



# Over the Fence

Greetings from Wanganui Vet Services

December 2019 ● Issue 32

News and Views



## December 2019

Christmas greetings everyone,

Another year comes to a close and it seems like one of the more memorable ones. Despite the All Blacks and Black Caps falling desperately short in their respective world cups, despite Micoplasma Bovis, despite the dooms-dayers, we have had a good year. Commodity prices for meat and dairy are looking stronger, the weather has delivered a good growing season and provincial New Zealand continues to grow.

With Christmas nearly upon us, I'm sure it will be a particularly special one for three of our staff, Wilna, Brigitte and Melissa who have all had new additions to their families this year, Reuben, Chase and Archer.

From myself and all of the staff thank you very much for your continued support. We love our jobs and the part we play in your businesses.

Have a safe holiday season and a prosperous New Year.

Tom

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Animal Health Reminders  
For the next two months :

- Toxovax / Campyvax / Ovastim
- Ram fertility checks
- 5 n 1, 8 n 1 or 10 n 1
- Monthly drenching of lambs
- Finish velveting / tidy regrowth
- Mastitis milk samples for culture
- Drench reduction tests
- Monitor ewe body weight

### Ram Testing

Healthy and sound rams are essential for good flock performance. It is useful to remember that sperm development takes 8 weeks, so it is important to test rams early, sort out any health issues like lameness or pizzle rot and take flystrike, clostridial, parasite and facial eczema preventative action where necessary. Along with this, rams should be shorn at least 8 weeks prior to joining to ensure you are not lowering their fertility. The sperm making factories work best when they are cool.

If you are planning to use teasers they need to be vasectomised a couple of months in advance ready to join with ewes a cycle before the start of mating (17 days).

Every year we see rams that have been in a holding paddock and 'forgotten' about until they are needed. Keep an eye on them, feed them well and don't forget about eczema prevention and parasites.

Call us now if you would like your rams vet tested, or checked for brucellosis and other abnormalities.

Remember these boys are athletes, so get them in tip top condition and they will reward you.

### Drench Testing

We strongly recommend farmers conduct a regular drench test due to rising issues in our area. What we need for a meaningful drench test, is to have a good representation of most important worm species in faecal samples. This is usually the case in December/January, so book this in your diary and give us a call later in the year. We need 12-15 lambs per active (approximately 75 lambs) to be tested, and we need them to have reasonably high faecal egg counts, which normally means leaving this group undrenched for some time (6-7 weeks from weaning). Don't let another year roll round without knowing if the drench you are using is effective or not.



## Ewe Performance

A resurgence in lamb prices occurred last year and is predicted to continue, so to ensure your farm gets the advantage it is important to be positioned to take full benefit of improving market conditions.

Now is the time to review how to improve the flock performance programme on your farm. Start planning now, well ahead of mating - we are here to work through solutions to help you achieve this.

One of the foundations of any sheep/lambing programme is avoiding losses due to abortion – Toxoplasma and Campylobacter being the two major causes. These disease organisms will likely be on your farm - recent national surveys have found Toxoplasma on all farms tested, with Campylobacter on 88% of these farms. Whether it's the small, unrecognised losses that continually undermine lambing performance, or sudden abortion storms, these diseases significantly affect productivity.



An effective vaccination programme can help avoid these losses and improve lambing performance. Every 1st time breeding ewe should receive 1-shot of Toxovax® and a 2-shot programme of Campyvac®4 prior to mating. These two vaccination programmes are the baseline of a successful flock performance plan on all sheep farms. Mixed age ewes do have losses from Campylobacter, so an annual booster is recommended on all properties, and especially when the 2-shot programme occurs as a hogget. In areas where there is a history or risk of Salmonella disease, the timing of vaccination is key. If enteric disease has been in your area, ensure the 2<sup>nd</sup> (booster) dose completes the 2-shot programme (into previously unvaccinated animals) at least 2 weeks prior to the highest risk period, usually late summer / autumn. Also, don't forget annual boosters to previously vaccinated animals.



A simple strategy to increase ewe fecundity, or the number of twinning ewes, is to use Ovastim. Lambing can be boosted quickly by an average of 20% by using an Ovastim plus programme prior to mating, and having farm

management and feed strategies in place will ensure the extra feed to have ewes in good condition and more lambs finished on time. A well planned and managed fecundity vaccination programme will provide you a very good return on the investment in the right situation

Talk to us about a sheep performance programme that will help ensure you gain the flock performance that you want, and take advantage of the high demand for lamb that is expected.

### Toxovax Orders

Toxovax must be ordered early to guarantee supply.  
The vaccine only has a short shelf life so is only manufactured on demand.



**Orders must be in at least 3 weeks before required.**

## Facial Eczema

It is looking like a hot summer looming. With a little rain every now and then it will be ideal conditions for eczema again. As we know predicting eczema is like crystal ball gazing, but it is preventable.

We will be starting our spore counting service in January so we can keep a close eye on the trends in the region. We also routinely test grass for many different farmers now.

If you are bringing in grass, cut samples to 1 cm from ground, from about 10 different spots, 10 paces apart, until you have at least 60gms of grass. This is about a bread bag full.

The best advice we can give is make a plan and be decisive as in most cases eczema levels rise very quickly. If it feels like eczema weather it probably is eczema weather!

## Sheep Measles (Ovis)

We have had a renewed push on Sheep Measles this year and Brenda Collins has put a lot of effort into contacting local farmers and rural dog owners. This has had a positive result, reducing Ovis incidence in the kill sheets of our local farmers. Dose your dogs with a tapewormer monthly. Insist visiting dogs are also treated at least 48 hours before arrival. Clean up sheep and goat carcasses. Talk to your neighbours about their control measures.





## FROM OUR VETERINARIANS :

### New Technique :

#### Stifle Injury in Working Dogs

Cruciate ligament disease is a common cause of lameness in dogs. When left untreated or only rest is chosen as a 'treatment', limb function deteriorates due to ongoing joint instability resulting in the development of severe arthritis. This will compromise capacity to work as well as the working life expectancy of your working dog.

Up until recently, we could only offer one surgery technique in which a synthetic ligament was used to mimic the function of the ruptured cruciate. This technique is relatively simple, but unfortunately, it has its limitations in active and large breed dogs. For these patients we often advised referral for more advanced surgery techniques performed by the specialists at Massey University Veterinary Teaching Hospital.

We're proud to announce that we are now able to offer a new surgery technique called 'Tibial Tuberosity Advancement' (TTA) to repair ruptured cruciate ligaments in dogs over 18kg. In contrast to the 'old technique', no attempt is made to restore the function of the ruptured ligament, instead the forces causing instability in the stifle are neutralised by use of 3D printed Titanium implants. Results have been great and most patients are weight bearing the day after surgery.

By Dr Hein Stoop



### Heatstroke

Heat stroke is when an animal is unable to cool down or maintain a normal body temperature for an extended period, without any infection. It is often caused by increased heat production (eg. exercise), high environment temperatures, and inadequate heat loss though panting. Some breeds or types of dogs are more at risk of heat stroke, such as brachycephalic dogs, large or giant breeds, obese dogs, thick coated dogs, and working dogs.



#### Consequences of Heatstroke:

- Decreased blood pressure
- Decreased blood flow to vital organs
- Organ damage including brain, heart, kidney, and liver, and brain swelling, leading to seizures, coma and death.

#### What will you see?

- Extreme panting
- Collapse
- Vomiting or diarrhoea
- Drunken gait, lack of coordination, weakness
- Drooling
- Change in alertness or consciousness
- Seizures
- Death can occur within 24 hours from secondary effects of the heat stroke

#### What can you do if you suspect heat stroke in your dog?

- Wet the dog down with cool water (not ice cold)
- Use a fan, air conditioning on high or the window down in the car to get air flow moving, this helps to disperse heat
- Cold packs wrapped in a towel can be placed in the armpits and groin areas (remove if the dog starts shivering)
- Offer cool water to the dog
- Get them to a vet as soon as possible

Quick recognition and owners starting cooling methods immediately are essential to successful treatment. You must get them to a vet as soon as possible.

By Dr Gemma Pouls



# What's Up

For all you Summer and Winter cropping needs, contact Bruce Baldwin to discuss your options  
027 663 2565



## Lifestyle Farming Club

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of May we launched The lifestyle farmers club for all those out there farming a smaller slice of paradise than our traditional farmers.

The idea is to form an ongoing group who can benefit from information sharing, networking, the opportunity to socialise with like minded people and experience other properties and enterprises.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November we held our second open day where we covered topics including thistle control, fence construction (strainer posts), beekeeping, soil testing, fertiliser and docking of lambs. At the conclusion of the afternoon Andy from Roots Brewing Co kindly let us sample some of his locally brewed beer.

All in all it was a very enjoyable day and we have had some great feedback. Anyone interested in joining the group can contact Wanganui Vet Services or Wanganui Farm Supplies.

## Cropping Report

By now our summer crops should be sown and be germinating, but the job is not fully complete just yet.

- It is essential to keep on top of weeds which is a matter of having a quick walk through your paddocks or give young Bruce a call for some timely advice. With all spraying of weeds there is an optimal time to spray and that is usually earlier rather than later. All too often good crops become less than optimal crops because weeds are let go and spraying becomes not an eradication exercise, but a damage limitation effort, as the weeds are too mature to effectively control.
- Insects love crops as much as our stock, so also on those brief walks through your crop be on the lookout for the tell-tale signs of bugs. We are looking for damage to the plant such as bits eaten out of leaves, insect frass (poop), live insects both immature and mature and general ill-thrift of individual plants. The more stressed and slower growing the plants become through the summer the more insects will become a problem, so watch out especially when it gets dry. Left unchecked bugs such as Diamond Backed Moth can devastate a crop which is needless as they can be controlled leaving a crop to bounce back and grow when the rain comes.
- Planting of winter crops such as Swedes and Kale need to be in by mid-December so preparations should be well underway.
- Start planning for future crops now. If you are contemplating cropping new areas, now is the time to get areas selected, soil tested and base fertiliser levels corrected. Crops such as Lucerne and Fodder Beet have been grown very successfully in Wanganui but do require some forethought and advice.
- Whilst your crop is doing the business now, in many situations it won't be long before you need to regrass or resow in the autumn. Take a look at Hustle, a relatively new variety as it has outperformed other grasses on the market. Contact Bruce Baldwin for the data and results so far.

For any crop related problems or advice, please contact Bruce as he is only too happy to come out and assist. Ph 027 663 2565



Have a Merry Christmas!



## HOLIDAY HOURS

Dec 16th – 20th	8.00 – 6.00 OPEN
Saturday 21st	9.00 – 12.00 OPEN
Sunday 22nd	CLOSED
Monday 23rd	8.00 – 6.00 OPEN
Tuesday 24th	8.00 – 6.00 OPEN
Dec 25th – 26th	CLOSED
Friday 27th	8.00 – 6.00 OPEN
Saturday 28th	9.00 – 12.00 OPEN
Sunday 29th	CLOSED
Monday 30th	8.00 – 6.00 OPEN
Tuesday 31st	8.00 – 6.00 OPEN
Jan 1st – 2nd	CLOSED
Jan 3rd onwards	Business as usual!

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