaccination using vaccine that had been opened for several months. At this point the thinking is that after being opened the vaccine had been contaminated and over time, despite being fridge stored, had suffered from a bacterial / fungal growth resulting in toxins being produced that caused calf deaths.

Whatever the case, the important points to note are:

- Always treat vaccines hygienically and use new or cleaned and disinfected vaccinators.
- Do not squirt vaccine back into the pack if you take the gun off. It is best not to take the gun off at all.
- Always keep vaccines cool while in use or refrigerate between use.
- Do not use vaccines that have been opened for prolonged periods. (Some vaccines are coming out with shelf lives of only 4 days after they have been opened.)

Velvet Audits

It is that time of the year again when registered velveters will need to get their velvet audit done. Just a reminder that although, as veterinarians, we are not responsible for requirements around the Regulated Control Scheme for Velvet Harvest, we are aware that premises must be:

- Clean and tidy
- Have an identified clean zone and a shed map indicating these clean zones
- Have systems to store velvet hygienically
- Have velvet freezers that are for velvet only and freeze to a temperature of -15

We have been requested by NVSB to work with farmers to ensure things are up to scratch. Random audits without notice can occur so it is essential facilities are up to scratch at all times.

Bloat's About

With bullocks worth \$3000 and yearlings \$1500 plus, dealing with a bloat threat is the sort of nightmare you don't want! As we mentioned in a newsletter some time ago, the company selling bloat capsules, in it's wisdom, decided to take them off the market. This has left a huge hole in our ability to combat bloat, especially where water treatment with bloat oil is not a practical option!

A cold Autumn and September with plenty of frosts has kept grass covers short and allowed clover to develop very nicely in the sward so it looks like it is going to be a good clover year running up to Christmas. Unfortunately along with great growth rates from clover containing swards comes a greatly increased chance of bloat. We have already had reports of several bloat deaths.

So what are the options for controlling and avoiding bloat in the coming months? In many cases control will involve more than one of these.

1. Treating water systems / troughs with bloat oil. This will work where cattle drink predominantly trough water and the water has the correct amount of bloat oil in it. Peta Dispensers can be used to treat individual water troughs.
2. Grazing ewes and lambs under cattle or ahead of the cattle to reduce clover content, as sheep will selectively graze the clover.
3. Feeding some roughage, hay / silage, to keep rumens full and reduce gorging. Gorging is most likely to occur when stock are shifted or cold sou'westers blow accompanied by rain and cattle 'park up', empty out, and then graze heavily when the sun comes out.
4. Keep cattle full at all times—don't chew out areas and then move to high covers of good quality feed.
5. If you are lucky enough to have an in-line dispenser in your water system, Rumensin can also be used to aid bloat protection.
6. Avoid clover dominant paddocks, especially with older cattle which tend to bloat more severely and are worth a lot more!
7. Sell the cattle and make silage! Before bloat capsules came along I encountered situations where this was the best option. At least farmers could sleep at night!

Don't Forget

If you have used drench capsules or long acting injection this Spring it really is essential that you take faecal samples from treated ewes to assess how well the treatments are working. As everyone is aware, drench resistance is rife out there. Continuing to use capsules or injection that have reduced efficacy is an excellent way of speeding resistance development from a low grade to a full grown problem.

When it comes to faecal egg counts in ewes at this time of the year we would encourage you to assess the status of untreated ewes also. Information around how your untreated ewes are performing in the worm space is very useful when it comes to making future decisions around ewe management and genetic (ram) selection.

Dust to Dust

A little boy came downstairs crying late one night. "What's wrong?" asked his mother.

"Do people really come from dust, like they said in church?" he sobbed.

"In a way they do," said his mother.

"And when they die, they turn back to dust?"

"Yes, they do."

The little boy began to cry again. "Well, under my bed there's someone either coming or going."



A Good Turn Out

Thanks to our dairy farming members who attended our recent dairy seminar. For those unable to attend some of the take home messages were:

- ◆ There are a great gains to be made in growing young replacements out properly and meeting target liveweights for all animals. To achieve this you must focus on the bottom end.
- ◆ Focussing on the bottom end starts from now. Your smallest weaners are already behind the eight ball.
- ◆ Have sufficient weaners to be able to select from and cull a few if necessary.
- ◆ Heifers calving above target liveweights:
 - Produce more milk.
 - Get in calf earlier as 2nd calvers.
 - Stay in the herd longer.
- ◆ Subclinical acidosis can be a problem on high quality pastures. Where this occurs the use of yeasts and other rumen modifiers can improve cow health, reproduction and milk volumes.
- ◆ Trials with **Multimin Injection** 4 weeks pre-mating have shown consistent benefits in conception rates and in-calf rates moving the mean calving date forward. The benefits from using Multimin have been calculated to result in a return on an invest of up to 500%.



AFTER HOURS VET

Emergencies - 06 322 8058

Shop Hours - 8am to 5pm

Monday to Friday

Email - huntervillevetclub@xtra.co.nz