

Sheep Farmer Newsletter August 2011

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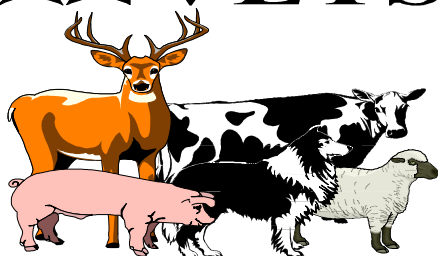
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Practice News

As indicated in the last newsletter Roo Wijey at the Milton clinic has finished there and is heading back overseas. We have managed to secure a replacement, Murray Gillies, from Canada and are waiting for the immigration type red tape to be cut through before he

can arrive & start work. Hanneke is away back to Holland until roughly the end of October and we have a locum, Chris Hopwood, who started here on 1st August to help cover that vacancy. In the meantime Roo's position in Milton will be covered by a roster of Balclutha vets and the locum.

Recent Animal Health Problems

On the whole things have been reasonably plain sailing as far as various disease conditions go, however we have seen a few cases of the following.

1. *Listeriosis*: - As usual baleage is the culprit here. If, for whatever reason, (damaged wrap, carried over, made too mature etc) the pH is not sufficiently low (it has to be <4.8) then this allows the growth of large numbers of *Listeria* bacteria which can then cause two types of disease symptoms -

- Nervous disease – often seen as circling, head tilt etc.
- Enteric disease – usually seen as sudden death, sometimes with evidence of a khaki coloured scour. Note – the *Listeria* is not a mould so the absence of mould in baleage is no guarantee that it is OK as far as *Listeria* goes.

Treatment of both forms is possible but you have to be really prompt with the enteric form to have any chance of success. Contact the clinic for more info on treatment.

2. *Coughing Hoggets*: - This has been due to viral (sometimes called enzootic) pneumonia, not lungworm. Antibiotic treatment of severe cases is possible – contact the clinic for more info on this. Prevention really needs to start way back when the lambs are being yarded with attention paid to the way lambs are driven and handled, and the road and yard conditions as far as dust goes.

At this time of the year as far as mob based treatment/prevention goes a drench of LSD is probably the most useful thing you can do but try & combine this with some other management procedure rather than doing a specific yarding just for this purpose. LSD will help stimulate the hogget's immune system to help them combat and throw off the infection themselves. Work has been done showing that LSD does boost the immune response.

At the end of each raceful, while you are filling up the race again, sit the drench gun nozzle in a container of disinfectant – this will help prevent you spreading any infection to unaffected ones so much.

3. *Low Magnesium Levels in Ewes*: - Jillian reports a case where bearings in ewes were accompanied by low Magnesium levels. This in turn affects calcium metabolism and is one of the possible causes of bearings you can do something about. It is pretty straight forward to blood test 10 ewes to check their Mg levels.

4. *Salmonella Brandenburg*: - At the time of writing no cases of abortion and death due to this had been brought to my attention – long may it stay that way!

Reminders

With lamb prices looking set to remain at good levels any little improvements in the various aspects influencing lamb survival can add up to considerable improvements in profitability. The following pre-lamb “activities” can all have an influence on lamb survival.

1. *Clostridial Vaccination*: - The booster shot should be given to the ewes 1 – 3 weeks pre-lamb. The supply situation of the various options is, I'm afraid to say for about the third year in a row, not particularly wonderful:

- Ultravac 5 in 1 plain and selenised – no supply issues.
- Prolavax + Se – available after 12th August.
- Prolavax Plain – unavailable.
- Nilvax Plain & Se – available.
- Eweguard B12 + Se – Almost certainly unavailable by the time you get this newsletter.
- Eweguard Plain & Se – unavailable.

To be sure it might pay to contact the retail department and forward order your requirements. Unless there has been late autumn application of Se prills, or some other concurrent form of Se administration, you are probably better off with the selenised product so that the newborn lamb starts off with goods Se levels.

2. *Trace Elements*: - The two important ones are selenium and iodine. Se, if necessary, can be administered with Ultravac, Prolavax etc. (if you can get it!!). Unless Flexidine was used pre-tup (in which case further iodine supplement will not be needed) then the only other effective form of iodine supplementation is as an oral dose. The correct dose is 280mg of potassium iodide (note – many so called mineral mixes containing iodine have a lot less) and the correct timing for this in severe cases of iodine deficiency is eight and four weeks pre-lamb. In moderate cases (which are the majority) give one dose six weeks pre-lamb. This timing is important – many farmers, because of convenience factors, administer it at the same time as they give Ultravac etc. – this is too late (and six weeks is too early for Ultravac). For improved lamb survival iodine supplementation is important in South Otago.

3. *Vitamin E*: - A deficiency of Vit E in particular can also result in poorer lamb vigour and survival. This deficiency is practically guaranteed where stock (sheep, cattle and deer) have been on brassicas, but it is also likely on other winter feed as Vit E is low in stored feed (hay, baleage etc.) and in mature grass.

Various factors determine the best time to administer Vit E making it hard to give a recipe for all. Where

Flexidine has been used, the closer to lambing it can be given the better. For other situations enquire at the clinic. LSD liquid represents the gold standard for quality, and more importantly, stability. As I have previously warned, beware the crap copycat powder products where all ingredients are packaged together in a plastic container. One of these local products we had analysed had just 14% of the level of Vit E it claimed to have.

4. Pre-lamb Long Acting Anthelmintics: - There have been no new developments in this area in the last 12 months and the story around their responsible use has not changed for several years now. Some selective use of these products, based around factors such as pregnancy status (1, 2 or 3), ewe condition, age etc. is fine (in fact in triplet ewes that need all the help they can get it is to be encouraged). Conversely single bearing mixed age ewes should rarely, if ever, need treated. Avoid routine whole flock use as this does accelerate the development of drench resistance.

The products are:

- *Capsules (3 types)* - all in stock and the usual delay charge terms apply.
- *Cydectin Inj., Cydectin LA and Dectomax Inj.* - all in stock and in addition, although the supply company isn't, we are offering deferred charge on these products – charge Dec, pay Jan.
- *Eweguard* – as mentioned above all Eweguard products are out of stock.

Contact the clinic for more detailed advice on the relative merits of these products, and the best option for use on your farm.

5. Lambing Kit: - Get this organised – disinfectant (Vetacide); lubricant; penicillin (plus syringes and needles); energy drench (Headstart); Glucalphos; iodine spray; 20% Dextrose; Watery Mouth treatment etc.

Spring Storm Supplies

The mention of lambing kits reminds me of an issue I want to raise. There are some “storm supply” type products that you should, by this time of the year, ensure that you have sufficient on hand as you never know when, due to snow or supply issues, you may not be able to access these products. The products I am referring to are milk fever treatments (e.g. Glucalphos), sleepy sickness treatment (Ewelife, Ketol etc.) and lamb covers, especially the Woolovers.

When a storm (even not as bad as last September) hits there can be a huge spike in demand and we, (and wholesalers, manufacturers etc further up the line), simply can't meet the demand - and that's assuming road access allows you to get here to purchase these.

You should always have a minimum of say, 40 - 50 doses of Glucalphos on hand (don't worry about expiry dates – calcium borogluconate will be calcium borogluconate in 100 years time!), 5lt of Ewelife or Ketol and around 200 - 300 lamb Woolovers stored away. The latter should be stored in a rodent safe environment as these could be rat/mouse heaven I would imagine! Prior to last September's storm the Woolover manufacturer couldn't give them away, then suddenly he couldn't keep up with the demand. The only way round this is for you all to hold more stocks. We will be stocking more but this will still be but a drop in the bucket if and when a severe storm hits.

Scanning Results

At the time of writing I hadn't received a lot of results but a lot of those that I have heard have been up 5-10% on last year which is good. It just remains to try and convert as many of those potential lambs into actual live lambs on the ground.

One way of helping to achieve this is to focus on the lighter end of the flock as these drag down overall lamb survival and weaning weights. At scanning mark the lighter ewes (say less than condition score 3), draft them off and preferentially feed them to lift their condition score to over 3 by lambing.

From about 5 weeks prior to lambing try to ensure all multiples are not losing weight or condition as if they are you get an element of subclinical sleepy sickness and the toxins produced from the breakdown of body fat make the lambs less vigorous and slower to stand at birth.

Finally, if any of you have too many dry's identified at scanning give the clinic a call so we can assist you to try and identify the cause(s). Targets would be two-tooths <3% dry, and mixed age <2% dry, so if you are well above these give us a call.

Clydevale Depot

The recent decision by PGG Wrightson to close their Clydevale store has left farmers in the greater Clydevale area with a longer trek to town for those farm supply items you often find you suddenly need at short notice (wool bale clips, Roundup, pipe fittings after you've just cut through the alkathene etc!).

We had some spare space at our Clydevale Store so the decision has been made that we (CVA) act as an agent for CRT at Clydevale. Hence the Clydevale store will now carry a range of rural supply “convenience” items on behalf of CRT. These can be purchased with (or without) your CRT card and

the charging and accounting will occur via your usual CRT account (not CVA). As many of you may have noticed an outside secure compound has been developed to store larger, bulkier items like gates & Novaflo for example.

It will no doubt take a while to fine tune the appropriate range of goods to be carried so if you require something that is not there just let Gary know so he can obtain it. Hopefully this service will prove useful and convenient as it will probably be a case of use it or lose it.

Merchandise Matters

Firstly apologies for the dire supply situation of a number of the pre-lamb products. I thought last season was bad enough but this season is shaping up worse. Excuse the French but someone somewhere needs to get their shit together!

When I started writing this newsletter we were told Eweguard B12 + Se & Prolavax + Se were available. In the space of 2 – 3 days this has changed to unavailable for the former and not available until the 12th August (if everything goes well!) for the latter.

I can only suggest that for all the pre-lamb type products you ring and place an order so we can put your name on your requirements and put the stock aside. When some products are unavailable it can then place extra pressure on alternative products and these can end up unavailable, even though at the time of writing they are in stock.

Anyway the list of specials, promotions etc this month is as follows:

- **Startect Drench 15lt** – Receive a free backpack worth \$100.
- **Combat Topline Cattle Pour-on** - Super special – only \$716.83 nett incl GST for 7.5lt. Will treat 300 x 500kg cows for \$2.39 ea.
- **Cydectin Pour-on** – 17lt pack only \$1646.35 nett incl GST. Nil milk, nil meat withholding.
- **Cydectin Pour-on 2 & 5lt** – Get an extra 10% product free.
- **Dectomax Injection** – Buy 2 starter packs and receive a Norsewear clothing pack or a rucksack from Hunting & Fishing.
- **Eprinex Pour-on** – Buy 3 x 5lt and get 1 x 5lt free.
- **Alliance & Converge Drench 10lt** – Get a free Smartdrencher gun with each 10lt pack.
- **Genesis & Cydectin Inj** – Both available on deferred payment. Charge December, pay January.
- **Drench Capsules** – Likewise for these – charge December, pay January. With 2000 Bionic capsules receive a large 70lt Icytek chilly bin.

- **Meatybites Working Dog 20kg** – These are on special through August - \$58.73 nett incl GST.
- **Tux Dog Biscuits 40kg** – These are also on special through August at \$99 nett incl GST
- **Eukanuba Premium Working Dog 20kg** – If you sign up for the Eukanuba Farmgate programme these are **permanently** on special at \$108.72 for 20kg (\$20 saving/bag) plus you get a Wheelie Bin to store them in and a stainless steel bowl for each dog.

Promotion Winners

Coopers Truck Promotions – Noel Caulfield won the iPod and Garth Shaw the drum of drench in the promo's associated with the visit of the Coopers truck a while back. Unfortunately no-one from here won the truck itself but for a nationwide promo we weren't far away – it was won by someone in Invercargill however a miss is as good as a mile I suppose!

CVA Golf Champion 2011 – The winner of the CVA trophy for the most stablefords (biggest burglar!) at the recent CVA golf tournament at Kaitangata was Kevin Tait from Wangaloa.

On A Lighter Note

An Old Farmers Advice:

- Life is simpler when you plough round the stump.
- Don't corner something you know is meaner than you.
- Your fences need to be horse-high, pig-tight & bull-strong.
- If you find yourself in a hole the first thing to do is stop digging.
- Forgive your enemies – it messes up their heads.
- Always drink upstream from the herd.
- Good judgement comes from experience and a lot of that comes from bad judgement.
- Education is what you get from reading the label, experience is what you get from not reading it.
- The biggest troublemaker you'll have to deal with watches you from the mirror every morning.
- Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.
- Don't interfere with something that ain't bothering you.
- When you wallow with pigs expect to get dirty.
- If the going is real easy, beware, you may be headed downhill.
- Letting the cat out of the bag is a whole lot easier than putting it back in.
- If you get to thinking you're a person of some influence, try ordering someone else's dog around.