

HVC YOUR CLUB

Aug 2026

Calf Meal Caution

Calf rearing is in full swing and it is a good time to remind calf rearers about the risks of dogs eating calf meal. Although it might taste good to dogs, most calf meals contain ionophores (Bovatec and Rumemisin) that are toxic to monogastric animals which includes dogs!

Signs of poisoning are loss of appetite, drooling, weakness and staggering gait, and, in extreme cases, death!

Don't allow your dogs access to calf meal at any time. If you suspect your dog may have eaten calf meal observe it closely and call the clinic immediately if you note any of the symptoms mentioned above.



**DOGS CAN'T
OPERATE
AN MRI**

**BUT
CATSCAN.**



Spring Is Coming!

Farming in our neck of the woods appears to be heading towards spring in a very good space with virtually all the stars aligned. I got back from overseas early July and was pleasantly surprised by the grass growth through June and the resultant feed covers.

Reports coming in are that scanning percentages have been very good with low numbers of dry ewes and in-lamb ewes in good condition.

Demand for all classes of stock is extremely strong although there has been some recent reductions in dairy payments.

For what it is worth, some overseas observations:

Wherever I was people were complaining about the cost of living crisis, so we haven't got that to ourselves, it didn't stop people with money from spending it!

It was impossible to buy a decent meal of beef or lamb for under NZ\$50 and people were happy to pay up.

When you lie on your back and look up into the Mediterranean sky, there are vapor trails as far as the eye can see which leads to the question, who actually wants to save the planet! We flew on one relatively new airline in Europe that has 286 planes.

The Blue Mosque could do with a new carpet and I thought it would be great advertising for the wool industry to donate one to it! Millions of people would walk over it every year and a few more pray on it!

There are too many people in the world and London is an unbearable place on a hot day unless you find a shady spot.

Farming is a tough gig the world over. We are lucky to farm in NZ. But it is essential we protect what we have and not get clobbered by the ideologies and policies that are wrecking agriculture in other parts of the world!

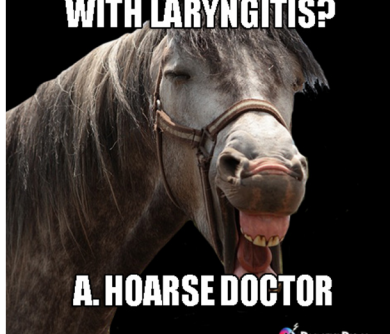
Mineral Levels in Calving Cows

The first cows have now calved on many dairy farms. If you have had any issues with metabolic disease in these cows, now is the time to check things out, especially if you have not run pre-calving blood tests.

It is critical to check that pre-calving magnesium supplementation has been effective in ensuring good magnesium levels. At the same time phosphorous and calcium levels can also be assessed. Changes in cow wintering policies from previous seasons can lead to good or bad results when it comes to mineral status.

Whatever the results of blood tests it is not too late to tweak cow management and mineral supplementation to correct things for the rest of the herd.

**Q. WHAT DO YOU CALL
A VETERINARIAN
WITH LARYNGITIS?**



A. HOARSE DOCTOR

**DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE CAT THAT
WENT TO THE DOCTOR?**

IT WASN'T FELINE WELL



Iodine in Sheep

Iodine is an essential element for all mammals. New Zealand has marginal soil iodine levels hence the use of iodised salt for human supplementation!

When it comes to sheep, iodine deficiency can cause issues with lamb survival and low birth weights. Deficiency is most commonly seen where pregnant ewes graze brassica crops. These crops contain goitrogens which interfere with iodine availability. Supplementing pregnant ewes with iodine when grazing brassicas has been our standard recommendation for many years. Two drenches are generally recommended - one onto, and one off the crop.

But it's not just on crops that problems occur though. On occasions iodine deficiency can occur due to a lack of iodine in the sheep's diet. Plants do not require iodine for growth and levels in NZ grass can often be marginal. Soil / mud can contain more iodine than plant material so a good wet winter with plenty of mud for ewes on rotation generally solves the iodine issue!

In recent years however, winters and springs have been pretty dry with little mud. We have seen high lamb losses around lambing that could be associated with low iodine levels. We appear to be into another dry winter this year and iodine supplementation is something you may like to consider, especially if you have had high lamb losses from scanning percentages in past seasons.

Unfortunately there is no simple test to diagnose iodine deficiency. In severe situations enlarged thyroid glands (goitre) may be seen. However this is extreme deficiency. More marginal deficiencies can only be diagnosed by collecting dead new born lambs (ideally 10 or more). We can dissect out the 2 thyroid glands and weigh them and the lamb to give a thyroid gland to bodyweight ratio. An elevated ratio is indicative of iodine deficiency.

The good news is that iodine supplementation pre-lambing is cheap, from as little as 4 cents per ewe for a potassium iodide drench or 25 cents multiminerals / vitamin drench that contains sufficient iodine.

Lamb Post Mortem Examination

If you suspect issues with lamb losses this lambing it is worth considering collecting lambs for post mortem examination. Elsewhere in this newsletter we mention the value of PMs for identifying iodine deficiency. Post mortems can also be used to identify issues around:

- Starvation / exposure / mismothering
- Trace element deficiency (selenium / copper)
- Dystocia - difficult lambing
- Umbilical and joint infections
- Campylobacter infections

Don't leave a high lamb loss suspicion at lambing to be confirmed at docking. Collecting 10-15 lambs over lambing for PM examination is an opportunity that can't be taken at docking!



Dairy Seminar

Thanks to all of our dairy clients who attended our seminar in July. Cosmin's presentation certainly demonstrated that there is a wave of new technology coming at dairy farmers. This will bring challenges in selecting what has potential on your farm and then learning how to embrace and utilise this potential. Brian delved into Johnes disease, its economic effects in dairy herds, the infectious nature of this disease and the testing and cow management necessary to control and reduce disease occurrence. Eleanor reviewed calf rearing principles and technical information on Bovilis Cryptium, the new to market calf scour vaccine giving protection against cryptosporidiosis. If anyone requires follow up information from the day, please contact the clinic.

Best Time To Vaccinate Pre-lamb

Every year we get asked this question. Nothing has changed. The ideal time is 2-3 weeks pre-lamb. If you have scanned or used harnesses to take out second cycle ewes, you can vaccinate 4 weeks pre-lamb and do the second cycle ewes 2 weeks later. Correct timing of 5 in 1 / 8 in 1 vaccination ensures ewes produce colostrum with high levels of protective antibodies giving longer protection in lambs from clostridial diseases (mainly tetanus and pulpy kidney).

AFTER HOURS VET

Emergencies - 06 322 8058

Shop Hours - 8am to 5pm

Monday to Friday

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