VetTIMES

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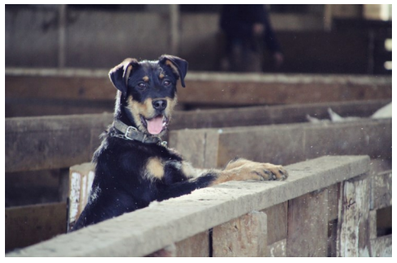
NSVETS TOTAL VET CARE

October 2024 VetTIMES



TOTAL VET CARE

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SITUATION COMMENT

What a difference 12 months makes. This time last year dairy farmers were looking at a very poor milk payout, however at least a really good spell of weather in September managed to keep morale up somewhat. This year is the complete opposite with a promising milk forecast but probably the wettest September for a long time. Probably the best thing about sheep at the moment is that it can't get any worse….surely?? Interest rates will drop but on-farm inflation still remains high. Andrew and Rochelle hosted their 10th annual Winter Woolies event. Pita Alexander's presentation and Rochelle's on the level of drench resistance in Northern Southland were particular highlights.

Managing the current wet conditions is challenging. Avoiding paddock damage is critical to ensure sufficient grass for the next round. Make decisions early around cows that are lighter than desired – yes OAD milking will compromise some milk production, however it gives them a much higher chance of getting in calf. Putting cows onto OAD at the end of October is too late.

There are some tweaks to the non-cycling cow and heifer synchrony programmes this year. The research is pointing to some very good results. Talk to one of the vets about these changes.

The *M.bovis* surveillance scheme is still going and is an ideal opportunity for BVD control and monitoring. The scheme will pay for all service bulls to be tested (or up to 150 females) and so only the lab fees for BVD are charged. Currently there are no active cases of *M.bovis* in NZ and this monitoring is part of providing evidence of freedom from disease.

We have seen a number of reports of Salmonella in cows in Southland (including our farms) however worryingly we have also had a relatively new strain (*bovismorbificans*) show up with some devastating results. Key point is to act early. Initial clinical signs are cows with profuse diarrhoea that rapidly lose weight. Vaccination is very effective at preventing the disease

Keep up the good work out there everyone.

Morgan Greene MVB MANZCVS

Contents:

Cattle Reminders

- Dairy—pre-mating check of 'at risk' cows
- Pre-mating trace elements
- Tail paint—4 weeks before PSM
- Organise mating programme (cows and heifers)
- Treat non-cyclers one week before PSM
- BVD booster bulls & cows 4 weeks before PSM
- Metricheck late calvers

SYNCHRONISE HEIFERS FOR MORE MILK & FAST FORWARD GENETIC GAIN

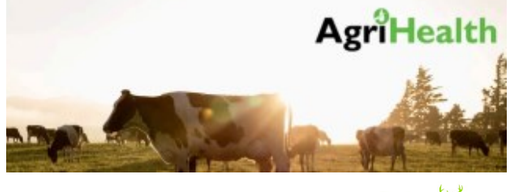
Genomic selection, speed-breeding, call it what you will - NZ farmers now have the ability to breed better animals, faster and to produce more milk, more efficiently.

This spring, there's a proven way to accelerate genetic gain in your dairy herd, with lasting benefits – compact calving, more days in milk, additional AB calves, and higher animal efficiency.

What is it? Synchronising heifers with the DIB Co-Synch program.

There are several good reasons to implement heifer synchrony this season:

1. Synchrony programs are generally very successful in New Zealand dairy heifers .
2. Synchronised heifers can be mated using fixed time AI, without the need for heat detection, and inseminated just before the main herd mating starts .
3. Synchronised heifers calve 11 days earlier on average. This means:
   - They get into their milking routine ahead of older herd-mates .
   - 11 more days in milk per heifer treated = more income .
   - Early calving heifers become early calving second calvers. Remember first calvers take longer to cycle than mature cows, and it's so important to get those valuable 2-year-olds back in calf .
4. And – critically - synchronised heifers mated to AI means more AB heifer calves next spring. Heifers are generally the highest BW animals in your herd, and their daughters give you accelerated genetic gain
5. Improved animal efficiency means less emissions per kg of milk solids, to help meet the expectations of our global dairy customers Success comes down to having well-grown heifers in good body condition, and a good plan. We can help you with that – enquire about booking your heifer synchrony with your vet today.



NORTHERN SOUTHLAND'S VETS

ABOMASAL ULCERS IN CALVES

Every year we see cases of abomasal ulcers in calves. Mild cases go unnoticed, as early signs can be vague. Only when the ulcer goes full thickness (rupture) and a peritonitis with septicemia occurs do we get called to these cases, and often by this stage, the calf may simply be found dead. Treatment is seldom successful so here is what to watch for and how to reduce the risk.

What to look for

- Calf 4 weeks to 4 months of age, but most commonly noticed near weaning time.
- Abdominal pain – tucked up appearance, teeth grinding, kicking.
- May be bloated.
- Off feed, fever, rapid heart, depression.
- If bleeding - anaemia (pale gums), black sticky poo = trouble.

Reduce the risk

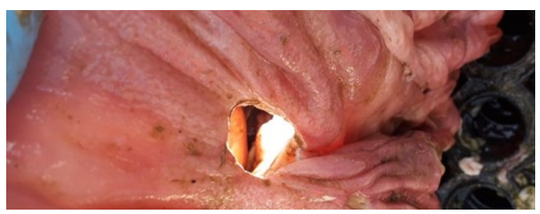
The single most associated risk involves **the feeding process** – including conversion from milk to a fibrous diet, and in particular **inconsistency**/fluctuations.

- Timing – if erratic, but also once a day feeding is higher risk.
- Volume – high volume (also once a day) .
- Milk temperature fluctuations.
- Concentration – particularly when using powders.
- Quality – of milk replacer, or whole milk e.g., high bacterial load, unhygienic feeders.
- Time without feed in stomach will lower pH increasing the risk.

It is important to gradually increase the meal component of the diet before reducing milk feeding (It is quite common to do this the other way around, restrict milk to increase the meal intake).

Rapid growth periods also seem higher risk. Clostridia bacteria are often found in calves with ulcers, but this could be secondary rather than the cause, still, make sure you have given 5 in 1 or 7 in 1 vaccine.

Stress is a contributing factor sources of stress may include Transportation, Mixing of groups, Overcrowding and Concurrent disease – particularly respiratory.



Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS

SALMONELLOSIS

We have seen an increase in Salmonella cases in dairy cattle this spring.

Salmonellosis is caused by the ingestion of Salmonella bacteria, which can live for long periods of time in the environment (~28 weeks). There are a variety of types or serovars of Salmonella that can affect dairy cattle, with the most common being *Salmonella typhimurium* and *Salmonella bovismorbificans*.

The occurrence of Salmonella is increasing in New Zealand, in parallel with a world-wide trend, largely as a result of intensification, higher stocking rates and/or higher use of supplementary feed.

The most common signs of infection include:

- Sudden drop in milk production.
- Loss of appetite.
- Profuse diarrhoea.
- Anorexia with a fever.
- Dehydration.
- Abortions (sometimes).
- Death .

In New Zealand, carrier animals are the leading means of spreading infection, especially as re-shedding of infection can be brought on by stressors such as calving, transportation, bad weather or deprivation of food or water. The risk of Salmonellosis also increases when supplementation with magnesium (e.g. Mag oxide, Mag chloride), is of poor quality or occurs at above recommended dose rates.

Prevention should focus on reducing the risk of infection, minimising the spread of infection, and enhancing the immunity of animals within the herd.

- Vaccinating with Salvexin +B is an effective way of protecting the herd against Salmonellosis, and can be helpful in reducing the number of sick cows even once an outbreak of Salmonella occurs in a previously unvaccinated herd.
- Good biosecurity procedures for any new animals entering the herd.
- Appropriate storage and application of effluent, with a minimum stand-down period between application and grazing.
- Effective rodent and bird control.

Salmonella can transfer between cows and humans so ensure good hygiene measures are in place when dealing with sick animals.

If cases do occur, it is important to seek veterinary advice promptly. Early treatment of cases with broad spectrum antibiotics will usually result in the survival of the animal. Delayed treatment (~48 hours) will result in severe dehydration and irreversible damage to the gut. Treating these cases will require supportive therapy, which may improve the chances of recovery, however this is likely to be a lengthy process.

Talk to NSVets if you are interested in vaccinating against salmonellosis prior to mating.

Sam Lee BVSc

Horse Reminders

- Brush out last of winter coat
- Selenium & vitamin E to new born foals
- Watch for founder in ponies

INJECTION SITE ABCESS

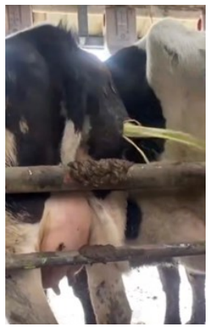
A character trait amongst vets is a love for popping abscesses. Earlier this month we had the pleasure (for us at least…) of treating over 100 cows who had developed injection site abscesses. This was likely due to being vaccinated with a dirty needle, along with being in the wrong area of the cow.

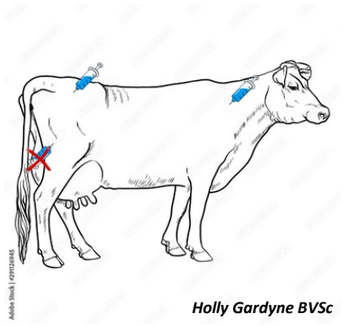
Injectable vaccinations or treatments can be given under the skin (SQ) or in the muscle (IM). Make sure you read the instructions before giving any animal remedies.

A quick reminder for us all on where IM injections can go:

- They should be given deep into the muscle.
- They should be given at a max of 20ml per site.
- The neck is the preferred place for IM injections or the rump in non meat animals if the neck is unsafe. Other areas such as the thigh are more likely to develop abscesses.

Needles should be changed frequently to minimise the risk of infection. If there's any doubt about how animal treatments should be given, feel free to give us a call – we are more than happy to help!





Holly Gardyne BVSc

Sheep Reminders

- Topdress cobalt and selenium
- Tailing
- Feeding prioritisation
- Pulpy kidney vaccination
- B12 injection lambs
- Scabby mouth vaccination of lambs
- Investigate wet-dries
- Blood test rams B-Ovis

TAILING

One day it will stop raining, and we will be able to tail our lambs. So what products are we going to poke into them this year?

Scratch: Short pastures may encourage thistles and low grazing could make for a high-risk year for scabby mouth. Still the two trusted products are Phenax and Scabigard – both good, just personal preference over applicator and dose control.

Clostridial vaccine (5 in 1): If fast growing lambs before Xmas is your thing (we all aim for this but don't always achieve it!) then a 5 in 1 at tailing is highly recommended. A booster will be required at or before weaning. If ewes were not vaccinated and you want tetanus protection for tailing you need to use **Lamb vaccine** instead. On more extensive properties the risk period for sudden death may come a bit later so a pre-wean jab may be sufficient. The 5 in 1s come with a myriad of options but in a nutshell, if it has just selenium it is **not for lambs at tailing** (too much selenium), if it has B12 or B12 and selenium then it is fine for lambs at tailing. All of the B12 and selenium is short acting (3-6 weeks).

Selenium: Selenium is important for lamb growth and immunity. 70% of our pastures are deficient in Selenium. Lambs born to ewes that were well supplemented in pregnancy may have adequate selenium levels at tailing. If you are seeing slow growth, weak, lame, and hunched lambs selenium may be a factor. Selenium can be given on its own (Selovin-5) with B12 (Prolaject, Smartshot) or in the 5 in 1 – just check which product you have as some contain too much selenium for small lambs. (Note the long acting Selovin LA is only for lambs from weaning and lasts over 12 months in adults but will be less in lambs as they out-grow their dose rate.)

B12: B12 is needed to complete the process of getting energy (glucose) out of grass. Without it, a chemical builds up causing ill thrift, watery eyes, washy wool, and lost appetite. In general, suckling lambs don't need extra B12 as they get their glucose directly from the milk, however given the season we have had, some ewes may have a lower milk supply so lambs may be relying on grass a bit more than usual. In which case, this could be the year to use B12 at tailing. We tend to get about 3 weeks out of a short acting (5in1, prolaject), and 2-5 months out of 0.5ml-1ml long acting respectively (smartshot).

Why don't we drench at tailing: I agree that this year lambs are eating a fair bit more grass, and that grass is quite short in length so they could be taking in more parasite larvae than other years. However, for worm larvae to complete their lifecycle they need to be stimulated by a chemical in the rumen. Lambs despite eating some grass, still don't really have a fully functioning rumen at tailing, therefore no chemical, so no worm development. There will be no persistent protection with a tailing drench so you won't be preventing a wean (or prewean) drench and will be having no effect on larvae in the environment, if anything you could be making things worse from a resistance status. Plus it is certainly possible to kill a lamb (or 50) with drench at tailing age (we have seen it!). Now that said, depending on weaning date it is quite likely that lambs will benefit from a drench pre-wean this year.

Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS