



# CLUTHA VETS SHEEP & BEEF FARMER NEWSLETTER



December 2015



## Clinic News

By the time you read this we will have moved into the new surgical suite at the western end of the building that has been under development since early April. As appears to be the norm with building works, there have been time over-runs. However the contractors (ABL) have done a very professional job and at this stage we are pretty confident the whole job (there is still a second stage to go) will come in under budget which, if you watch Grand Designs NZ on TV, you will realise is no mean feat.

The whole surgical suite upgrade has been done to what is basically a human hospital specification. The main operating theatre has what is known as positive pressure ventilation. That is incoming air is filtered through a HEPA filter and pushed into the room at around 20 air changes/hour, which ensures that no "grubby" air can get in from the rest of the building round the doors etc. and so possibly result in a wound infection. The surgeon can scrub in for surgery using a hands free sink and tap unit - no touching of possibly bacteria contaminated surfaces needed. As part of the upgrade we have installed a digital x-ray system which has several advantages over a conventional film based system. Much better quality images for a start that can be digitally manipulated to improve them even further resulting in more accurate diagnosis and prognosis. Also in an instant, images can be sent for a 2<sup>nd</sup> opinion or even emailed to the owner so they could show their friends their dog or cat's broken bone or bladder stones etc. The isolation facility (for contagious diseases like parvo) can be accessed directly from the outside meaning if potential infectious cases are identified prior to entry into the building, they don't have to go through the main surgical work area but can go straight into isolation where they can be examined and treated. The 2 kennels in this area are monitored by CCTV from the main prep area so there is minimal traffic in and out of this potentially rather contagious area.

So all in all a really modern, high tech surgical/medical facility that should benefit all small animals and their owners in South Otago for years to come.

As we enter stage 2 of the building redevelopment I expect there will be at times a little more disruption evident as this stage does involve a bit of work in the reception and retail areas which can't really be boarded off behind hoardings. However we will do our best to minimise this.

Once the whole renovation is complete (mid next year) there will be an official opening during which there will be the opportunity to tour the whole building.

## In This Issue

- Clinic News
- Recent Animal Health Issues
- Reminders
- Internal Parasite Update
- Condition Scoring Ewes
- 150th Tokomairiro A & P Show
- Merchandise Matters

Onto other matters. By the time you read this our 2 English locums Chris Watson and Liz Howse will have finished up. Other than that (which was always scheduled - by definition a locum is someone who fills in for a time or temporarily takes the place of another) there have been no staff changes.

Coming soon is the annual Clutha Vets Calendar featuring local scenes and a diary of animal health events which will be sent out to a large number of our clients based on their turnover with us. Unfortunately this disadvantages those smaller farm units whose turnover is relative to their size and therefore don't quite reach our trigger point. Please give us a call or pop in and ask for one, we have spares kept aside for you.

## Recent Animal Health Issues

For the 2<sup>nd</sup> newsletter in a row there don't appear to have been too many issues lately. With the late spring and shortage of feed earlier on it would not surprise me if some farms could be facing a higher worm challenge than normal, so keep a close eye on the lambs and if not sure get a FEC done. We have kits made up ready for this purpose. We can generally turn round these tests inside 24 hours.

Keep an eye out for the first case of Pulpy Kidney if you haven't already done a preventative vaccination to the lambs themselves. The protection the lambs got from their mothers colostrum will be close to running out if it hasn't already. Pulpy Kidney is extremely preventable via vaccination so don't delay this if you have had what looks like a Pulpy Kidney death - a suddenly dead lamb "going off" very quickly and often froth evident at the mouth. Better still if you have had cases in previous years get the Ultravac in ahead of the time these cases occurred. If you give the replacement ewe lambs a 2<sup>nd</sup> dose 4 - 6 weeks later then they will be set up for their lifetime pre-lamb vaccination programme. You may get away with just the 1 dose to works lambs - previous experience on your farm would be the best guide here.

## Reminders

**1. Teaser Rams** - Many farmers have found the use of teaser rams an inexpensive tool to achieve better performance, especially over two-tooths and also in inducing more hoggets to come on heat. Work has shown that hoggets that show heat in their first autumn/winter have a higher lifetime performance, irrespective of whether they are actually mated at that age or not. Used over two-tooths they can advance what would be ewes being mated later in the cycle, thus advancing the mean lambing date which should result in more lambs away early, plus each cycle a ewe has before being put with the ram increases the likelihood of twinning. Teasers need to be operated on by 9 weeks prior to the start of mating so they need done over the next couple of months. They should be put out with the ewes 17 days before the "real" rams are put out at a ratio of 1:300 - 1:500. The timing is important - a 20 - 21 day period with the teasers would

mean many ewes will have cycled just before the flock rams are put out meaning the actual mating date could be delayed. By the time the various drugs and materials are included these generally work out around \$85 each so not a huge investment for the benefits obtained.

**2. Ram runs** - Regular examination of rams is important to ensure your rams are going to be fit for the job ahead and that the many causes of infertility are detected. Cases of scrotal mange epididymitis (lumps), poor testicular tone, small testicles, hernias, abscesses and even the odd unidentified teaser ram are regularly identified, all of which render the affected animals temporarily or permanently unsound for breeding. An infertile dominant ram can have quite an impact on your flock scanning and it could be costing your business thousands of dollars a year for the sake of a short inexpensive (\$67.50 + \$1/ram) visit each year to check the rams. Brucella ovis, while well under control is, because of a small number of farmers who never check their rams, unlikely to ever be totally eradicated and it is only continual vigilance that will keep this contagious cause of infertility under control.

Fill out the enclosed form and return it promptly in order to enable us to organise the runs efficiently.

**3. ToxoVax & CampyVax Order Form** - This is also included with this newsletter on the back of the ram run form. Testing of wet and dry ewes for Toxo and Campy serology over the last few years has yet to reveal a farm where Toxo has not been present at some point. In the case of Campy, 88% of farms tested have had some exposure to it.

The single lifetime dose of ToxoVax should be given at least six weeks prior to the first mating. It has about a 10 day shelf life from the time of arrival in the clinic so, **pre-ordering is essential** and this should be done at least **4 weeks** ahead of when you require it. Capacity at the plant is being stretched so adequate time with pre-ordering is increasingly essential.

Most farmers do vaccinate for both Toxo and Campy as whether it's the small, unrecognised losses that continually undermine lambing performance, or sudden abortion storms, these diseases significantly affect productivity. For those of you who don't vaccinate, have a look at the following figures from Vet Services Hawkes Bay's (who scan hundreds of thousands of ewes every year) database. Their figures show:

- A 4.3 - 11% increase in scanning in mature ewes, where ToxoVax is used (as a two-tooth).
- A 3.1 - 12.5% increase in scanning in two-tooth ewes where ToxoVax is used.
- A 6.8 - 11.4% increase where CampyVax is used (as a two tooth).
- A 6.9 - 14% increase in two-tooths where CampyVax is used.

Can you really afford not to use these vaccines? Fill out the enclosed form & return it now - right now!

**Please remember to write your name on both sides of the form as these are separated and sent to**

**different areas of the clinic for ordering ToxoVax and sorting ram runs.**

**4. Optigrow Checks** - Telephone either clinic to arrange this prior to dispatch of the stock to any works. In lambs selenium and cobalt should be checked, and in cattle and deer selenium and copper. Prior to the first draft blood tests in lambs can provide useful information on cobalt and selenium status.

**5. Drench Checks** - Irrespective of which drench is being used you should check on its effectiveness at least once a season, but preferably twice, early and late in the season. The reason for this is that the worm species present can vary through the course of the season so one check either early or late could miss a particular species and if this happened to be resistant then you would miss it and effectively get the wrong answer. Take samples off 10 lambs, 10 - 14 (no more than 14) days post drenching. Keep samples separate – packs of plastic bags are available at the clinic for this purpose. Counts should all be zero. If not there is a problem that may or may not be a resistance issue. Further testing will likely be needed to sort this out.

**6. Check the Bulls** - Watch the bulls when they are first put out with the cows. Things to watch for are mounting but not obviously serving, or a number of frustrated cows hanging around an inactive bull.

## Internal Parasite Update

In this newsletter it has become routine to provide an update on any developments in this important area over the last 12 or so months.

**a) Sheep** - Pretty much steady as she goes. The best product to use for routine lamb drenching as it is best at slowing down drench resistance development is a triple combination like Matrix. Matrix has reduced in price so that it is now less than \$80 more than Switch, a dual combination. In my opinion the extra 2.3c/30kg lamb cost of Matrix over Switch, which you could look at as an insurance policy against drench resistance development would be well worth paying.

Throwing in 1 drench of one of the new actives (Zolvix or Startect) later in the season (round early April) has been shown to prolong the life of the existing cheaper actives so that is also advice worth following. For those of you who want to really know the drench resistance status of your property a Faecal Egg Count Reduction Test (FECRT) is indicated. Contact the clinic to get more details on this but basically the initial setting up involves identifying round 100 ewe lambs at weaning, not drenching them and waiting until they get to an average of 500 – 1000 epg before starting the test.

The last aspect I want to mention is refugia or lack thereof. In South Otago unless we get a blistering drought the only time you really need to think about this is when grazing new grass. You don't have to leave some lambs undrenched to achieve adequate refugia. A better way is to not coincide the shift onto new pasture with a drench (drench a few days before or

after the shift) or run undrenched ewes over the new grass after the lambs.

**b) Cattle** - Oral drench, especially younger stock, where you can with dual or preferable triple combinations. Matrix (a triple) is available in 3 different dose rates 1/5kg, 1/10kg and 1/20kg live weight. When stock get a little bigger and oral drenching holds less appeal use a combination injection such as Eclipse E or Boss. If you *must* use a pour-on then use a combination pour-on such as Eclipse or Boss. Just a reminder that not all "similar looking" pour-ons are equal. See the October 2013 newsletter which demonstrates the relatively poor performance of Saturn Pour-on.

**c) Deer** - Of all the species deer are probably in the most precarious state as far as drench resistance goes and I'm afraid the day is looming when we may have effectively no drenches that work adequately on some deer farms. Pour-ons are a **definite no-no**. The drench we currently advise is an injection of Dectomax or Cydectin injection **combined with** an oral drench of a mixture of 2 different oral drenches. Details of this recipe are in the October 14 newsletter, copies of which are on our website, or alternatively handouts detailing this are available at the clinic.

## Condition Scoring Ewes

This is a great tool for improving overall flock performance. Some of you are doing it but the majority aren't. It's quick once you are competent and is a better predictor of performance than body weight. Clutha Vets has staff who can condition score for you. We are happy to come out and teach you so why not, after you have weaning out of the way, call us and learn the skill. Beef and Lamb also have some great tools (have a look at their website) but there is nothing like having a hands on demonstration.

The winter and spring just past have been one of the more difficult and many ewes will be weaned lighter than normal and under condition score three. If you combine this with the strong El Nino weather pattern being predicted, then to minimise any negative impact on your 2016 scanning you need to be pro-active. Condition scoring (CS) fits nicely in here. It's a tool that gives you knowledge which allows you to make better and/or earlier decisions.

CS is a tool to:

1. Let you know what condition the flock is in and also the range in CS.
2. It allows you to manage groups of ewes in relation to CS. Lifting the bottom CS ewes by targeted feeding will give a greater gain compared with a slight lift of the flock overall.
3. It is a tool to monitor change and allow you to make management adjustments.

This summer probably more than many will be a good time to make change to effect change. Please give us a ring ... we love to help.

## 150<sup>th</sup> Toko A & P Show

Clutha Vets would like to extend a warm welcome to visit our tent at the Toko A & P Show on Dec 12<sup>th</sup>. We have been continually associated with the show since our inception in 1908 - how many other businesses can say that! We plan to have veterinary "things" both old & new, competitions for children with an animal theme & of course a chance to catch up with Clutha Vets staff in a relaxed environment.

For the kids we have a couple of competitions. PLEASE ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILDREN OR GRANDCHILDREN TO ENTER. It would be great to have a good show of entries. Details are of these are as follows:

- **Pre-school and Year 1 - 3:** Make a vegetable animal.
- **Year 4 - 7:** On one page have a photo or drawing of your pet and write a story about what makes your pet special.
- **Year 8 - 13.** Design a poster with an animal health/disease theme relevant to NZ or write a 1 page essay on the value of pets in society.

*Entries can be dropped off at any of the clinics or depots up to Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> at 5pm, Milton Clinic until 5pm Friday 11<sup>th</sup> or at our tent by 10am on Show Day itself. Name, address, contact number and child's age with entry please. There will be prizes and the winning entries will be featured in follow-up newsletters and on our website.*

## Your Vets

### Balclutha Clinic

John Smart	BVSc
Jason Darwen	BVSc
Rob Mills	BVSc
Hamish Moore	BVSc
Catherine Copland	BVM&S
Peter Heslip	BVSc, MACVSc
Annie Jackson	BVSc
Steven Butler	BVSc
Elsbeth Dunne	BVSc, BAgSc
Isobel Topham	BVSc
Bevan Topham	BVSc
Ruth Andrews	BVSc
Bridget McCauley	BVSc
Marek Misiewicz	BVSc

### Milton Clinic

Peter Kalb	BVSc
Jillian Clark	BVSc
Sid Taylor	BVSc, MACVSc
Barbara Christensen	BVSc, MACVSc
Keara Brennan	BVSc, MRCVS

## Merchandise Matters

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

- **Take a Mate Fishing to Stewart Island:** This long standing promotion (I checked back in my newsletter archive and it has been running since the year 2000) is back again. All Merial Ancare purchases from Oct – Dec 21<sup>st</sup> get you in the draw for one of about 10 places for this great competition. Be in to win.
- **Christmas Hams are now in store:** The famous Merial Ancare ham is here on selected oral drenches, injections and pour-ons. Pressed or "On the Bone" these high quality hams are here to take home. Get January's drench on deferred and take 2 hams home!
- **Merry Christmas from Us to You:** One lucky Merial Ancare customer will win a fantastic outdoor setting composed of a wine barrel BBQ cooker from Wild Earth and a Rocker Set and Settee from the Rocker Man of Dunedin valued at over \$4000. The setting is currently displayed in the Balclutha Clinic, it is exclusive to Clutha Vets and has to be seen to be believed. Be in to win.
- **Zoetis Anthelmintics – Vetdectin, Startect, Dectomax:** Purchasers of any of these products will receive a \$30 New World voucher in time for your Christmas dinner.
- **Dectomax Injection:** As well as the New World voucher detailed above receive a Bluetooth speaker.
- **Eukanuba Premium Dog Food:** All purchases go in the draw to win a Honda XR 150 motorbike. There are 12 bikes to be won nationwide. One is on display in the retail shop in Balclutha.
- **Royal Canin Puppy Large Breed 20kg:** A very good price of \$111.78 incl for this Rolls Royce of dog food. Limited stock – get in quick.
- **Meaty Bites Working Dog:** Purchasers go in the draw to win a Webber BBQ.

Since this is the last newsletter for the year I will take this opportunity on behalf of all the staff here at Clutha Vets to wish you all a Merry Christmas & Best Wishes for 2016.

John A. Smart BVSc.

### **Balclutha Clinic**

2 Wilson Rd  
Balclutha  
03 418 1280  
admin@cluthavets.co.nz

### **Milton Clinic**

106 Union Street  
Milton  
03 417 8032  
milton@cluthavets.co.nz

### **Clydevale Store**

Clydevale Road  
Clydevale  
03 415 9121  
clydevale@cluthavets.co.nz



[www.cluthavets.co.nz](http://www.cluthavets.co.nz)