

Retail Ramblings

The list of specials and promotions this month is as follows:

- **Merial Ancare Sheep Drenches** - Receive an Icebreaker Merino T-Shirt with each qualifying purchase from their wide range of sheep drenches.
- **Merial Ancare Cattle Drenches** - These include Eclipse, Eprinex, Exodus, Genesis, Ivomec, Matrix C & Switch C. Depending on pack size & in some cases the number of packs you receive either a Casio Tough Solar watch or a Casio G Shock watch. Enquire at retail for more details.
- **Eclipse Pour-on & Injection** - On the large pack sizes (12.5lt & 6lt respectively) you receive your choice of 1 of several Stihl power garden tools - a hedge trimmer, line trimmer or blower.
- **Boss Combination Pour-on** - With each 5lt get 1lt bonus product free. While stocks last - not too many left as it is effectively 20% bonus product.
- **Eukanuba Dog Biscuits 18 - 20kg sizes** - All purchases go in the draw for a Husqvarna 440E chainsaw. Fill out the entry form in store.
- **Zee Tags** - Receive a free metal tool box when you order qualifying amounts of their various ear tags.
- **Flexidine Long Acting Iodine Injection** - Go in the draw to win 1 of 2 pizza ovens from Clutha Vets &/or 1 of 5 Weber BBQ's nationally.
- **Depodine Long Acting Iodine Injection** - There is a great bulk buy break on this product for larger users. Enquire in-store.

Promotion Winners

Quite a few promotions finished around Christmas time. The winners of these are:

- **Merial Ancare/Clutha Vets Take-a-Mate Fishing to Stewart Island:** All the draws for this weekend of fishing, wining & dining have been made and the winners are:
Richard Kerr, Tarara; Graeme Moffat, Te Houka; Craig Lister, Lovells Flat; Duncan McCrostie, Kaitangata; Grant Dawson, Popotunoa; Alistair Lovett, Hillend; Steven Bamford, Warepa; Donald Lochhead, Waitepeka; Gary Sanders, Milton and Sonia Harris, Paretai.
- **Zoetis \$5000 Travel Voucher:** Through their purchase of Zoetis products this voucher was won by Chris & Sarah Stirling of Clydevale.
- **Merial Ancare Stihl Pack:** This collection of assorted Stihl power tools was won by Max and Lois Harrison from Newhaven.
- **Meaty Bites Weber BBQ:** Nathan (aka Waka) Wilson of Glenomaru through his purchase of Meaty Bites dog biscuits won this. We're just waiting for the invite Waka!
- **Tux Samsung Tablets:** Ross Begg of Pukeawa and Vic Stanley of Milton each won a Samsung tablet courtesy of their purchase of Tux biscuits.
- **MSD \$500 Hunting & Fishing Voucher:** Winners of this voucher through their purchase of MSD (Coopers) drench or lice products were Hamish & Jody Johnson of Kuriwao.

Congratulations to all 16 of our winners. That's really quite an impressive list - I was intending to put the presentation photos in the newsletter as well but there's so many that I don't have room!

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

Beside the bridge
Clydevale
03 415 9121
clydevale@cluthavets.co.nz



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Balclutha Clinic

John Smart	BVSc
Jason Darwen	BVSc
Rob Mills	BVSc
Hamish Moore	BVSc
Catherine Copland	BVM&S
Peter Heslip	BVSc, MVM
Annie Jackson	BVSc
Steven Butler	BVSc
Elspeth Dunne	BVSc, BAgSc
Isobel Topham	BVSc
Bevan Topham	BVSc
Ruth Andrews	BVSc
Bridget McCauley	BVSc
Anna Burrell	BVSc

Milton Clinic

Peter Kalb	BVSc
Jillian Clark	BVSc
Sid Taylor	BVSc, MACVSc
Barbara Christensen	BVSc, MACVSc
Marek Misiewicz	BVSc
Tom Wallbank	BVM&S

CLUTHA VETS SHEEP & BEEF FARMER NEWSLETTER



CLUTHA
VETS

February 2017



Clinic News

Well hope you're all getting through the "winter" alright! We certainly haven't seen much sun for a few weeks now although at the time of writing this (26th Jan) the forecast was looking at bit more promising. As a result the season has not been conducive to optimum lamb growth rates although some farmers I have talked to seem reasonably happy with the way their lambs are growing. In general lambs do best when conditions are sunny and even bordering on being a bit dry.

I reported in the last newsletter that the building redevelopment in Balclutha was finished. It is working out really well with no "we should have done it that way" type comments. We intend to have an official opening but with issues around securing the person we would like to open it, no date has been set for this yet.

Staff wise we have employed a new graduate, Anna Burrell who hails from the West Coast. This is in anticipation of a couple of upcoming changes. Elspeth Dunne is taking a 6 month leave of absence and Izzy Topham is resigning in March to become a student again.

Recent Animal Health Issues

1. **Pulpy Kidney** - With the trend to cases of pulpy kidney occurring earlier in the season and my warning in the last newsletter quite a few of you have brought your vaccination programme forward and so we have seen less cases than usual which is good. However there have still been a few so if you haven't brought your Ultravac dose forward maybe you should next season. It's not extra expense, just incurring that expense maybe 4 - 6-weeks earlier.

2. **Salmonella Hindmarsh in Ewes** - This disease has been on the increase over the last few years. We haven't had any to date this year - a couple of years ago the first case occurred on January 8th hence the reason for mentioning this. Don't leave too big a time gap in going around the ewe mob(s) over the summer/autumn in case you receive an unpleasant surprise on arrival in the paddock. If you find dead two-tooth or older ewes, invariably in good condition, sometimes with evidence of a khaki coloured scour round the rear end then get in contact with us immediately as *S. hindmarsh* is likely to be the culprit. Vaccination in the face of an outbreak is very effective and prompt antibiotic treatment of sick ewes (but not with penicillin!) can save a good percentage until the vaccine kicks in round 10 days after vaccination.

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Reminders

1. Anti-abortion Vaccines (in other words ToxoVax & CampyVax4) - **Both** these vaccines should be used by all sheep farmers who are serious about maximising their returns from lamb production. They both give worthwhile and proven benefits, and their use well and truly makes economic sense.

Remember that obvious abortions from Toxoplasma and Campylobacter are just the proverbial tip of the iceberg. The bigger loss is the loss of weak lambs born alive, but that subsequently struggle to survive and succumb in the first few days of life. For example a set of twins is born, one of the lambs is, due to earlier placental damage (but not enough to cause abortion), smaller and weaker, and dies even in reasonable weather. These losses, because of all the other usual issues going on at this time of the year e.g. mis-mothering, weather/storm type issues, metabolic diseases etc can be kind of hidden amongst all these other causes and as a result can be hard to recognise and quantify but work has repeatedly shown they can be quite a significant cause of lamb loss.

2. Injectable iodine - There are now 2 more or less identical products available, Flexidine (250ml) and Depodine (500ml). I carried out a trial (reported on in detail in the June 2015 newsletter) and confirmed that the standard 1.5ml dose given pre-tup lasts through lambing. The best time to give this is round 4 weeks pre-tup although we found in the trial that blood levels were elevated within 2 weeks of administration. So you could probably go down to 2 weeks pre-tup, but I think round 4 weeks would be the better option.

Pre-tup use of Flexidine or Depodine should improve the scanning % by 4 - 6% on average, but the bigger benefit is the variable but sometimes quite large improvements that occur in lamb survival.

Those of you who supplement iodine by oral dosing with Pot Iodide should give the correct dose (280mg) 1 - 2 weeks pre-tup. Watch out for the usual procession at this time of the year of snake-oil salesmen peddling apparent wonder brews. These often contain different ingredients but bugger all of any particular one so you end up wasting your money. If you're not sure bring in the label, or a list of the ingredients & their concentration and we can assess it for you.

3. Uddering Ewes: This should be done anytime from at least one month after weaning onwards. Doing it at, or soon after, weaning means you –

- Miss the significant number of cases (perhaps around 50%) that occur at or shortly after weaning.
- Are likely to cause more mastitis by yarding ewes with full engorged udders in grubby dusty yards
- Will have trouble feeling the udders anyway as they are distended with milk.

If you are not sure what is normal or abnormal mark the doubtful ones and we can check them for you and show

you what is what, so in the future you won't be throwing out perfectly good ewes, or vice versa, keeping some old tart that should be down the road!

4. Teaser Rams: As indicated in the last newsletter, these can be a useful tool to tighten up the lambing (especially with two-tooths), determine optimum mating dates, and if used with hoggets, increase their lifetime mating performance. We have already contacted the majority of those who indicated on their ram run form they wanted some done, but if you have neglected to return the form and want some done then time is running out to get it done as they need the 'snip' at least six weeks prior to use which is 17 days prior to mating.

5. Androvax/Ovastim Vaccination: There are certain instances where the use of one or other of these products to increase the number of lambs born (by 20 – 25%) can be useful. However if you are already scanning more than 160 - 165% (which is the majority of people) then these products are definitely **not** for you.

The programme is:

Previously unvaccinated stock:

Androvax - 1st dose 9 - 10 weeks pre-tup. 2nd dose exactly 1 month later.

Ovastim - 1st dose 6 - 9 weeks pre-tup. 2nd dose 3 weeks later at 2 - 4 weeks pre-tup.

Previously vaccinated stock:

Androvax - 1 dose 5 - 6 weeks pre-tup.

Ovastim - 1 dose 2 - 4 weeks pre-tup.

6. Yersiniosis in Deer: Yersiniosis is a very severe and highly infectious disease related to age, stress and exposure to the bacteria Yersinia. These bacteria are widespread and survive well in soil, water and pasture. Carrier animals can also shed the bacteria in faeces. It is the leading cause of death amongst fawns in autumn and winter. Weaned deer are most at risk and become infected round 4 - 8 months by eating faecally contaminated material. Symptoms include smelly green watery diarrhoea often turning dark or bloody. Sudden death can also be a symptom without signs of diarrhoea - an autopsy will be needed for diagnosis if this is the case. Most fawns will be exposed to the disease but will only develop clinical disease if under stress. Important stressors include weaning; poor nutrition; sudden changes in feed; mixing of deer groups; cold, wet, windy weather; yarding; transport; and heavy parasite burdens (especially lungworm).

The idea is to reduce the effects of these stressors:

- Look at the option of weaning before the rut when it is warmer and more feed is available.
- Have an effective parasite control programme.
- Vaccinate with the first dose of Yersiniavax **before** weaning to prevent clinical disease.
- Vaccinate from 12 weeks of age and ideally complete the 2 shot programme before weaning.
- Avoid vaccinating at weaning - the stress of this can compromise the effectiveness of the vaccine.

The aim of vaccinating is to prevent a serious epidemic occurring by reducing the spread of disease.

Vaccination in the face of an outbreak is ineffective - if you do have an outbreak the best thing is to try and identify the stressor and try to minimise the effect of it.

Pre-tup Blood Testing

As reported on in the February 2016 newsletter we now have a pretty accurate blood test to determine iodine levels. So far nearly all testing has revealed, at best, marginal levels in South Otago. In a trial in the Awamangu area 3 years ago the control ewes levels were marginal for the entire 11 months of the trial. The best time to check would be through February so if your levels are low/marginal then you have time to administer Flexidine or Depodine prior to mating which is the best time to use these products. The lab cost is around \$55 / head but because there is little variation in levels within a flock even just 3 bloods will tell the story so the total cost is not great. At the same time we could check Selenium levels (the other important pre-tup trace element) using the same bloods.

Beef Cow Pregnancy Testing

Pregnancy testing beef cattle is a great tool to sort out which cows to keep for next season. At Clutha Vets we use ultrasound probes that go in the cows rectum to scan the uterus and detect the foetus inside. To ensure 100% accuracy all cows that look dry on the scanner are manually tested (gloved) to confirm they really are dry as despite all the whizzy looking technology this is still the most reliable method of determining dries.

We recommend that pregnancy testing occurs at least 6 weeks after the bull is taken out. This guarantees that all late pregnancies can be detected. Cows can just be scanned wet or dry or late calves can be identified as well. If you do want to know the lates it is best if scanning occurs close to 6 weeks after the bull has been removed. Identifying the lates gives you the ability to manage them differently e.g. leaving them out on the hill or on crop longer and/or culling the tail end that will end up weaning smaller calves.

If you mate for 2 - 3 cycles only, then all pregnancies can be aged on one scan. If you mate for longer and want to know the calving dates for the early calving cows we would need to do 2 scans. The first scan will age the early pregnancies and should be 85 - 90 days post the start of mating. The cows in the mob that aren't detected pregnant at that stage are then rechecked 6 weeks after the bull has come out.

Clutha Vets pregnancy testing service offers the following benefits

- Fast accurate wet/dry scanning of cows.
- Very accurate identification of empty cows as they are rechecked by manual testing to definitely confirm they are indeed empty.

- Option to accurately age the foetus to predict calving dates.
- Knowledge to discuss and deal with any reproductive concerns including trace elements and BVD.
- Ability to treat sick cows or deal with other problems e.g. in-growing horns while on farm.

Lessons from the Spring of 2016

By Jillian Clark. Who can forget the great mid August – early October we had last year. Pasture covers and grass growth were higher than normal, lamb survival was high and lambs were exceptional at tailing which has followed through, despite more recent pretty average weather, to good weaning drafts.

Why?? Because the warm spring meant that ewes were being more closely fed to the actual feed requirements through lambing and early lactation. This meant ewes had a good supply of colostrum at lambing and allowed them to reach a higher peak lactation.

Certainly the lack of storms was a high contributor to increased lamb survival but improved colostrum quality and quantity will have also assisted.

The lesson here is that many don't have adequate grass covers at lambing and early lactation to capitalise on their ewes milking genetics. Also many don't have ewes in optimal body condition at lambing. The benefits of improved milking in the ewe carry right through to weaning and beyond. Can you afford not to capitalise on this? Have you thought about how you could improve Spring covers and ewe body condition at lambing for 2017. Winter crops and crop areas have already been set but there are still many decisions you can make to improve Spring covers and ewe condition from that achieved in the past.

ToxoVax Orders

A message from retail. Several of you have said that you haven't received a Toxo order form. These were sent out to **all** sheep farmers on our database along with and tucked inside the last newsletter which in turn was in with the December accounts (as has been the case for quite a number of years now). If you didn't have an account that particular month the order form and the newsletter were still sent out - we can identify clients without an account for exactly this type of purpose.

Anyway irrespective of whether you got one or not, as at the end of the day I can't absolutely guarantee there wasn't a mistake in the envelope stuffing process, make contact with the clinic to get your order in. February is a crunch month for ToxoVax orders and there will likely be a 3 - 4 week delay from order to delivery.