



# Over the Fence

## Greetings from Wanganui Vet Services

March 2012 • Issue 12

### monthly news and views



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### Animal Health Reminders

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- Toxo /Campy /Salmonella Vacc Ewes
- Yersinia Vacc Deer

**What a season!** The rain has kept coming down, the grass continues to grow and all stock are in excellent order. It has not been so great for camping holidays but it is hard to get all the ducks in a row. It is certainly becoming more difficult to predict weather patterns.

With stock in such good condition, we have seen few animal health problems and with the grass being so long and the weather cooling off, we will probably avoid any serious Barber's Pole infestations or facial eczema liver damage in sheep this season.

The luxuriant growth we have enjoyed means that creating good pasture quality going into the winter will be the challenge on some properties. Poor quality pasture is going to make it hard to get ewes putting on weight through mating, but at least cows should be well catered for on the hill country.

It looks like being a good long dairy season such that cows can only look forward to a short holiday this winter. The pregnancy testing results have been very interesting so far - we had thought we should have a great mating this year with high in-calf rates - wrong again! The early dairy heifer and cow pregnancy testing results are very disappointing. We think that some animals were simply in too good a condition this season- much like mother bear's porridge - they have to be 'just right' ( not easy is it ? ).

Many of you will know by now that Tom is out of action for a time. He is not a happy man as he has some serious back problems to try to get over to get mobile again. In the meantime he is still available by phone at home and Bruce is in control of ensuring you all get deliveries as required. We are, however, very fortunate to have added Stu Crothers to our team - he will be running the contracting crew, scanning etc and so you will all see plenty of him in coming months.

Please let us know if you have any difficulties in the meantime - we will sort it.





## EXIT DRENCHING

Any worms that survive a standard treatment dose in sheep after a routine drenching programme has been completed will be the basis of a resistant parasite population. The purpose of introducing an exit drench strategy into a planned worm management programme is to minimise the possibility that these drench resistant worms survive and reproduce following drenching seasons i.e. following spring and summer/autumn.

An exit drench is administered at the end of a drenching season i.e. last drench before summer or winter months

Knowing what product to use as an exit drench is the key to success.

An exit drench must meet the following criteria

- Be highly effective against a broad spectrum of worms
- Contain a different drench family to that used previously in the drenching season
- Effective in controlling drench resistant worms
- Delivered at an appropriate time



Suitable drenches are usually combination drenches e.g. Matrix that is a triple combination, Startect, a dual combination including an active called derquantel from a brand new drench family

### Spring:

Three worm species; Oestertagia, Trichostrongylus and Nematodirus are dominant during spring months. Use of an exit drench at the end of spring will help ensure that no resistant worms from these species are left from the previous drench to contaminate pastures through the summer/autumn period.



Another key timing for an exit drench is treatment following the use of capsules or other long acting products in ewes. Exit drenching is recommended given the possible prevalence of residual worms post administration and towards the end of drug activity and payout.

### Autumn



Warm, moist conditions during summer and autumn can often lead to huge build up of Haemonchus or Barbers Pole during this period. Their fecundity (ability to produce a massive number of eggs) and rapid life cycle during ideal conditions makes this worm a significant target for control. It can rapidly cause clinical disease; blood sucking from the lining of the gut leading to anaemia with rapid death in many cases.

Longer acting products such as vetdectin are often used to control Barbers Pole with a corresponding greater risk for worm resistance to develop therefore using an exit drench at the end of autumn prior to winter is a good option to clean out any resistant worms that have developed



## DRENCH RESISTANCE IN NZ SHEEP

For some time now farmers have faced the expanding problem of drench resistance. However; often the loss of efficacy is not obvious so the importance of resistance is forgotten. In 2005 an estimated 64% of all sheep properties had some form of resistance.

### Key facts regarding resistance

- Resistance worms are difficult to detect without a faecal egg count reduction test
- Resistance can go undetected if the faecal egg test is done at a time of the year when some of the worm species on the farm are not present in the sheep's gut
- Once resistance is established almost impossible to eliminate
- Increase farm costs
- Affects animal growth potential
- Reduces farm profitability



## QUARANTINE DRENCHING

Quarantine drenching is an extremely important aspect of any effective parasite management programme. It ensures resistant worm burdens are not introduced or transferred from one property and established on another. This will help slow the emergence of resistance so stock can be grown to potential

### Procedure

#### New stock brought onto farm

- Drench stock on arrival using a triple combination drench
- Drench to the heaviest animal in the line. Don't under dose
- Keep in quarantine paddock for 24-48hrs where there is plenty of feed and water so welfare is not an issue.
- After 24-48hrs move to normal grazing

#### Stock sold off farm

- Drench stock leaving using a triple combination drench (unless going to the works)
- Drench to the heaviest animal in the line. Don't under dose
- Keep in quarantine paddock for at least 24hrs before stock exits the farm



### The quarantine paddock

The quarantine paddock will be contaminated including resistant worms so measures to help reduce future challenge include

- Don't graze with susceptible sheep
- Graze with cattle
- Use grass for supplements such as hay or silage



## HOGGET MATING

As long as certain rules are followed hogget mating can be very productive especially with the record lamb prices

### The guidelines are

- Hoggets must be > 38kg at tupping. Preferably >40kg and have a condition score >2.5
- Therefore select hoggets to be mated on weight not eye.
- Introduce teaser rams at 17 days before mating to induce more hoggets to come into oestrus earlier. Ratio of 1:70 to 1:100
- Mate for 2cycles = 34 days with a ram ratio of 2-3%
- Use lower birth weight rams e.g. perendale to avoid lambing problems and lamb and hogget deaths.
- Join rams about 1st May. Best results from 15th May. The maximum oestrus period is from 15th May to 15th June, however it's a trade off because if you mate later, hoggets have less time to recover before being mated again as 2THs





## Abortion in cows ...

It's getting near that time when clients start contacting us about seeing some abortions. There is nothing more demoralising than finding aborted fetuses lying on the ground whilst out shifting fences. Other common signs of abortion include membranes hanging out from the cow's vulva, a failure to calve when expected, a return to heat or a vaginal discharge. Unfortunately there are many causes of cattle abortions with the most common being

- Feed hoggets well all the way through from mating until following mating as 2TH's.
- Offer at least 1200kg DM/Ha of quality feed all the time.
- Hoggets need to put on at least 1kg per week so they are at least 60kg at lambing
- Wean Hogget's lambs early at about 10 weeks of age providing lambs are at least 20kg bwt
- This will give sufficient time for the ewe hoggets to recover before being mated as 2TH's
- A study across NZ showed on average 60% lambing. Some farmers are doing > 80%. Some even over 100%
- Provided hoggets are fed well and up to target weights all the way through there won't be any long term consequences apart from a slight decrease in 2TH weight at subsequent mating
- Animal health
  - Vaccinate against Toxoplasmosis once only as hoggets
  - Vaccinate against Campylobacter as hoggets and give a follow up booster as 2TH's
  - Vaccinate with either 5in 1 or 10in 1 especially before going on to crops
  - Strategic worm drenching as required to limit growth depressing effects of parasitism
  - Dip them so they don't get fly struck
  - Prevent facial eczema
  - Attend to any trace element deficiencies

## ABORTION IN COWS

- **Neospora** - The most commonly diagnosed cause in NZ
- **BVD virus** - Often unnoticed as early foetal losses
- **Macrocarpa or Pine** - Ensure cows do not have access to branches or needles
- **Fungal** - Aspergillus or Mortierella fungi from mouldy feed particularly silage. Sometimes these



- fungi grow on dead matter in the pasture.
- **Leptospirosis** - Should be at a minimum now as most dairy herds are vaccinated; however very few beef herds are vaccinated
  - **Nitrate poisoning** - Main risk factor is active growth of crops and new grasses after a drought
  - **Salmonellosis** - Can cause abortion storms and sick cows. Been a recent outbreak in dairy herds in Taranaki
  - **Listeriosis** - Often grows in poor quality silage

An accepted natural abortion rate for NZ dairy herds is 1-2% per month. These are usually congenitally deformed fetuses that are rejected by nature. If abortion rate is greater than 2% then samples should be taken for investigation of the cause. Ideally we want to collect the aborted fetus, some membranes and blood samples from the cow.

Of the 2 main causes

**Neospora** - causes an estimated 40% of all abortions in the NZ dairy herd

- Can occur as an abortion storm. It then becomes persistent in the herd followed by a low level of abortions every year
- Or it may enter the herd without the dramatic effect of a storm with a lower level of ongoing abortions
- Abortions often occur in the presence of BVD virus
- The infected cow can abort at any pregnancy at any stage of

- pregnancy but usually 4-6 months pregnant.
- Give birth to an infected calf which goes on to abort itself

The dog plays an important role in the spread of Neospora therefore

- Do not allow dogs to eat aborted placentas or fetuses
- Do not allow dogs to roam around the farm unless they have a muzzle on
- Do not feed dogs any meat from animals that come from a farm with Neospora because the parasite lives in muscle and other organs of all infected animals, Freezing does not kill the parasite.
- There used to be a vaccine to help control the disease but as it was not very effective its now discontinued
- In a chronically infected herd replacement calves can be blood tested and identified carriers culled.

### BVD virus

- Has many symptoms which result in significant losses
- Poor conception rates
- An increased rate of late returns due to early embryonic loss
- Abortions
- Stillborn calves
- Calves with congenital defects
- Once in the herd BVD is perpetuated by the presence of persistently infected (PI) carrier animals which constantly shed virus and infect other naïve animals
- Control requires either eradicating PI animals and following up with good biosecurity or else vaccinating

## SHEEP SCANNING

Most sheep farmers in our district now pregnancy scan their ewes because they have realized there is value in identifying twins, singles, lates and dries early so management decisions can be made with this information to maximize farm income.

For those of you that haven't or those of you that have forgotten why you are doing it!! Here are a list of the benefits

- Twin bearing ewes can be fed better. They need to be fed half as much again as single ewes. Correct feeding will result in bigger twin lambs born and improved survivability
- Growth rate after birth of twin lambs is improved because their mothers can be stocked at lower stocking rate therefore will be in better condition at lambing and produce more milk.
- Fewer lambs lost if twin bearing ewes are lambed on easier more sheltered country.
- Fewer deaths from sleepy sickness if twin bearing ewes are well fed.
- More wool and less wool break if twin bearing ewes are well fed.
- Less lambing difficulty with single bearing ewes because they are not overfed.
- Immediate removal and early sale of dry ewes usually at a premium. This also results in the saving of feed for the productive ewes.
- Late lambing ewes can be sold or held up so early feed is not wasted on them.
- Problems in sheep reproduction performance can be identified and investigated.

**Scanning Twins/Singles. Scan 80-100 days after rams joined.**

**Scanning Wet/Dries. Scan at least 40 days after rams removed after tupping.**

Stuart Crothers has been employed to co ordinate the scanning this year following the tragic death of Andrew Mosen last year. Stuart will be in contact with you if you regularly scan your ewes. If not contact him via the clinic.

**PHONE 349 0155**



## Enjoy a Joke ...

Three Irishmen are sitting in the pub window seat, idly chatting and watching the front door of the brothel across the road. They see the local Methodist pastor appear, knock on the door and quickly go inside.

"Would you look at that!" exclaims the first Irishman. "Didn't I always say what a bunch of hypocrites those Methodists are??"

No sooner are the words out of his mouth than a Rabbi appears at the brothel door, knocks, and also disappears inside.

"Dere's another one trying to fool everyone with pious preaching and silly hats!"

They continue drinking while roundly condemning the vicar and the rabbi when they see their local Catholic priest knock on the brothel door.

"Ah, now dat's sad," says the third Irishman, "One of the girls must have died."

## SALMONELLA OUTBREAKS IN EWES

Already we have seen some Salmonella outbreaks in ewes this year. It can be catastrophic when it strikes with often many deaths.

Affected ewes get sick very quickly. They are very lethargic, often scouring and can die very quickly. Vaccination in the face of an outbreak will help but often there will still be a lot of deaths before vaccination kicks in.

The vaccine we use Salvexin B is intended as an annual booster to all ewes. Two toothers entering the flock ideally get a sensitiser and a booster a month later and all retained ewes would get an annual booster soon after weaning/shearing. Most outbreaks occur in the summer/autumn period.

As Salmonella does not strike every year a practical option is to give all two-toothers a single shot as a sensitiser and then all ewes vaccinated if and when an outbreak occurs. Prompt vaccination and light stocking will see it halted quite quickly. Even with this method you will still lose some ewes though but no where near as many. If you don't want to take any risk with the high value of your ewes compared to years gone by, give two toothers their 2 shots and follow up with an annual booster of all ewes every year. This is what is called good insurance.



## SALMONELLA IN CATTLE

FYI there has been numerous outbreaks of Salmonella in dairy herds in Taranaki recently. The cause has not been determined but various experts from Massey University etc are doing a lot of work on it such as the impact on cow health and production. We have not seen any outbreaks in our area but we advise our dairy farmers to keep it in mind and contact us if there is any suspicion particularly if cows suddenly get sick and start scouring with blood in it,

## FACIAL ECZEMA SPORE COUNTING

We are monitoring 6 sites across the district once a week and reporting the counts to clients by email. If you want to be part of this service send an email to

**John Pickering at johnpickering@xtra.co.nz** to be included.

## NAIT SCHEME

The National Animal Identification and Tracing (NAIT) scheme will be up and running soon. The scheme is being developed to identify and trace cattle and deer. The scheme will link people, property and livestock providing lifetime traceability to help New Zealand maintain its reputation as a premium producer of premium produce.

Further to meeting these requirements electronic tags allow farmers to make management choices with great ease that will improve decision making around genetics, replacement selection, adequacy of feeding and much more.

RFID tagging will be mandatory from July 1st 2012 for cattle and 1st March 2013 for deer.

### Once the law is in place

- You need to register with NAIT- voluntary from Feb 2012 but once the law has passed it will be mandatory.
- Register farm or property
- Register person in charge of animals who will be responsible for registering animal data online and reporting stock movements and deaths.
- Tag cattle (and later deer) with NAIT approved RFID ear tags. Secondary tags will be required for all animals except those going directly to slaughter
- Register your NAIT tagged cattle and deer
- Record any deaths of NAIT tagged animals with NAIT
- Report all stock movements via phone or internet or a NAIT approved information provider to or from other properties, including off farm grazing
- Animals going direct to slaughter
  - Bobby calves require only a meat processor



issued 'direct to slaughter' tag

- NAIT approved RFID tag for all other cattle

- Stock movements to NAIT accredited sale yards and meat processors will not be required to be recorded by Farmers sending stock. This will be done on their behalf by the NAIT accredited entities
- While the NAIT scheme will be web based there will be other options for you to carry out some of your NAIT obligations. There will be a paper based option for movement recording for farmers who do not have reliable internet. Charges will apply for this option whereas using the internet option will be free.

There will be numerous opportunities to grasp this technology and utilising it could well improve your farm profitability. Make the most of it.



## VETCARE TRAINING VETERINARY NURSE GRADUATION

Once again a fantastic night was had by all at the VetCare veterinary nurses graduation held in December at Infusions. 18 students graduated with their National Certificate in Veterinary Nursing and Animal Care and 2 students with their National Certificate in Animal Care.

These graduates have spent the past 36 weeks training at Wanganui Veterinary Services in all aspects of veterinary nursing from dealing with customers, retail, nursing hospitalised patients and assisting with surgery - a very real and "hands-on" practical approach to training.

We wish them all the best for their futures in this industry and look forward to introducing you to the Class of 2012 in the next newsletter.

If you are interested in this as a career, then contact Michelle Parkin at 3496195 or 3490155.





# What's Up

## Well done

to the Winners of our Christmas draw for the dinner set, hams and Dyson vacuum cleaner.



**FRONTLINE®**  
*Plus*



Well the Stork  
has done it  
again.

We have another little boy in  
the WVS family.  
Dianna our super receptionist  
has given birth to Max 7lb  
11oz.



## WANGANUI CAR RALLY

Some of us got a ride in a vintage bus the week of the car rally.  
What a fantastic sight all those wonderful vehicles.

## FAREWELL LINDA

Linda has left her  
coop upstairs  
For greener pastures.  
Good Luck!  
We will miss you.



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