

**The Altar Boy**

An altar boy goes to confession:  
 "Bless me Father for I have sinned. I have been with a girl."  
 The priest asks, "Is that you little Joey Pagano?"  
 "Yes, Father, it is."  
 "And who was the girl you were with?"  
 "I can't tell you, Father, I don't want to ruin her reputation."  
 "Well, Joey, I'm sure to find out her name sooner or later so you may as well tell me now. Was it Tina Minetti?"  
 "I cannot say."  
 "Was it Teresa Mazzarelli?"  
 "I'll never tell."  
 "Was it Nina Capelli?"  
 "I'm sorry, but I cannot name her."  
 "Was it Cathy Piriano?"  
 "My lips are sealed."  
 "Was it Rosa DiAngelo, then?"  
 "Please, Father, I cannot tell you."  
 The priest sighs in frustration.  
 "You're very tight lipped and I admire that. but you've sinned and have to atone. You cannot be an altar boy now for 4 months. Now you go and behave yourself."  
 Joey walks back to his pew and his friend Franco slides over and whispers, "What'd you get?"  
 "Four months holiday and five good leads..."

**Deer Reminders**

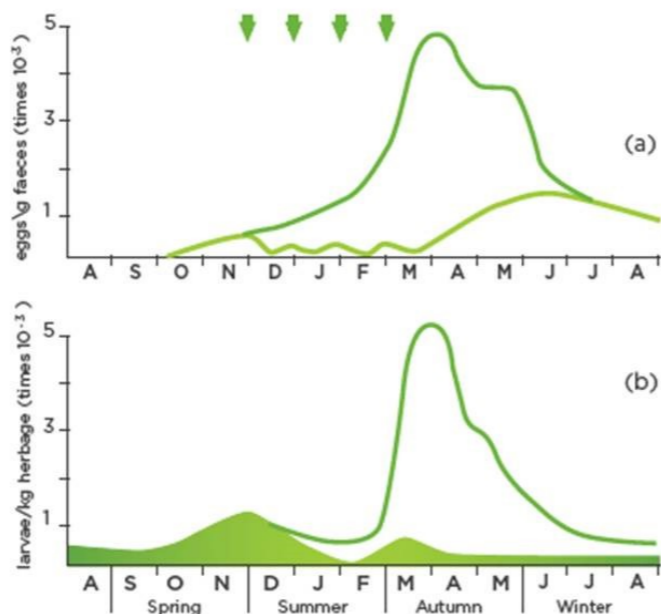
- Drench weaners
- Check copper & selenium status and treat if necessary
- Put chaser stags out

**Autumn Worms**

One of the reasons why we drench lambs at regular 21-28 day intervals is to maximise lamb growth. Another is to reduce worm burdens on the pasture. Worm eggs often sit quiet through summer but erupt when conditions are ideal (mild and wet) in autumn. This 'explosion' can be very severe especially if you have been trying to stretch out your drench interval. What does this look like? You may be starting to think that your drench isn't working, that lambs are looking 'wormy' again at - or even before - 3 weeks. While drench resistance is possible it is perhaps more likely that the drench worked fine but that the larval intake in the lambs is now so high that it is costing

the immune system greatly, resulting in reduced growth rates. What can you do? The larval burden is already there. You could try to select 'cleaner' paddocks for grazing the lambs now. Don't graze lambs on weaning areas now (in autumn) and minimise their grazing on lambing paddocks if possible also. For cattle, shift weaners off summer areas in autumn and try to avoid their winter pastures in autumn also. You might consider knock out drenching - especially if you are concerned about drench resistance. This is where you substitute one of your usual drenches with a new family. This is most effective in early autumn to try to prevent an autumn larval peak of resistant parasites on pasture. Next season be sure to stick to the recommended 21-28 day drench program using an effective combination drench and don't forget tools like using older stock to clean up behind the lambs, integrate stock classes, cropping etc.  
 Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS

The effect of four x monthly drenches from weaning on (a) the faecal egg output of lambs and (b) the pattern of larval availability on pasture. Anthelmintic treatment from (Brunsdon, 1981).



**Sheep Reminders**

- FEC ewe lambs
- Record mating data
- Check and change ram harnesses
- Check foot conditions in rams
- Teasers out with hoggets

1. Situation comment, Superbugs, Duck Dog WOF
2. Trace Elements, Brucella Ovis Still Exists
3. Equine Sarcoid, Mineral Max, Leptospirosis
4. Autumn Worms

**Situation Comment**

It was nice to see summer eventually, even if only for a short period of time. Whilst growth has slowed, plenty of supplementary feed has been harvested. It would be a good idea to have some of this feed analysed as the quality maybe poorer than expected. Empty rates in the dairy cows are unfortunately at an all time high averaging 17% on fertility focus reports and 15% tested on the day. There was a major fall off in conception rates across the board in the second three weeks of mating coinciding with feed quality and quantity (due to very low dry matter percentages). Congratulations to local farmers Hamish and Miriam MacKay and the Heslip families on receiving awards for the Glammies at the Wanaka Show. Animal welfare and AMR (antimicrobial resistance) are the two main areas of international veterinary and political focus currently. As always we will do our utmost to help improve standards in these areas. On a lighter note St Patricks weekend in Dublin was a great place to be when Ireland dented another record streak!!

**Superbugs - The Threat of Antibiotic Resistance**

Resistance of bacteria to antibiotics is on the rise worldwide and New Zealand is not immune. The Chief Medical Officer of Great Britain has described it as "a catastrophic threat" and warnings about the likelihood of deaths in future from infections we currently routinely cure have prompted others to speak of "the post-antibiotic age" when diseases like Scarlet fever and Typhus once again cause significant death and suffering. The use of antibiotics in animals is always a significant part of these discussions. While the scientific link between animal treatment and human resistance is often difficult to prove, there is no denying



the political and public perception backlash against the use of drugs in food producing animals. On the political front the Dutch government legislated a 70% reduction of antibiotic usage in animals between 2011 and 2017. On the public perception front we see statements like "Recognize meat for what it really is: the antibiotic- and pesticide-laden corpse of a tortured animal." Ingrid Newkirk, cofounder of PETA. New Zealand's dairy industry faces a challenge to deal with these forces in the very near future with the move away from using antibiotic to prevent infections over the dry period, that is the blanket use of Dry Cow Therapy. We have just received a new tool to help us face this challenge, the Antibiogram.

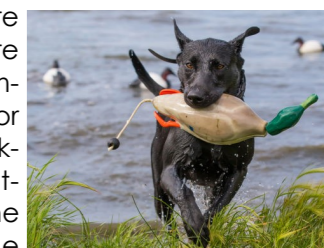
**The Antibiogram test will allow a resistance profile to be built for your farm using bulk milk samples.** The bugs in the sample are grown and tested to determine what drugs are working and which are not. It will also show you what the country as a whole looks like. This will allow for better decisions when thinking about what tube to use and may help cut down on repeat treatments and extended courses of treatment. Call Riversdale or Te Anau clinics to find out more.

Michael Baer BVSc



**Duck Dog WOF**

Duck shooting season is fast approaching! Bring your duck dog in for their annual WOF during April and we will make sure they are 100% ready for opening weekend! The vet will give them a thorough check over and this is also a good time to ensure they are up to date with vaccinations and worming, especially if going onto properties where sheep are run. Make sure your faithful companion is ready for the opening weekend of duck shooting and go into the draw to win the cost of your consult back.



## Trace Elements

Late autumn and winter can be a stressful time for livestock. It is important that trace elements are not limiting their performance over this time. Checking their levels in autumn can prevent unnecessary lost production or performance and is much easier now than once on crop or at a runoff.

Some elements are tested accurately by blood but others, e.g. copper, are best tested via the liver, where it is stored. (Blood tests for copper is like looking at the trough, as opposed to liver tests where you are checking the tank.) We can easily test live animals on farm, including cattle, lambs (and even deer) by taking a small liver biopsy. Local anaesthetic is used but in cattle and sheep sedation is not necessary. Lambs are held on their side while cattle often stand quietly chewing their cud!



**Copper**  
Copper for cattle and deer is of particular interest as it will soon be on its downward curve so we need to know what we have in reserve. Deficiency may go unnoticed or may show as:

- loss of coat colour (brown or blonde tinges)
- diarrhoea
- poor growth, lower fertility and milk yields
- skeletal defects – sway back, weakness, fractures, joint lesions (especially deer)
- anaemia – lethargy
- heart failure

Note many of these signs can be due to parasitism – but parasitism also will reduce copper absorption! Soil and plant tests are not reliable tests for animal requirements. Yes animals can be deficient if there is not enough copper in the diet, but it is being bound by other minerals like molybdenum, iron and sulphur. Wet soils in winter, high organic matter, and over liming can also trap copper making it less available.

Some farms routinely give copper in autumn without testing but care must be taken particularly in dairy systems using palm kernel, as toxicity causing death is a real possibility.

Treatment options include:

**Capsules** – administered orally, slow release and safe, last for between 5-12 months. However these can still be inhibited by other elements in the gut.

**Injection** – last at least 4 months but is usually enough to see us through winter. This method will bypass any inhibition in the gut.

**Drenching** – only last about a week, levels in worm

drenches are low.

**Salt licks** – highly variable uptake (take care with tex-el sheep)

**Top dressing** – 5-10 kg copper sulphate/ha (or oxide) annually can be costly. Don't graze within 3 weeks. Poisoning on landing strips is possible! Direct supplementing the animal is probably more cost effective and reliable.

**Note:** Injections MUST be under the skin, not into muscle and be clean as abscesses can occur. And take care not to jab one twice. Stressed animals can get a sudden release of copper so to reduce risk of toxicity, reduce stress – muster quietly, keep yarding short, avoid hot days and don't do at the same time as other products or activities.

Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS



## Cattle Reminders

- Pregnancy test
- Beef weaners - drench
- Review mastitis control - plan dry cow therapy
- Vaccinate for Salmonella
- Liver biopsy check for copper and selenium or check cull cow livers at works
- Lepto herd
- Drench cows at least 4 weeks pre dry off
- Dry off poorer condition cows and culls
- Lepto booster for calves vaccinated early

## Brucella ovis Still Exists!

We had a **new case** of Brucellosis in rams this year. It still astounds me that NZ (or at least Northern Southland) has not eradicated this disease. Unfortunately for this to happen, everyone needs to be on board which is not the case.

*B. ovis* is most commonly introduced via new or rogue rams and spreads rapidly once rams are romantically active in shortening day length.

Another way can be through the ewe that may have seen a rogue infected ram - any ram that follows within 11 months could potentially pick up the disease from her tract. So if you have had early lambs you may be at risk and your scanning may suffer.

I feel we all have some responsibility in eradicating *B. ovis*. for our neighbours and our own farms benefits.

## Pet Reminders

- Duck dog W.O.F
- Worm cats and dogs

## Equine Sarcoid

A sarcoid is a tumour found on the skin of horses. It is one of the most common skin neoplasias seen in horses. It is generally benign and non-life-threatening but can be locally invasive. Sarcoids can have several different appearances and sometimes look like a thickened and bleeding area (ulceration) that may crust over as it heals.

There are six different classifications of sarcoids based on their appearance:

### 1. Nodular sarcoids

- Firm, raised circular nodules
- 5 – 20 mm in diameter

Usually in the sheath/groin area and eyelids

### 2. Fibroplastic sarcoids

- Proliferative, fleshy, and ulcerative

Usually along the groin, lower legs and eyelid

### 3. Verrucous sarcoids

- Wart-like appearance

Can occur anywhere along face, body and groin area

### 4. Occult or flat sarcoids

- Flat, circular thickened areas
- May also appear as small nodules 2 – 5 mm in diameter

Usually found on the neck, mouth, eyes and inside of the thighs and upper forelegs.

### 5. Malevolent sarcoids

- Appear as multiple nodules

Are locally invasive and occasionally infiltrate the local lymphatic system, appearing like cords under the skin.

### 6. Mixed sarcoids

- Lesions appear as a mix of the ones mentioned above.

This type is more typical of a sarcoid that has been on the horse for a long time or has experienced some sort of trauma.

Sarcoids can often be identified by appearance and location; however, a skin biopsy is needed to give a definitive diagnosis. A biopsy can cause the tumour to become irritated and worsen so may not be recommended.

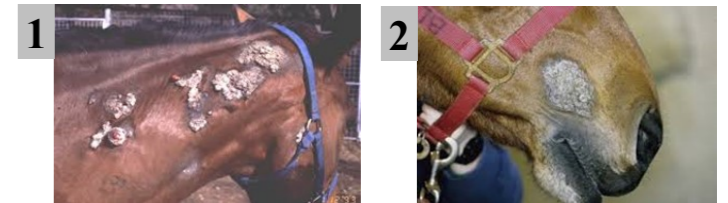
Sarcoids are difficult to treat and there is no single best therapy to use. There are over 40 treatment methods including surgical removal (excision), freezing therapy (cryotherapy), laser treatments, topical chemotherapeutic drugs, injection of a chemotherapeutic drug into the tumor, radiowave therapy and heat treatment. There is no one treatment that is a definitive cure.

Recurrence of the tumors is common after removal but they do not tend to spread to internal organs

like some other cancers (metastasize). Because of this, the best option may be to not treat the sarcoid at all, only leave it alone unless it is inflamed or causing the horse pain.

There are several theories as to why sarcoids occur but an exact answer has not yet been found. There is no vaccine on the market currently and there are no methods for prevention.

Megan Reidie BVSc



Name the types of Sarcoids in the above pictures and email your answers to [admin@nsvets.co.nz](mailto:admin@nsvets.co.nz) to go in the draw to win a prize.

## MineralMax

### Strategic trace element monitoring

Available for Dairy, Beef, Sheep and Deer of all age classes.

By joining **MineralMax** you will receive:

- Customised sampling dates
- Reminders before each appointment
- A discounted price on lab fees

## Horse Reminders

- Vaccinate foals for Salmonellosis, Tetanus & Strangles

## LEPTOspirois

Just a reminder that we are approaching a high risk period in Southland for leptospirosis. If you haven't already, arrange your herd's annual vaccination now. Also don't forget your heifers - wherever they may be - and your calves if necessary to align them with your herd vaccination programme.