

# Sheep Farmers Newsletter May 2008

Clutha Vets Animal Health Centre

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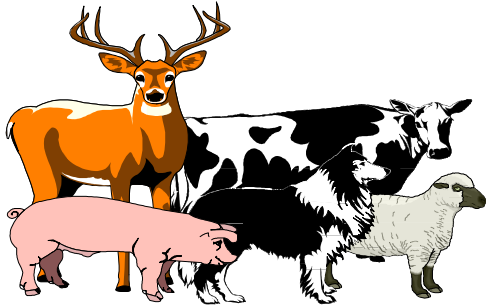
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**M·V·E·T·S**



## Animal Health Centre

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## CONTENTS

- Practice News
- Recent Animal Health Problems
  1. Internal Parasitism
  2. Ryegrass Staggers
  3. Pinkeye in Ewes
  4. Pneumonia in Lambs
- Reminders
  1. Brassica Feeding
  2. Salmonella Brandenburg Vaccination
  3. Ultravac Vaccination of Hoggets
  4. Clostridial Vaccination of Cattle
  5. Prescription Animal Remedy Return.
- Transport to Slaughter
- Brassica Grazing
- Clutha Vets Website
- Clutha Vets Centenary 1908 - 2008
- New Product
- Merchandise Matters
- Promotion Winners

## Practice News

Well at least we have had some rain since the last newsletter however the feed supply remains tight, on many farms. As the amount of supplementary feed made was, in many cases quite a bit less than normal, if the forthcoming winter is not very kind there are

going to have to be some tough decisions made along the way.

Staff wise we are still on the lookout for more vets, although we have managed to secure one who will start in July/August so more of that in the next newsletter. The new name above is not a new vet -

Alisa got married a few weeks ago (congratulations to her and Glen) but when finally back at work a horse hoof rearranged her face so she was promptly off work again. I don't think ACC are really very impressed with Clutha Vets record lately.

## Recent Animal Health Problems

**1. Internal Parasitism.** Considering the recent climatic conditions (long dry period followed by rain) which set the potential for sudden outbreaks of parasitism to occur we didn't see too many of these thank goodness. The publication of the last newsletter allowed a very timely warning and most of you are pretty aware of the potential for problems to occur in such situations anyway.

Despite this however we did see several cases of deaths in lambs due to parasitism and the odd one in ewes as well. The potential is still there for this to be a problem over the next month or so, so keep a close eye on the situation. As I have said before, in lambs in these situations good observation and stockmanship is often more useful than FEC's. We have quite a few high egg counts coming back from ewes, especially two-tooths, which is a reflection of the nutritional stress they have been under over the summer/autumn. If you haven't already done so a FEC prior to winter could be handy as due to available feed supplies it is going to be difficult enough to feed ewes well through the winter without feeding thousands of worms as well. Often just a % of the flock will come back with elevated counts and just drenching the bottom x% of the mob is a very viable solution to this.

**2. Ryegrass Staggers.** There were a number of cases of this occurring however they have pretty much stopped now - see last newsletter for more detail.

**3. Pinkeye in Ewes.** Odd outbreaks of this have been occurring recently. It is caused by a Chlamydia (close cousin of bacteria) infection and is quite contagious. It is inclined to occur in cycles in a flock as immunity waxes and wanes. Treatment in those situations where it is warranted is by antibiotic administration, usually by means of a puffer. Aureomycin puffers are off the market however Teramycin puffers (same antibiotic) are available for this purpose. Those of you who had Aureomycin puffers down for pinkeye treatment will automatically have those rolled over to Terramycin puffers at the next PAR renewal/assessment.

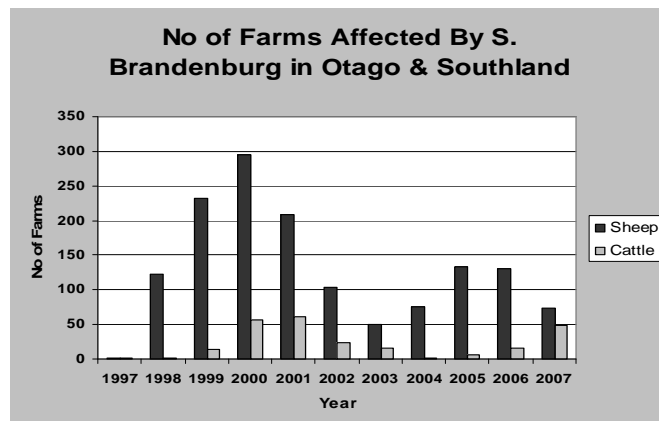
**4. Pneumonia in lambs.** Problems still continue - see the last newsletter (March 08).

## Reminders

**1. Brassica Feeding.** As this will likely start in earnest towards the end of this month I thought a review of the more important animal health related

issues associated with their feeding might be timely - see later in this newsletter for an article on this.

**2. Salmonella Brandenburg Vaccination.** Case numbers reported to the laboratory last year showed a decline on the year before, which is just part of the natural waxing and waning of cases that we expect to occur. See graph below.



For those considering vaccination the programme is 2 doses to the two-tooths 3 - 6 weeks apart - don't do in-lamb hoggets - they rarely get it. The second dose (or the sole booster dose in previously vaccinated ewes) is probably best given by the end of June.

**3. Ultravac Vaccination of Hoggets.** Shortly the hoggets should have received their 2 doses of Ultravac 3 - 6 weeks apart so that they will be fully protected against blackleg etc prior to going onto winter crop as well as being correctly set up for their lifetime programme of annual boosters pre-lamb. Note that depending on your incidence of Pulpy Kidney these doses can be given much earlier if necessary.

**4. Clostridial Vaccination of Calves.** It is not uncommon to have the odd sudden death in young cattle, especially through the winter period due to Clostridial disease - pulpy kidney, blackleg etc. Most of these can be prevented by Ultravac vaccination. In a few instances these deaths are due to a strain of Clostridia not in the 5 in 1 vaccine & in those cases we prescribe the 10-strain Covexin10. This is the classic "prevention is better than cure". A death prevented will pay for many many years of vaccinating.

**5. Prescription Animal Remedy (PAR) Return.** Later on this month you will receive the annual PAR renewal form. Please return this form ASAP which will enable us to complete the legal requirements so that you can purchase specified PAR's from the retail staff. Failure to return this means they cannot legally supply you your PAR's. Don't shoot the messenger!

## Transport to Slaughter

**1. Cancer eye.** The rules for transporting cows with cancer eye have altered recently. Provided the cancer

is confined to the eye and/or eyelid, is up to 2cm in diameter and is not bleeding or discharging then it can be transported to the works. An animal with lesions between 2 - 3cm that is not bleeding or discharging can go at the owner's risk. Cattle with lesions over 3cm in diameter, any involving the whole eye or that have extended into the surrounding tissue, those discharging pus or which may haemorrhage cannot be sent. This means many cases that were once thought suitable for transport and slaughter no longer are. Hence once you see a cancer eye don't delay in contacting us to see if it can go to the works otherwise the chances of it being able to go are much reduced.

**2. Lamé Animals.** The rules state that an animal must be able to bear weight on all four limbs. We are often asked to certify animals that do not fit the criteria and cannot help if they cannot go. I have had a couple of smacks on the hand over the years for siding a bit too far in the farmer's financial favour so can't do that again or I shall be shot and sent to the Russian front.

Note that we certify animals as fit for transport, which means we give an opinion that a specific animal can be transported safely with due regard to its welfare. We do not certify it fit for human consumption – that is for works vets and meat inspectors to ascertain.

### Brassica Grazing

To get the best performance out of stock grazing brassicas and to avoid potential health problems there are some best practice guidelines or rules to follow:

- *Minimise exposure to toxic sulphur compounds.* These damage red blood cells resulting in loss of appetite and varying degrees of anaemia and in severe cases redwater and death. Kale and Chou are worst for this. To help avoid this use low sulphur fertilisers e.g. DAP prior to sowing.
- *Allow stock to acclimatise to the crop.* Initially run animals on crop 2 hours/day (about 20% of diet) building up to 100% of the diet by 7-10 days. Alternatively continue to provide a runoff block of older pasture. At the very least this will reduce the check that occurs when stock go onto brassicas and allow them to reach maximum growth rates sooner, but it could prevent deaths as well.
- *Feed extra fibre.* Always feed supplementary fibre such as straw, hay, etc as this slows down the flow of feed through the rumen and gut and allows a more effective rumen fermentation and digestion. Studies have shown that lambs fed 0.2kg DM of straw/head/day had higher growth rates than those fed only brassicas.
- *Ensure stock's trace element/vitamin status is OK.* Studies have shown that applying mineral mixes containing selenium, cobalt, iodine and copper to

soils that are low does not lift the levels in brassicas. Of main concern are iodine, Vit E and selenium levels in all stock and copper levels in cattle and deer. The first 3 can be corrected by administration of LSD - again a warning to beware of rubbish LSD copycat attempts. The exact timing of administration of LSD depends on a number of factors - length of time on brassicas, pregnancy status, Flexidine use etc - ask at the clinic for advice for your particular circumstances.

- *Break feed to allow better growth & utilisation.* Studies have shown that cattle grazing turnips had significantly higher weight gains when shifted daily onto a fresh break than those given a new break weekly.
- *Removal from brassicas.* Brassicas contain high levels of calcium and milk fever can result if stock close to lambing or calving are removed from brassicas and put on low calcium feeds such as early spring pasture. This is one of several reasons why I think it is preferable that ewes (and cows) are not grazed on brassicas with a month of the start of lambing (or calving).

### Clutha Vets Website – [www.cluthavets.co.nz](http://www.cluthavets.co.nz)

Many of you may not realise it but we have had a website for a few years now. I have never mentioned it before now because, quite frankly I felt it was a bit pathetic. No one had the time to put much effort into it and it was never up to date.

Paul Bonini, our business manager has completely revamped it and what's more keeps it up to date. You will find for example, links to other useful websites – Met Office, Farming Show, Agridata (this latter has up to date info on sheep, beef & deer meat prices), back copies of recent newsletters as well as other useful info regarding Clutha Vets in general. Relevant information and photographs will be added frequently so feel free to pay a visit from time to time. If you have any suggestions for improvements e.g. links to other farming websites please let us know.

### Clutha Vets Centenary: 1908 - 2008

Through recent publicity many of you will be aware by now that this year marks 100 years since Clutha Vets was established in the area, which makes it one of the oldest, if not the oldest practice in NZ. To mark the occasion the following activities are scheduled:

- **Thurs June 19<sup>th</sup>** - Golf tournament at Balclutha. Contact the clinic to register.
- **Friday June 20<sup>th</sup>** - Invitation to all members to an open day at the Balclutha Clinic as follows:
  - 12 - 4pm: Refreshments and BBQ.

- 5.30 - 6.30pm: Happy hour at Rosebank Lodge
- 6.30 - 10pm: Speakers, entertainment and supper.

We need numbers for catering purposes so please contact the clinic to register – no cost.

- **Sat June 21<sup>st</sup>** - Centenary dinner at Rosebank Lodge for past and present staff and directors.

In addition a booklet covering the history of Clutha Vets is in the process of being produced and it is hoped to make this available as part of the registration process.

If anyone has old photos pertaining to past Clutha Vets activities we would appreciate a lend of them. In addition, if you have any old animal remedies, equipment, books etc lying in the deepest cobwebby recesses of the woolshed, I have established a museum display (in the waiting room) & always appreciate any donations of any such old items.

### New Product – Cydectin L.A. Injection

Some of you may have heard of a new product on the market from Fort Dodge. It is a long acting version of Cydectin injection and I am sure you are going to be subject to some pressure from farm merchandise outlets in the lead up to lambing as it is the only “long acting” product they have to sell. However there are some things you need to know to make an informed decision:

- Firstly, it is long acting **only** against one worm type – Ostertagia (112 days). Haemonchus does not occur down here so the length of action against it is irrelevant. It lasts for 42 days against Trichostrongylus and has no persistent claim against any of the other worm species.
- Secondly it must be administered **high** in the neck behind the ear as a subcutaneous injection.
- Its withholding time is 91 days.
- Lastly and most importantly what is its likely place in the resistance development scheme of things? Those of you who have read/heard me on the use of capsules or Cydectin injection pre-lamb in ewes will know that all these products have the potential to accelerate the development of drench resistance. It is my opinion that from best to worst as far as resistance development goes are Bionic combination capsules (best), then Extender Max, Extender SeCo, Maximisers and finally Cydectin injection (worst).

Unfortunately, I think that Cydectin LA will fall right at the bottom of the heap (worse again) in terms of potential for resistance development for two reasons. Firstly it has a slowly declining level of activity (its tail, which is similar to “normal” Cydectin) and which gives an advantage

to more resistant worms. This is made worse with Cydectin LA because there will presumably be a bit less of a refugia than with conventional Cydectin injection (because of its longer period of action against **some** worms) so that the surviving resistant worms will then be a bigger proportion of the total worms on the pasture. Hope you can follow the thrust of that argument!

Long acting products have their place but they all need to be very selectively targeted and this is particularly so with Cydectin LA injection. On no account should it be used on all ewes at once. Price will help stop that anyway – the cost looks like it will be much the same as a capsule. I would strongly advise any of you considering using this pre-lamb to speak to one of the veterinary staff first for the best advice on the full range of long lasting options.

### Merchandise Matters

The list from Pihl and the team this month is:

- **All Merial/Ancare Oral Sheep Drenches:** All purchasers of these go in the draw for a Sony 40” LCD TV
- **Selected Merial/Ancare Pour-Ons:** All purchases also go in the draws for a 40” Sony LCD TV - 3 chances in 100. Hurry as this is filling fast.
- **Also from Merial/Ancare:** There is a national promotion whereby if you bring into the clinic a card you will have previously received in the mail with your name etc on it you will be put in the draw for your choice of a Nissan Pathfinder, a Haines Hunter 535 boat or \$40,000 worth of holiday. You don’t have to buy anything - just drop the card in.
- **Virbamec 20lt:** A generic ivermectin drench \$314.38/20lt drum. Get a Phillips 20ml metal drench gun with each 2 x 20lt.
- **Tempor Lice Pour-on:** Get 1lt free with each 5lt.
- **Cydectin Pour-on:** 10 % bonus product free on all pack sizes (2, 5 & 15lt) or on the 15lt pack forego the extra 2lt and receive a gas barbeque and LPG table heater instead – your choice.
- **Exit Pour-on 20lt:** For lice control in sheep – only \$340.76 or 42c/75kg ewe dose.
- **Tux 40kg:** All purchasers go in a South Island wide draw to win a Yamaha 700cc 4-wheeler and an 80cc kid’s version plus there are consolation prizes of Swandris and large sun umbrellas.

### Promotion Winners

**Merial/Ancare Sony 40”LCD TV:** One has so far been drawn and was won by Max Nichol of Clarks Junction.

John A. Smart B.V.Sc.