

Autumn Action on Dairy Farms

- There is plenty of feed about but dry off is not that far away. It is time to assess cow condition and begin making plans to dry off lighter cows to ensure they calve in good condition. Cosmin can assist with condition scoring herds.
- It really has been a pretty good summer for grass growth. If you have fed less supplementary feed this year there may be changes in the mineral status of your herd. Make a plan to check copper, selenium, Vitamin B12 and magnesium levels with blood tests and liver samples. We can do on farm liver biopsies or arrange for liver samples to be taken at the works from cull cows.
- Weigh replacement stock to ensure they are on track and meeting target live weights. Don't forget their mineral requirements.
- Drench resistance isn't just a problem on sheep farms, consider getting a Faecal Egg Count done 10 days after you drench your weaners. If your drench is working properly all counts should be zero!
- Plan your dry off vaccination programmes so all cows get their boosters for leptospirosis, salmonella, and calf scours at the correct time.



What Goes Up, Must Come Down!!

Given the current prices being paid for livestock on a grass market, there must be plenty of folks out there thinking this old adage doesn't apply to our current situation!

I have seen rising 2 yr old steers sold for \$300 or \$400 more than their carcass value, that's a lot of kgs to put on to get back in the black!

In times like this it pays to focus on the engine room of your business, your ewe flocks and cow herds. Light breeding stock and your replacements should be the number one priority. With current store lamb prices, like steers, significant live weight has to be put on lambs to achieve the same value at slaughter! Selling store lambs, despite how much grass you might have, is a great option for many

While the current situation is great, don't get too caught up in the hype. Good farm management and sticking to what has worked well in the past is a great option in the present scenario.

Tree Threats

After the recent winds there are trees down all over the place. While the majority of these trees, which seem to be gums and poplars, present little risk to stock health, there are some trees that are a threat.

These include macrocarpas and pines. While good at damaging fences they can also damage cow foetuses! While cows do not always abort after ingesting pine and macrocarpa, the chances can be high. Cows are more likely to eat needles and branches when they are hungry (ie winter). Dead and live material can both cause abortions. Minimise or ideally prevent cow access to fallen pines or macrocarpa.

Branches and leaves from ngaio trees are extremely toxic causing severe liver damage. I have seen 7 dead bullocks in a paddock where a ngaio came down!

Kowhai has caused cattle to go down on rare occasions over the years.

Yew trees are the most toxic of the lot. Fortunately yew trees are not common, found mainly in gardens and ironically lots of church grounds and cemeteries.

There are many other trees with varying levels of toxicity. If you have a tree down that you are unsure about, identify what it is and ask AI, or maybe a vet??

Lots of Grass, Little Selenium

One of the draw backs of strong summer grass growth such as we are currently experiencing, can be low selenium levels in grass which will result in low selenium levels in stock.

Most of our area is recognised as having low or marginal selenium levels, especially for young stock.

Adequate selenium is critical for good growth rates in young stock and good fertility in breeding flocks / herds.

With tupping about to happen it is critical ewes have an adequate selenium status. With less pre-tup drenching taking place, un-drenched ewes don't receive a selenised drench as a source of selenium supplementation.

If you don't know your ewe flock selenium status it is not too late to get some blood tests done and where low selenium levels are found, come up with a supplementation programme. This could be drenching with selenium and water or Healthy Ewe High Selenium.

Longer term, the use of long acting selenium injection or addition of selenium prills in fertiliser can be considered.

NB. This article is mainly related to ewe flocks. The selenium status of weaner cattle should also be considered. Low selenium levels will significantly reduce weaner liveweight gains. Not what you want given their current values!

Diarrhoea In Puppies

Diarrhoea is a common problem in our young 4 legged friends so it can be hard to tell when they need a vet visit.

The causes are varied, most commonly it is caused by a sudden change in diet (either by yourself or the pup eating something it shouldn't). If your pup hasn't had a regular de-worming schedule, this can also be a cause for diarrhoea. Stress is also a cause for loose poos so having a change of environment could cause this to occur.

More concerning causes of diarrhoea (especially in pups less than 3 months of age) are parvo, campylobacter, coccidia, salmonella and E.coli. Pups can get sick from raw meat the same as we can.

Make sure puppies have their first parvo vaccine by 8 weeks of age and a booster at 12 weeks. In young puppies, diarrhoea can kill quickly if dehydration is occurring (the pup isn't replacing all the lost fluids via eating and drinking); especially if the pup is vomiting as well. Occasionally diarrhoea can have a few red streaks of fresh blood but if you are seeing any blood in quantities more than this they should be checked asap.

We have seen multiple cases of parvo, some fatal, recently. So please ensure pups are fully vaccinated. If you are unsure we can give a booster at any age.

If you have any concerns please phone and talk to a vet!

New Calf Scour Vaccine

It would be pretty hard to have missed the advertising in Dairy publications for ***Bovilis Cryptium*** a new vaccine for the control of *Cryptosporidium* in calves. *Cryptosporidium* is the most common form of calf scours in dairy calves and while it is often not as severe as Rotovirus it is a real problem! ***Bovilis Cryptium*** vaccination program will be similar to those for Rotovirus vaccination programmes.

Despite the advertising we have not actually received the vaccine pricing and specific details yet. Given the potential value of 4 day old calves ***Bovilis Cryptium*** should have a place on many dairy farms.

By the time you get this newsletter we should have full details about the vaccine so give the clinic a call if you would like to discuss its use. We will also be able to give you information at your dry cow consult.



Mould and Dogs

Dogs, as everyone knows are great scavengers and love to eat mouldy and rank things they find on the farm, in the garden or on the side of the road. Unfortunately, mouldy food can produce mycotoxins that can cause agitation, vomiting, diarrhoea, tremors, stiffness, ataxia (uncoordinated movement), hyperthermia, and seizures.

Signs can come on quickly, sometimes within minutes. Diagnosis is based on suspicion of your dog eating something and a vet inducing vomiting. Usually the vomit contains foul smelling and mouldy food.

We treat with supportive care and reducing tremors with diazepam. Death is uncommon but dogs can aspirate vomit which can cause a secondary lung infection.



10 Day Drench Checks

In recent weeks we have carried out numerous 10 day post drench FECs to check how well triple drenches are working. **Over 90%** of these tests have highlighted resistance issues and the recommendation in many cases has been to change the drench to either Zolvix or Startect. If this change is not made, resistant worm numbers will continue to build resulting in serious autumn worm challenges and the continued selection of worms with resistant genetics.

If you have not carried out a 10 day post drench FEC ***we strongly recommend you do***. While it is generally agreed it is almost impossible to eradicate resistant worms once they have become established, good worm management going forward can slow resistance development and improve the situation on farm.



AFTER HOURS VET

Emergencies - 06 322 8058

Shop Hours - 8am to 5pm

Monday to Friday

Email - huntervillevetclub@xtra.co.nz