

Annual Dairy Seminar

16th of July, 10am
Rangatira Golf Club

RSVP to the Vet Club for catering
purposes

ALL WELCOME

Missing Lead

Have you seen our missing lead???
Please call the clinic if you have
taken your dog home from here and
ended up with an extra lead. We
would love to have it back.



Winter Has Arrived

Winter has certainly made its presence known, with cold temperatures, plenty of wind and the rain reminding us that the warmer months are well behind us. Hopefully we'll see some decent snow on the Mountain soon for the skiers amongst us!

We've been fortunate to have had a kind autumn, with reasonable pasture growth across most areas. Overall, stock have generally come through autumn and the start of winter in good condition. As we move further into winter, attention now turns to managing stocking rates, maintaining pasture covers, and making sure there is enough feed to carry stock through until spring. Planning ahead now will make those last few weeks of winter much easier.

Pre-Lamb Treatments

The time has come around quickly, and it's once again time to start thinking about pre-lamb treatments. If you haven't already received your pre-lamb order form and returned it to us, please contact the clinic to request a copy.

Some important considerations include:

- **Clostridial vaccination** - Administering vaccines 2–4 weeks before lambing provides good antibody levels in the colostrum, helping to protect newborn lambs during their first few weeks of life.
- **Selenium supplementation** - We continue to diagnose selenium deficiency throughout our region, so it's well worth considering supplementation where appropriate.
- **Vitamin A, D & E** - This can be beneficial, particularly in older ewes and multiple-bearing ewes, to help reduce the risk of metabolic issues such as low calcium and may also assist in the management of bearings. It also improves lamb survival in older ewes.
- **Drenching** - Long-acting drenches (capsules, injection and oral drenches) can be included on your pre-lamb order form, and I encourage you to have a conversation with one of our vets first. We'll help determine whether they're the right option for your farm and discuss the best parasite management strategy to suit your system.

Winter Wellness For Your Dogs

It's a good time to think about checking your dog kennels for draughts and leaks. Dogs hold weight a lot better when they aren't burning unnecessary calories trying to stay warm overnight. Dog jackets can be a good investment if your dog doesn't like having a bed in their kennel. Kennel sores and fluid filled swellings over the elbows can be prevented by providing some kind of bedding for your dog. Older, arthritic dogs also do better if they are kept warmer. Those stiff aching joints suffer a lot on frosty nights and mornings ...I'm sure a lot of our members can relate to this!

This is also a good time to think about filling up your bait stations for rat control. Make sure your bait stations are well away from your dogs and the bait isn't able to be removed and dragged back to a rat nest as this is a good way for dogs to get hold of it and be poisoned.

Rats can spread leptospirosis to dogs so if they aren't vaccinated for leptospirosis, now is a good time to think about getting them done. We do see a few cases a year around here and it can be fatal.

We can provide relief in the way of pharmaceutical drugs to help those stiff arthritic dogs too. Make an appointment with one of our vets to see what we can do to help.



Nitrate Poisoning-Know the Signs, Act Fast

Nitrate poisoning can happen when cows graze pasture or crops with high nitrate levels. The risk is highest in late autumn and winter, or after rain following a dry spell. In the rumen, nitrate is converted to nitrite, which stops the blood from carrying oxygen properly. Affected cows can go down and die very quickly.

Watch for these signs (often within 1–2 hours of starting a new break):

- Staggering or looking "drunk"
- Muscle tremors or weakness
- Fast or difficult breathing
- Excessive drooling or frothing
- Blue or chocolate-brown gums
- Several cows affected at once, with sudden deaths possible

If cows are showing signs:

- Call your vet immediately and let them know how many animals are affected.
- Move any cows that can still walk off the suspect paddock.
- Your vet may treat affected animals with intravenous methylene blue.

Reduce the Risk

- **Test suspect feed** – bring us a pasture or crop sample and we can provide same-day nitrate test results.
- **Don't put hungry cows onto high-risk feed.** Fill them up with hay or silage first.
- **Check cows 1–2 hours after starting a new break**, and continue monitoring after each new break. Problems can sometimes appear on the third or fourth break.
- **Graze high-risk crops later in the afternoon**, as nitrate levels are often lower after a sunny day.

Early action can save lives. If you're concerned about nitrate levels in your feed, contact us before grazing.

Possum Bait Poisoning In A Dog

When the council load up bait stations for possum control, one of the poisons they use is called Brodifacoum. This is an anticoagulant (prevents blood from clotting) and is also used in rat bait.

We had a dog recently who had a haematoma behind her eye, causing the eye to bulge forwards. The dog also had a hacking but non-productive cough. Once the swelling behind the eye had been ruled out as an abscess, and an xray of her lungs revealed a pattern consistent with bleeding into the lungs, she was started on vitamin K (the antidote for brodifacoum). The lab confirmed a toxicity and she improved quickly on the medication.

It is thought she accessed the poison by eating a dead possum, which can carry undigested bait in its stomach.

Possum bait stations may also contain cholecalciferol, which will kill animals by causing heart or kidney failure. Cyanide is another, this prevents oxygen from getting to the brain and a lethal dose will kill in about 15 minutes.

Any concerns about your dog eating any type of bait should be addressed by a vet as soon as it happens as we can make them vomit it up. This is only effective if the poison was ingested less than 6 hours ago.

Autumn and Winter Lamb Management

A common trend we're seeing is more lambs being retained over the autumn and winter period. While this provides a valuable source of income during the quieter months, it also creates additional parasite challenges.

Finishing lambs grazing "lamb pasture" are often exposed to much higher larval burdens, meaning FECs tend to rise more quickly and drenches may be required at shorter intervals. In contrast, lambs grazing hill country or following ewes generally continue to have much lower parasite burdens. This has been particularly noticeable in replacement ewe lambs, where close monitoring has allowed many farmers to safely extend drench intervals and reduce unnecessary drench use.

By this stage, the 2025 spring-born lambs should be developing immunity to internal parasites. Even six weeks after drenching, many lambs may still have low FECs and not require immediate treatment. FECs remain one of the most valuable tools for making informed drenching decisions. Rather than drenching by the calendar, we recommend monitoring worm burdens with regular FECs and, when treatment is required, following up with a 10-day post-drench check to ensure the product has been effective. This approach helps preserve drench efficacy while ensuring lamb performance isn't compromised.

AFTER HOURS VET

Emergencies - 06 322 8058

Shop Hours - 8am to 5pm

Monday to Friday

Email - huntervillevetclub@xtra.co.nz