NS VETS TOTAL VET CARE

May 2022

VetTIMES

SITUATION COMMENT

Morgan usually writes this segment and is more witty and worldly than I, but he is trying to put a drop in his annual leave bucket so I will have to do. Time to state the obvious. Autumn has been dry, but we were perhaps luckier than some areas where I believe herds were dried off at the start of April. Stressed pastures have caused a resurgence of rye grass staggers across all stock classes, something the short-toothed vets have perhaps never seen down here. Meanwhile, Porina and grub are having a ball. Baleage is being traded for gold bars. Winter crops are mostly better than last year, and frosts are (at this time) staying away so hopefully (p.s. *hope is not a strategy*) the grass isn't finished growing yet and we can get ourselves semi set up for spring. The Dairy forecast is good, as is the lamb, if you can get them away - we say that most years at this time it seems. Also coming up is our influx of stiff and sore 'open day' Labradors – the calendar has aligned this year so we all get to pluck ducks on mother's day! Hope your transition toward winter is painless.

Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS

WORMWATCH MAY 2022

Winter is almost upon us, yet current conditions are still very favourable for larval development, especially following the recent rain. Given pasture covers are generally low due to the extended dry spell, you can expect larval challenge to be high. This is particularly important for young stock and it would therefore be wise to keep drench intervals to 28 days or at least monitor with a FEC if you are hoping to extend this out. For young stock going onto crop, try to time the last drench for the day they go onto the crop to minimise parasite burdens being carried into winter.

Andrew Cochrane BVSc

Cattle Reminders

- Dry cow therapy
- Internal parasites—treat at drying off
- Final pregnancy test
- Copper & selenium status—treat pre winter if necessary
- Complete herd lepto vaccination if not done
- Attend to lame cows prior to winter
- Lice control
- Pre-winter worm treatment of beef cattle
- Preferential feeding for selected cows

Pet Reminders

- De-sex cats
- Order jackets and bedding
- Booster vaccination for cats prior to winter

STAFF PET CORNER

Java and Tigger joined Jill & Dave in January. At 8 weeks of age they were full of energy, initially treating the furniture as a racetrack and the curtains as vertical climbing walls. Thankfully, they have now started to settle down.
They love cuddling on their orange blanket.

Horse Reminders

- Drench for worms
- Wean foals
- Booster vaccination for Tetanus, Strangles & Salmonella of foals

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FEEDING THE FIRST TRIMESTER

A dry season highlights again the benefits of getting lambs away early – of course Covid didn't help, along with the lure of good money late in the season. For those of you chasing the latter, I hope you had considered the extra worm burden on farm that may bloom late Autumn, that may affect the replacements and 2 tooths. Also the extra drench(s)/ vaccination/dipping/shearing/labour/feed costs, and the effect this may have had on ewe BCS, and the flow on from that.

Hopefully the priority was shifted to capital stock so that ewes went to the ram in good condition. You are well drilled now to know higher BCS leads to higher ovulation, conception, twining, lamb survival, lamb growth and weaning weight, which of course helps to get lambs away sooner and you find yourself going up the spiral rather than down it. Whatever your situation the questions remains, where to from here?

Maintain Good Ewes - We can get away with maintenance only feeding (1.3kgDM/d) to **good** BCS ewes from day 25 of pregnancy, but avoid underfeeding. It is thought this can 'flick off' an embryo leaving a ewe with a single rather than twins. Studies have also shown a foetal programming effect in that a ewe loosing condition over pregnancy will have daughters that are themselves less likely to have multiples. Remember also that most of your ewes are in the **'placenta development phase'**. Weight and size of the placenta reflects its capacity to transfer nutrients to the foetus. Underfeeding before day 80-90 may reduce placental development resulting in a foetus with slowed growth, low glucose levels and low oxygenation of the blood, all increasing the risk of prenatal death, as well as **reducing birthweights** which is a big driver of survival of the newborn lamb, especially in multiples.

Cull light ewes - The ewe longevity study highlighted that Ewe BCS is a good predictor of wastage. A ewe ≤ 2.0 at the start of winter is twice as likely to be dead or missing at weaning than ewes over 3.0. 1 in 6 of these will die (around 17%). With this in mind, a **BCS score at scanning** can get these girls gone (note they may still scan well).

Lift the tail end - If you do keep these girls you have a small window of opportunity before winter to try and get them up on condition. Run as a separate mob and be prepared to pamper. Consider grass wintering – but monitor worm burdens.

Hoggets - If you are mating hoggets – they really need to be 65% of mature weight (bottom line, not the average - so 42 kg for a 65 kg ewe flock) and they need to keep growing (135 g/ d) right through winter in order to have a successful lambing. A hogget below weight and BCS at scanning is more likely to be wet/dry (studies found every 1 kg gained between scanning and set stocking is 10% less likely to be wet dry).

Critical Feed Periods for the Ewe over pregnancy:

Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS

'TPLO': A NEW METHOD OF CRUCIATE RUPTURE REPAIR

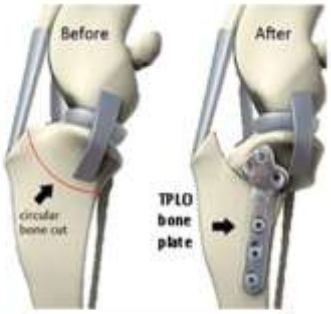
We are now offering a new surgical technique when repairing ruptured cruciate ligaments.

Cruciate rupture is one of the most common injuries we see in dogs. Turning suddenly when running or getting a back leg hung up in the fence can tear the cruciate ligament within the knee joint causing a sudden lameness. In small breed dogs, rest and pain relief can sometimes be sufficient to heal the joint however surgery is usually required for medium to large breed dogs such as Labradors, Rottweilers, Heading dogs and Huntaways.

Placing a 'false' nylon ligament has been the main surgical technique used for years with very good success and recovery in small to medium sized breeds. We can now offer a new technique called a ***'tibial plateau leveling osteotomy' (TPLO).*** This method has traditionally been a referral surgery, however new advances in technology and training allow us to perform this procedure in Riversdale.
TPLO is considered the gold standard for the long-term success in large breed dogs such as Labradors, Huntaways and Rottweilers. The bone of the tibia is cut, rotated, and plated to change the angle and weight bearing dynamics of the stifle joint.

Ask NSVets about the new procedure next time you have a dog with a suspected cruciate injury.

Nylon Ligament Repair:
Diagram of Stifle joint showing the nylon thread in Blue



TPLO Repair:
Diagram of Stifle joint showing the bone-cut and plate

Sam Lee BVSc & Rebecca Morley BVSc BSc

Sheep Reminders

- Vaccinate for Salmonella
- FEC lambs
- Record tupping data
- Check rams
- Hold ewe condition
- Check baleage & silage quality pH
- Plan winter rotation

DAIRY SCANNING PRELIMINARY RESULTS

We are completing final pregnancy scans now and will provide a final graph in the next newsletter. In the mean time…

6 week in calf rate (ICR): Ranges from 49% to 82% The average was 66%. The industry target is 78%

Empty rates: These are ranging from 7% to 26%. With retests still happening the average is looking around 14%

Mating lengths varied from 59 days to 87 days.
It is no surprise that those who managed good 6 week ICR had the lower overall empty rate. Those with lower 6 week ICR tend to use a longer mating period to compensate. Care is required that the herd doesn't get later and later. The 6 week in calf rate is one of the key players for farm performance. It is driven by the 3 week submission rate (SR) (aim for over 81%, ideally near 90%) and of course conception rates (aim for over 53%, ideally near 60%).

It may be timely to think about the following:
Try not to hold on to cows identified as late calvers. These cows may fall into a continuing late pattern. Any late calvers kept will need to have very high production to compensate for the reduced days in milk.
Get cows up to calving target BCS. We have already written about dry-off targets. First calvers (R3s) may need preferential care.
Have a plan to control condition loss from calving to mating. Thinner cows take longer to start cycling and have 3 week SR around 10% lower than cows that calve at 5.0.
Replacements - ensure all calves and heifers are hitting weight targets (averages don't apply here). Underweight heifers will have a longer interval to first heat, so will be starting on a back foot.
Pre mating: While it is a busy time, it is worthwhile to monitor pre mating heats – utilise these to train staff. It can be an early indicator of trouble and can help with future heat detection.
Consider using a variety of heat detection devices.
Early intervention for metrichecking and non cycling treatments will give the best ROI.
Remember, when the 6 week ICR is low, bull power and sound bull management is even more important.

Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS

TRANSITION TO CROP ANNUAL REMINDER

Gut bugs take time to adapt to diet change
Done poorly, animals can lose condition, get crook, or die. Acidosis is the biggest issue, followed by nitrate poisoning and bloat.

Treatment for poor transition issues is generally crap – prevention is better.

- Measure crop yields and supplements and do a feed budget
- Allow for transitioning to take **10-14 days** (actual gut changes take much longer)
- Have ample supplement for this time.
  - Feed supplement before giving a new break so animals are not going on hungry
  - Be sure all animals have access to the supplement – one bale feeder is rarely enough
- Transition can be a gradually increasing on-off system, or a lead in area with increasing break size. Be sure to consider animal wellbeing and environmental impact around both methods.
- For fodder beet in particular - remember any food left uneaten may still contribute to the next day's intake and use a second fence to catch any breakouts
- Breaks should be of such to allow equal access (but minimal wastage).
- Avoid shifting breaks until the frost has lifted – and take care on dull or foggy days (nitrate risk)
- Watch for signs of illness (Not eating or standing back, tucked up, dull, weak or wobbly, sunken eye, gut pain, grinding teeth, bloated gut, 'sloshy' gut sounds,

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LIVER BIOPSIES

Remember to get your animals tested for their trace element status before winter. Copper is particularly important as this will likely decrease over this period. Liver biopsies are best for this trace element to tell us what is in 'the tank' as opposed to blood levels which tells us what is in 'the trough'. Biopsies are reasonably quick with minimal stress to the animals. Alternatively you can test animals through the works – just ask us and we can email you the form.

Deer Reminders

- Drench weaners
- Copper as required
- Drench stags
- Put chaser stags out