

## STAFF COMMENT

Thanks for opening this newsletter! I wonder if you noticed there was no letter in May, as we have decided to reduce the newsletter to bi-monthly.

There have been no staff departures to report, but some farms may have met the lovely Kate Lane, a Vet friend of Nuria's that has been locuming for us. Sadly, she will finish her stint soon but will be replaced by another locum in July. It has been great to secure these extra hands to allow our stalwarts to take some built up annual leave during the (slightly) quieter period.

So what have we been up to? Drying off cows, teat sealing, body condition scoring, liver biopsying and blood testing seems to be occurring most days. Thankfully the run on GDVs (Dog twisted guts) that came through both clinics seems to have stopped. As it is now getting (bitterly) colder, the rats are showing up again – remember to nail those baits down, well away from any pet access.

Some of you may have attended the annual Balfour Theatre Restaurant of which we are proud to be long-time sponsors. 'Queen' made an appearance this year, funny how I had not previously noticed the resemblance to some of our own boys? *(evidence below)*



Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS

## Contents

Pg 1 :  
-Staff Comment  
-Benefits of dentals

Pg 2 :  
-Calcium Caps  
-Salmonella

Pg 3 :  
-Healthy Nutrition  
-Toxins

## 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

## Pet Reminders

- Check diet for winter
- Check bedding warmth for winter
- Dental month—book your pet in for a Dental check today

## BENEFITS OF DENTALS

Bad breath keeping you from letting the dog up onto the couch, or the cat on the bed? The cause could be down to dental disease which affects 85% of dogs and cats older than two years.

The presence of tartar (the brown, stinky material at the base of some teeth) is not the true criminal, though it does provide a good home for bacteria and smells. The true damage starts with an invisible attacker. Plaque is a film of bacteria which sets up camp on teeth. This is highly irritating to gums, resulting in pain and sometimes bleeding. As it progresses, it causes damage underneath the gums, gaps form beneath teeth and the bone surrounding their pearly whites begins to shrink. Teeth become wiggly and often need to be removed.

We can't just ignore dental disease at any stage. It is one of the most common health problems your pet will face. The good news is, there are things we can do to prevent disease occurring and to treat it if it is already there.

Regular dental procedures are recommended to halt disease. This involves cleaning, removing tartar and loose teeth and then polishing. Not only does this remove the smelly breath but it helps to get rid of the pesky bacteria that are causing all the problems. In terms of preventing the need for a dental procedure, we have plenty of options. From specialised food, teeth-cleaning treats and even pet toothpaste!

If you're concerned about the health of your pet's mouth, book them in for a check up with a vet who can let you know what a tailored treatment plan will look like for you.

Holly Gardyne BVSc

## Horse Reminders

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



## CALCIUM CAPSULES

Many of our clients have had great success with using calcium bolus' at calving. Some have lowered their incidence of down cows to 10% of their usual number of cases. One farmer said it was "like day and night".

It is fabulous that these have been able to prevent down cows we all know how frustrating and time consuming these can be! But let's not forget the benefit you will see on the subclinical cases. More than half of dairy cows have hypocalcaemia (low blood calcium) in the first 3 days after calving. For every clinical case of a down cow there will be 10 cows still standing that are also affected.

Subclinical hypocalcaemia cows produce 7% less milk during lactation (clinical cases produce 14% less milk – or 100% less if they die!) Hypocalcaemia is implicated in LDAs (twisted stomach), uterine infection and ketosis, and greater rate of weight loss post calving. Even mild cases are associated with poor fertility and an increased risk of culling.

Cows to target are those with history of calcium problems, lame cows, older cows, and high yielding cows (25% top producers). The bolus is given at calving and again 12 hours later so there is a little bit of labour but nothing like what you will sink into a down cow.

Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS

## Deer Reminders

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

## WORMWATCH JUNE 2024

Winter has arrived but it feels like it's been here for months! Autumn conditions have been cold and wet which will have seen slower larval development than the previous few years. This should mean young stock are going into winter with lower worm burdens and hopefully the drench gun can go away for now. Resistance to drenches has continued to plague many farms this season, but the true impacts of this were reduced by a favourable growing season and higher pasture covers. This wont always be the case and I encourage you to continue to strive for reduced drench use, especially in adult stock, but also in young stock. Management of parasites needs to be more than just reaching for the drench gun, planning for next season will begin soon so consider where summer/autumn crops could fit into your farming system.

If you would like advice around a more sustainable approach to parasite management give us a call at the clinic and we can sit down and work out how this might look for your property.

Andrew Cochrane BVSc

## SALMONELLA REMINDER

Recently we have had a few cases of confirmed Salmonella ewe deaths come through the clinic. I have also noticed the odd dead ewe out in the paddock while driving around the district. Could these be salmonella too?

There are two forms of Salmonella disease that we see down here, The 'gut' (enteric) form and the 'abortion' form.

- The enteric form (*typhimurium* or *hindmarsh*) google will tell you is usually seen in summer, but in Northern Southland we often have cases later in autumn (as we have now). This may be due to the added stress and close contact that comes with a change in climate and moving to break feeding. This causes sudden death of ewes.
- The abortion form (*Brandenburg*) we usually see a bit later around June/July. This causes abortion and sickness or often death of the ewe as well. This is a lot more common down here.

While the vaccine we use for protection is the same, the timing of vaccination is different.

For **the enteric form** the gold standard for those that do routinely vaccinate would be:

- first shot at weaning
- booster 4-6 weeks later
- and an annual booster after weaning each year

It is more common though to simply vaccinate two tooths each year in January, and then a booster to any mobs at the first sign of an outbreak.

Only a few of our clients protect against the enteric form routinely. This is because it is not overly common down here, and **you can vaccinate during an outbreak** and achieve some protection within 10 days from just one shot.

This is **not the case for Brandenburg**. Vaccination in the face of an outbreak will give little or no protection. The protocol requires two shots, a sensitiser and a booster, ideally 4-6 weeks apart, with the second (booster) given on or before day 80 of pregnancy. This is around 2-3 weeks before the risk period. Many will give the booster at scanning for convenience. Sheep are then boosted annually. So if scanning at the start of July...

- Sensitiser late May
- Boost at scanning in July
- Annual booster at scanning

Sometimes people will vaccinate at the first sign of the enteric form say in April, and then use this as the sensitiser for Brandenburg, boosting at scanning.

Note that the protection for Brandenburg is not always 100% especially if the challenge is heavy.

In both forms vaccination is only one part of solution. Reducing stress by giving more space and more feed, also fresh water, and picking up any sick/dead ewes and foetuses goes a long way to reducing losses. Remember it is a zoonosis so we can get it too! Wear gloves, and wash your hands.

Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS

## Sheep Reminders

- Vaccinate 2 tooths—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

## HEALTHY NUTRITION

Eating healthy is always a battle when you can smell fried chicken or a lasagne topper wafting out of a dairy. Pets do not enjoy the same choices, but still need the same balanced diet as us. Many pet food companies specially formulate their products to meet the needs of your dog and cat. AAFCO (Association of American Feed Control Officials) sets standards to ensure that your pet's food is balanced nutritionally. Instead of getting confused by the different categories, look for the AAFCO label claim, usually on the back of the packet.

While many supermarket brands meet these requirements, there are a few differences worth noting between these and premium pet foods. Premium petfood usually use real meat in their ingredients and typically have targeted ratios of protein, fats, vitamins and minerals.

Growing, pregnant, older and animals under high exercise loads all benefit from higher protein content. Most of the premium foods you see in store (Hills, Royal Canin, Eukanuba and Black Hawk) have separate feeds for different life stages and requirements. This helps keep your working dogs working longer without injury (less time at the vets), or your cat's kidneys doing what they should.

Healthy fats have been shown to have positive health impacts almost across the board – the skin, heart, joints, kidneys, brain to name a few. These omega fats (think fish/olive oil) are commonly supplemented in premium pet foods, reducing inflammation and keeping your pets coat silky smooth.

NSVets stock a wide range of premium pet foods, from working dog puppy through to geriatric cat. Come in store or get in touch to find a premium diet suited to your pet.

Lachlan Chittock BVSc



## TOXINS

A skiff of snow on the hills and the odd frosty morning means we are getting closer to winter. Hopefully there is some dry firewood in the shed. There are a few notable plants that can cause some issues over this period for stock.



Acorns:

- Grazed once dropped, Cows and Sheep are more susceptible than Horses. Tannins in the acorns causes kidney damage and gastrointestinal ulceration (see below)
- Strong winds often cause large scale acorn drop – avoid grazing paddocks with Oak trees after.
- There is no antidote. If you think your stock are experiencing acorn toxicity, remove from the paddock, allow plenty of clean drinking water, and give us a call.



Red Maple:

- Wilted leaves are the culprits here – most likely because of concentration of a still unknown toxin. Storms/winds will mean more on the ground.
- Horses are the most prone – they may develop jaundice (yellow gums/eyes), weakness and dark coloured urine. This is due to the destruction of their RBC's
- Clinical signs develop between 1 -5 days after ingestion. If you suspect your horse has ingested some Red Maple leaves and is showing these signs, give us a call immediately. Supportive treatment aimed at reducing further damage and maintaining hydration will be critical.

In the case of any poisonous plant or toxin, stock will usually avoid these if well fed. A hotwire around these known plants might take 15 minutes, but save much more time and headaches in the long run.

Lochie Chittock BVSc

## BIT OF A LAUGH

Engineers have designed a car that runs on mint.

Hopefully soon they will create buses and trains that run on thyme.

