

SITUATION COMMENT

While it seems much of the world is in turmoil, and the news is filled with madness, it is nice to flick off all media for a while and find ourselves in that splendid gap between Xmas and New Year where no one knows what day of the week it is, what's open and what's not, or if the bins need to go out. Many of us are never eating again, (as I scoff another wayward scorched almond) except for ham sandwiches, ham toasties, ham steak... or perhaps this year it was the \$20 leg of lamb on the menu (turns out we should not have picked from the paddock this year, and just bought 5 of those)!

Thanks to all of you that hoped for rain this Christmas, what a help that has been, in the nick of time. Now we see a surge of feed, but also humidity and seedhead to house the flies, so hopefully the dipping gear has been getting a workout for prevention (rather than next week's treatment) of flystrike.

Dairy scanning has just started on the heifers, but non return rates have been good in the herds so we are looking forward to what could be a good conception season(?).

Our friends in the North have been battling with lungworm in calves so don't forget to switch to a drench with an ML active for better persistence of control in this species, the warm humid weather favors these critters too.

With many of our staff taking some time off over this holiday period, I hope you too manage to have a break and chance to do something you love. Lock in those resolutions and we look forward to seeing you back in 2024 (when we inevitably break them)! Happy New Year!

Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS

BIT OF A LAUGH

For my wife's Christmas present, I took her to an orchard and we stood there looking at the trees for half an hour.



Not the apple Watch she was expecting apparently.

Pet Reminders

- Check for barley grass
- Worm & flea prevention and treatment
- Pet Fun Day 25th Jan, Rvd

Cattle Reminders

- Early pregnancy testing
- Check lame cows
- Rotate breeding bulls
- Dairy calves—worm control, FEC, Lepto vaccinate (if not already done)
- Arrange winter grazing

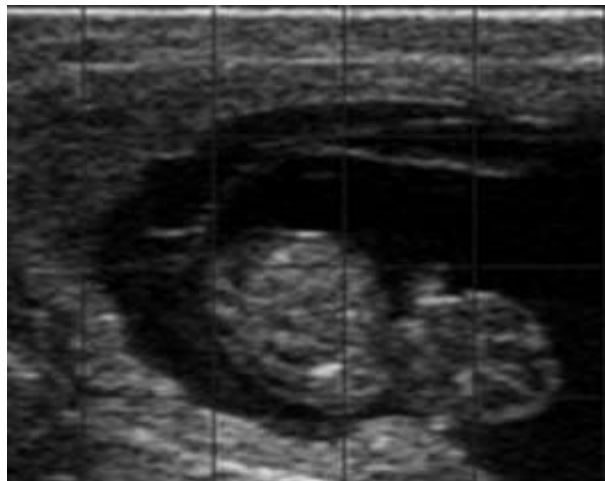
SCANNING REMINDER

If you haven't already, get your scanning dates booked in. Early scanning is much more accurate for aging and will allow you to...

Confirm conception dates: It is not uncommon to find a cow with several AI dates actually conceived at the first one! We also often find animals with pregnancies that do not match any recorded matings. Assess mating plan: helps to assess CR, and bull performance (or lack of) to accurately review your mating program and make adjustments for next year.

Plan for dry off: For targeted dry off decisions to meet BCS targets at calving, and identify late calvers as possible culls

Wintering: Helps calculate grazing days for feed budgeting, and implement more precise winter management, around feed allocation and dates for staggered return home from grazing.



Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS

Horse Reminders

- Worming treatment for foals
- Check condition of brood mares
- Dental check horses not holding condition

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FLEAS

Summer is here at long last and with it comes an increase in our cases of itchy dogs and skin problems. Some common signs of a skin problem:

- Itchy Skin
- Bald Patches
- Dry Flaky Skin
- Red Sores or Rash
- Smelly Weepy Skin
- Coat Colour Change

There are many causes of skin problems but the two most common are fleas and allergies, both of which become more prevalent in the summer months.

There are now many products available for the treatment of fleas, with protection lasting from one month for some and others up to twelve months for a single treatment.

It is important when treating fleas to not just concentrate on what's on the animal. If a flea problem has become well established, then those little critters will have been laying hundreds, if not thousands of eggs that fall off the animal and get spread around the home/farm environment. In warm conditions the eggs can survive for many months and will periodically hatch, creating new waves of infection.

Longer acting products are useful in this scenario as any hatching fleas will be killed before they lay any eggs, thereby perpetuating the problem. There are also products available for the treatment of the environment. These not only kill the fleas but can also contain substances that stop the eggs from hatching.

It is also important to realise that not all dogs react to the flea bites the same; some dogs can have large numbers of fleas but may not be very itchy and conversely, some dogs can be very itchy but have very small numbers of fleas. In these dogs, what we are actually seeing is an allergic reaction to the bites.

If you have a dog that is itchy and fleas are seen, it is important that all dogs and cats in the household are treated, or they will simply act as a source of further infestation. It does not matter whether they are actually itchy or not.

While fleas are not the only cause of itchy pets, studies have shown that more than 60% of skin problems have fleas as a component of the problem. When pets are found to have a seasonal, food or environmental allergy, establishing good flea control is one of the first things to address on the pathway to medication. If you have a pet allergic to other things, they will most likely be allergic to the fleas as well.

Please get in touch with one of our clinics if you have any questions, we can help you find a product to suit you.



Mike Tapper BVSc BSc

HEATSTROKE IS AN EMERGENCY!

It's that time of the year again when dogs are at risk of overheating and developing life-threatening signs of heatstroke. This doesn't just occur after excessive exercise, but if confined somewhere without shade (eg clipped to a fence) or somewhere without air flow (eg in a dog box or ute). As farmers, you expect your working dogs to start panting after mustering in a mob on a hot day. But how do you know when your dog is getting too hot and needs to be cooled off rapidly, or more importantly, needs to be taken to the vet? Look for:

- Excessive panting and salivating
- Bright red, sticky gums
- Feeling hot to the touch
- Vomiting, diarrhoea
- Weakness, wobbliness, collapse

If these signs occur, give us a call as we will probably recommend that you bring your dog to the clinic as soon as possible. Let your dog cool off in the water trough, but ideally water should be cool, not cold, as colder water will cause blood vessels in the skin to constrict and heat to be diverted to vital organs, causing damage. Transport your dog to the vets in the front seat with the air conditioning on, or have the windows down in the back so there's plenty of air flow. At the vet clinic, we can cool dogs down from the inside with IV fluids and run bloods to check for organ damage.

The longer your dog is overheating for, the longer it's vital organs are being "cooked", and potentially causing irreversible damage. Kidneys in particular are prone to heatstroke damage and kidney failure can occur. Do not wait to see if your dog recovers overnight – bring him in promptly so that treatment can be initiated as soon as possible.

Nuria Holzleg BVM BVS

WORMWATCH JANUARY

Parasite management is more than just 'drench down the throat' and as we move into the middle of summer it is important to consider what the likely larval challenge is and how we can reduce it. The aim of any parasite management plan is to minimise production losses, reduce larval contamination of pasture and maintain the efficacy of our drenches. When parasite burdens are high enough, then we can look to drench, but we also need to consider how we are providing refugia.

Make sure you continue to check your drench is working by doing a FEC 10 days after drenching. This is as simple as pushing lambs into the corner of the paddock and collecting 10 fresh (warm) samples from the ground and bringing them to the clinic.

Faecal egg count reduction tests (FECRT)

Those of you that are still interested in a faecal egg count reduction test, remember to keep those 100 lambs undrenched and keep them in with the other lambs to help get them wormy enough. If you haven't contacted us or have any questions, please give us a call at the clinic.

Andrew Cochrane BVSc

Deer Reminders

- Cut velvet re-growth

SEEN ANY LAMBS STAR GAZING RECENTLY?

In the last week we have had a number of enquiries regarding lambs star gazing and acting as if they are blind. These are 2 classic signs of Polioencephalomalacia - more commonly known as **Polio** or **PEM**.

Polio is a central nervous system disease of lambs, hoggets, goats and calves after weaning. It is often the good-doers that are affected. It is often associated with feed changes, generally low ME/high fibre to high ME/low fibre feeds. Subsequently, different rumen bacteria proliferate, producing a thiamine (Vitamin B1) destroying enzyme, Thiaminase, causing B1 deficiency. If thiamine is low, then there is no energy to pump out sodium from brain cells. Water follows salt, so these brain cells are loaded with sodium, then swell with water and die as they are compressed against the skull! This explains the following neurological clinical signs:

- Blindness—may walk in circles
- Star gazing/neck arched back
- Incoordination, staggers
- Rigidity/stretched out limbs
- Recumbent
- Eyes flicking
- Frothing at the mouth
- Seizures
- Sudden death

If you see these signs call the vet as soon as possible, treatment needs to be given before brain damage sets in.



Jill MacGibbon BVMS

UDDERING EWES REMINDER

On most farms, about 5% of ewes have issues in the udder. While weaning may be the most convenient time to check udders, this will only identify a proportion of the issues.

Massey University found that 50% of lambs born to ewes with an udder defect would die, and the ones that live will be on average 2kg lighter at weaning, equivalent to 11kg of lamb weight per ewe.

The best time to check udders is 4-6 weeks after weaning, up the race, and hands on.

Cull for hardness and lumps, abscesses, and teat cords. This feels like a pencil lead in the teat canal when you roll the teat between your thumb and finger. It is essentially a blind teat. I appreciate you will be well sick of the yards by this time and it is not a quick job but is important for improving lamb survival on farm.

This is also another opportunity to condition score the girls too (if not done at weaning) so that BCS <2.5 ewes can be separated from the main mob to put on condition for mating, not used to tidy up paddocks.

Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS

SUMMER SWELLINGS

When the summer warms up a bit we get some flush in our horse pastures. Add a little bit of rain and even under controlled grazing a feed change can sneak up on us. This is thought to be the cause of a slightly odd condition we see from time to time of grass related odema. Odema is fluid trapped within the tissues, and in this case it is seen in the horses legs, or brisket or sheath or even their cheeks (where gravity lets the fluid lie). Luckily the condition doesn't seem to be painful, and usually resolves once the horse is held off or on restricted green feed and ample hay is fed. Providing salt may help. Lead walking or light exercise will help the swelling to subside also.

It is important to monitor your horse – if they are a bit off colour, or the swelling is hot or painful, there could be something more sinister going on (like cellulitis or lymphangitis) which will definitely require veterinary attention. It is always a good idea to check with your vet.

Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS

Sheep Reminders

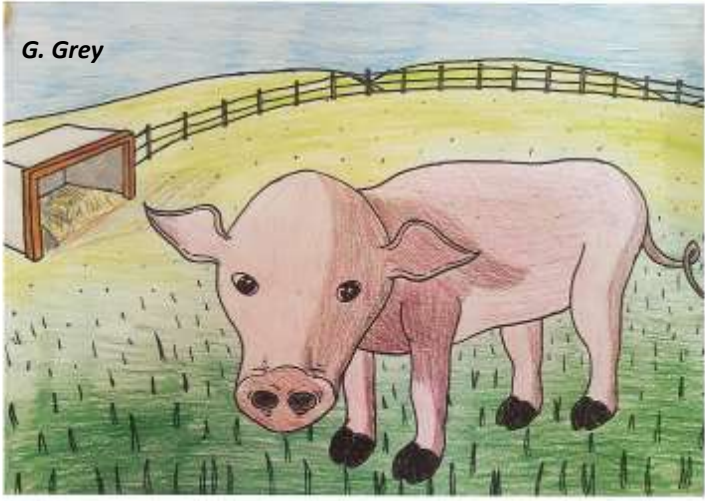
- Monitor trace elements
- Monitor worm burden in lambs
- Check rams
- Vaccinate lambs pulpy kidney
- Dip sheep flystrike
- Vasectomise rams
- Monitor lamb growth rates
- Faecal egg count reduction test (FECRT)
- Organise abortion vaccine requirements



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January 2024 VetTIMES



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