

FEEDING HIGH NITRATE PASTURES

Here at NSVets we can test your feed for the nitrate poisoning risk level. Samples are best taken earlier in the day when levels are highest. Allow an hour for the result.

Risk factors for nitrate accumulation in plants:

- Overcast weather.
- Immature plants.
- Recent Nitrate fertiliser application.
- Brassica, cereal grasses and annual grasses most risky.
- Morning shifts—nitrates build up overnight.

How can I prevent the risk of nitrate poisoning?

- Feed suspect crop later in the day, but allow at least 4 hours before dark.
- Gradual feed introduction.
- Provide supplements, reduce grazing time and prevent gorging by not putting on feed when hungry.
- Regularly checking cattle for signs of toxicity (including around 4 hours after the introduction of suspect feeds).
- If tests high, avoid feeding and retest in a few days.

What signs should I be looking out for when checking stock?

- Muscle trembling, incoordination (appear drunk).
- Dribbling, open mouth—breathing/puffing.
- Abdominal pain, diarrhoea.
- Recumbancy/down, death.
- May notice gums being a muddy brown colour rather than pink.
- Death can occur in an hour, or within a day of a toxic dose.

If you see these signs, call the Vet.

Samantha Edgar BVSc MANZCVS

Sheep Reminders

- Vaccinate 2 tooth—2nd vaccine of Salmonella Brandenburg
- Re-evaluate winter feed budget
- FEC ewe lambs
- Introduce winter feeding
- Condition score hoggets and ewes
- Vaccinate mixed aged ewes—Salmonella Brandenburg

Deer Reminders

- TB test
- Pregnancy scanning
- Weaners—drench for lungworm
- Liver copper & selenium check dry hinds
- Drench stags

PETS CORNER—JUNE IS ARTHRITIS MONTH!

Arthritis affects 1 in 5 dogs and 1 in 3 cats – could your animal be one of them?

Arthritis is particularly common in large breed dogs, especially in working dogs where animals have had an active life and often have old injuries that can accelerate arthritic change. Cats are often much better at hiding clinical signs of arthritis, so the signs to look out for a more subtle. As winter approaches, the cold weather can make the symptoms worse and more obvious (just like in humans).

Some signs to look out for in dogs:

- Are they slower to get going in the morning?
- Are they reluctant to jump up onto the ute, into the car or to go up stairs?
- Are they stiff or slow after a big day exercising?

Some signs to look out for in cats:

- Is your cat spending more time sleeping?
- Are they hesitant to jump off high things? (such as the bed)
- Do they have trouble grooming, especially around the back and tail?

June is arthritis month at NSVets – bring your animal in for a discounted consultation fee of \$30, and if x-rays are needed receive them for the discounted amount of \$90.

Arthritis results in chronic pain and we can help manage this using a range of tools, making your animals as comfortable as possible in their later years.

Ring us today to book in your consult for June.

Rebecca Morley BVSc BSc

Pet Reminders

- Check diet for winter
- Check bedding warmth for winter
- Arthritis month

PRE-LAMB TREATMENT

It is never too soon to start thinking about your pre-lamb treatment plan for ewes. Advertising will soon be rife on the radio and in our local rags. We do encourage you to ask us about the pros and cons before you make your choice.

Things to consider are:

1. Drenching.
2. Clostridial vaccination.
3. Mineral supplementation.

Whilst it would be nice to apply a rule for all farms to follow, it is not this simple. Treatment options will differ markedly between farms and between seasons on individual farms. The one constant is clostridial vaccination. A booster administered 3-4 weeks pre-lamb will provide protection of lambs for 8 weeks, assuming they receive adequate colostrum and that ewes have received sensitiser doses.

Drenching and mineral supplementation however, is another kettle of fish and should be tailored to your individual property. Long-acting drenches continue to receive a lot of press regarding both the benefits and pitfalls of their use. Put simply, long acting drenches WILL increase the likelihood of resistance developing on your farm, but managed correctly these effects can be minimised whilst productivity and return on investment can be maximised.

Some general rules around pre-lamb drenching:

- Every drench given increases drench resistance
- Combination are better than single actives
- Targeting treatments to ewes that will benefit most will see the best return on investment (i.e. skinny ewes, multiple bearing ewes)
- Consider what refugia looks like on your property
- If you drench, consider using priming and/or exit drenches

Talk to your vet to tailor a plan that will best suit your farming situation.

Andrew Cochrane BVSc

IODINE

It is known that feeding brassicas can lead to goitre, consider supplementing stock with iodine such as:

- Flexidine (limited stock now available)
- LSD
- Potassium Iodide



SITUATION COMMENT

It was with sadness for all at NSVets that Paul did not renew his veterinary registration after 46 continuous years as the onerous requirements for continuing education did not appeal any more. He has been a stalwart of the practice since before most of the other vets were born. His local knowledge is unparalleled and his expertise in sheep, beef and deer in particular is hard to replace. He certainly fits the picture of forgetting more than most of us will ever know. Fortunately, however he will still be around as our “delivery driver”.

We haven't seen too much of the other vets around the clinics lately with heifer teatsealing, dry cowing and end of season scans in full swing. The Dairy Management Training seminars are all organised as are the Winter Woolies days. Check the various forms of media for details.

At the time of writing the government decision around Mycoplasma bovis has not yet been finalised. A phased eradication looks most likely. Rest assured as Northern Southland's vets we are not servicing any dairy farms on Waiheke island – we remain local!!! Morgan, Rochelle, Sam and Rebecca have all attended various conferences recently covering all the major farm species. The national veterinary conference will also be attended later in June.

Finally, some sincere best wishes to those that are moving on from Northern Southland and welcome to those that are moving here. We hope you settle in well and look forward to working with you over the months and years ahead.

M. BOVIS UPDATE

Government goes with phased eradication. 3 main reasons:

- Single genetic strain only identified thus far.
- All positives interconnected thus far.
- Economically justified.

If these points change, then the government's decision may change.

Well done to Damien O'Connor on getting this through – as a farmer he understands the needs of the farming community. He will be ploughing a fairly lonely furrow in government and in my opinion doing a good job so far.

Morgan Greene MVB MANZCVS (Animal Reproduction)

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ACIDOSIS

This is a metabolic condition common in Southland, particularly with fodder beet feeding. It may result in mild illness of a few of the mob right through to the death of many. Rapid recognition and intervention is vital, but prevention is key.

Cause: Excessively rapid rumen fermentation of unusual (larger than used to) amounts of carbohydrate. (e.g. grain, brassica, fodder beet)

What: High carbohydrate causes a shift in Volatile Fatty Acid (VFA) metabolism from acetic acid to propionic and butyric acid. This favours lactic acid producing bacteria and lowers the rumen pH (acidic). The rumen lining gets inflamed and ulcerated (rumenitis) allowing bacteria out of the gut, fluid is drawn into the rumen (dehydration and sloshy gut sounds), blood becomes more acidic, cow goes down, comma, death (in as little as 6-10 hours).

Signs: Not eating, dull, wobbly gait, grinding teeth (from gut pain), rapid heart beat, distended rumen, sloshy gut sounds, pale runny bubbly poo, to down cows, in pain, progressing to milk fever like symptoms.

Response:

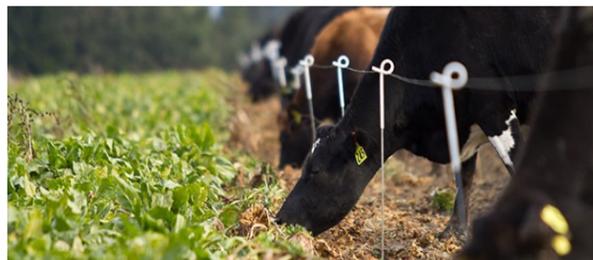
- Remove affected animals from the source.
- Change the rumen pH – (Mag Oxide or our ask about our Triple A drench).
- Give ad lib good quality grass and hay (to stimulate saliva a natural buffer).
- Call vet.

Delayed issues:

- Gut ulcers.
- Liver and lung abscesses.
- Peritonitis.
- Laminitis/lameness.
- Twisted gut.

Prevention:

- Correct transition! - It takes at least four weeks for the rumen absorptive surface (papillae) to elongate and adapt to be better equipped for VFA absorption, and may take 60 days to be complete!



- Encourage salivation with fibre - saliva is the animal's natural buffer.

Diets should have >32% effective neutral detergent fibre (NDF).

50% of the herd should be seen chewing (grazing or ruminating). Or this suggests a shortage of fibre.

Fibre should be of sufficient length with at least 25% of the forage component of the diet 10cm or more in length.

Animals need to be able to access the fibre – feed it along the ground or have one feeder per 20 animals!

Feed fibre source prior to moving the break so animals are less hungry.

- Double fence for some protection in the case of a break out.
- Having animals fully fed and content will reduce gorging at shift time and in a break out.
- Monensin, (E.g. rumenox) a rumen modifier, may help by increasing propionate and pH, and inhibiting lactate producing rumen bacteria.
- Neutralizing agents can be included in the diet MgO at 30-45 gm/head/day in a way that it is actually consumed not wasted.

Cattle Reminders

- Lice control
- Milking machine annual check
- Calf rearers (organise suitable housing and milk powder requirements)
- Rotavirus vaccination
- Salmonella vaccination
- In calf fertility focus review
- Preferentially feed light cows
- Teat seal heifers



ROTAVIRUS, OUR TOP CALF KILLER?

Rotavirus is our number one diagnosis in calf scours presented to the clinic. It can have devastating effects on growth rates and survival, It also allows other bugs to take hold. As well as being transmissible to humans the stress on the shed and the rearers can be immense, but it can be prevented for a similar price as just ONE 2L feed of commercial electrolyte.

Where does it come from?

Calves pick up the virus from the paddock, usually off their mother who may be a carrier in their faeces. Calves then bring it into the shed spreading it to others although they themselves may not be ill. Infected animals shed vast amounts of virus, contaminating the environment. One infected calf can shed enough virus particles to infect 10,000 other calves!!

What does it do?

The virus behaves in a similar manner to the highly contagious parvo virus we vaccinate our dogs against. It essentially chops off the absorptive surface of the gut causing more secretion and fluid loss, as well as reducing the ability to absorb nutrients. Calves who develop a scour, are more susceptible to other infections and begin the downward spiral of dehydration and malnourishment that is difficult to climb out of. Treatment consists of isolation, and supportive care with tube feeding and electrolytes. Rotagen has also been helpful.

Rotagen

Rotagen is an aid in the prevention and treatment of scours in neonatal calves. This product comes in a powdered form, which is given in a three to five day course. It can be mixed and drenched separately or added to milk.

Rotavirus Vaccination

- Vaccinate the cow to boost antibodies in the colostrum. There are several available.
- Does require accuracy of timing of vaccine, colostrum collection, and feeding of the colostrum.
- Depending on the vaccine, one 2ml dose injected into the muscle between 3-12 weeks from calving (3 weeks before PSC should cover most calving spreads)
- First day good quality colostrum must be collected from the cow and stored correctly. It mustn't be diluted with poor colostrum
- Good hygiene and management practices are still essential to compliment the vaccine
- To get the best value from vaccination, good colostrum feeding is critical. Calves must get 2 – 3.5 litres of first day colostrum within 6 – 12 hours of birth while colostrum antibodies are at their highest.

If you have concerns about rotavirus in your calves, simply bring in a poo sample and we can test it on our calf scour panel!

- They then need 2.5 - 3 litres of stored or fresh colostrum daily during the first high risk 2–3 weeks (longer if possible) to provide the vital localised protection at gut level.



WORMING REMINDER

If your horse hasn't received a drench this calendar year it would be advisable to do so. We do advocate moving away from over drenching by:

- 1) Using egg counts (FEC) - that we can do in the clinic
- 2) By following good pasture management, picking up the poop, and cross grazing with other species where possible.

Although with fading daylight, we often get a little slack at picking up the poop. As well as this, horses are often grazing lower now and into the poo patches a little more, increasing the risk of larval intake. Despite all this, regardless of faecal egg count results, we recommend always drenching with a moxidectin and praziquantel combination in Autumn to prevent encysted cyathostomes ('red worms'). These are not seen in faecal egg counts and cause a lot of damage, particularly in young horses. Happy Horse Clients should have received theirs now, for everyone else come and get yours today!



Horse Reminders

- Supplementary feed horses over winter
- Clip horses for hunting
- Lice treatment