

PO BOX 65 • Riversdale 9744 • Southland



August 2024

VetTIMES



Photo by S. Stevens

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STAFF COMMENT

Perhaps it is just because of getting older, and my memory shorter, that each winter seems colder than the last. We have had some ripper frosts this year, and with freezing fog in the valley, it was nice to get a call-out above the terrace for some vitamin D. I am writing this on our first morning without frost in a while, and its raining, but where else would we rather be!

The dairy cows don't seem to mind the weather and Body condition scores across the region are looking rather good going into calving. Speaking of, we seem to have had a lot of early calves this year, and this is echoed with our colleagues up country too. Our newest vet recruit Kayla is well ahead on our clinic calving cup!

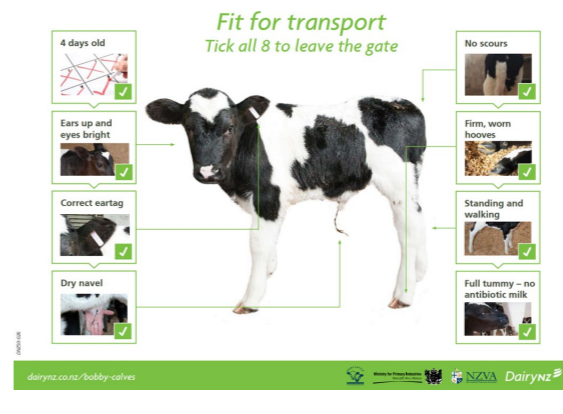
There are also some new lambs getting around, which thanks to the afore mentioned short memory, I still find very cute. In accordance with the arrival of oyster catchers at home recently, the grass should be growing by the 8th of August! So for now it is heads down tails up, with all staff on deck, and winter training seminars well underway. The response to our winter training has been great this year and we appreciate everyone that took the time to attend. We look forward to helping your pets and your business, and seeing you on farm or in store this Spring.

**Remember to ask about our deferred payment options.*

Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS

BOBBY CALF WELFARE

All calves, regardless of their purpose, should be treated with care and respect. Bobby calf welfare is important – the following DairyNZ poster will help you meet the welfare needs of animals in your care and to comply with the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act 1999:



Cattle Reminders

- Magnesium supplementation
- Consider drenching yearlings
- Vitamin A, D, E to milk fever prone cows
- Booster dose BVD vaccine to heifers
- Monitor conditions post calving

SHOULD WE REMOVE WOLF TEETH?

Wolf teeth are small, peg-like teeth that sit just in front of the first cheek teeth of horses. It's estimated that around 70% of horses, both male and female will have them. It is a common belief that wolf teeth cause problems with some horses when they are bitted. The bit can rub, knock and loosen these tiny teeth causing mouth pain and ulcers, resulting in disobedient horses.

Removal of these teeth in yearlings is generally still considered common place. Wolf teeth are most easily removed before the roots have had time to embed themselves well within the gum.

The decision to remove wolf teeth after one year of age will depend on many factors such as size, position, and reaction to pressure. Even though they serve no purpose, they may never cause issues. One of the main problems is that the anatomy of the tooth can vary so widely. Removal is not always simple and can result in bleeding, fractured teeth and gum infections leading to further pain and head shyness.

Wolf teeth are removed for the following reasons: in yearlings prior to breaking in, when they are also present on the lower jaw (rare but it does happen), if the teeth are mobile or wobbly or if there is obvious damage from the bit. We generally will not take wolf teeth out in older horses that already ride well or horses that are not ridden frequently.

Your vet can discuss options with you during your horse's dental exam. A lot of the time, "floating" or grinding down the sharp enamel points of the cheek teeth is sufficient in improving the overall condition and balance of your horse's mouth.



Kate Taylor DVM BSc-Hons

Sheep Reminders

- Order lambing requirements (complete our pre-lamb vaccine order form).
- Blood test ewes metabolic profile.
- FEC ewes and consider pre-lamb drench.
- Vaccinate ewes clostridial vaccine.
- Reassess ewe feed levels.
- Vitamin E/Selenium to brassica fed hoggets.
- Assess spring feed budget.
- Drench ewes iodine.
- Ensure PAR/RVM authorisation is current.

WILTSHIRE SHEEP STUDY

Ever thought about trying to add shedding sheep genetics into your farming system? Understandably, people are getting a bit sick of having low returns for the wool removed from their sheep.

Beef and Lamb NZ have conducted a 'Low- Input' sheep study to try and assess whether 'shedding' or 'haired' sheep can help improve on-farm profitability. Wiltshire rams were used and compared to a conventional Romney cross mob of ewe lambs.

To achieve a 'full – shedding', three to four crosses are needed (after three or four years of using a Wiltshire ram, you will have adequate shedding to not require shearing in those lambs). Once this transition to a fully shedding flock has been made, a net increase of 17% profit was made across the system.

A small number of second and third cross lambs started to shed in December, which may mean a reduced need to shear throughout that summer. If you are thinking about adding these genetics into your sheep, then it is advised to do a 'shedding score' in January and selecting your breeding stock from those with the highest shedding score.

Because Wiltshires have traditionally been used as a terminal cross, this study focused on maternal traits. There was no difference in onset of puberty in the first and second cross. There was no difference in scanning percentage and weaning weights were higher in the first and second cross (this is due to hybrid vigour).

There were no differences in carcass weights, or values – meaning Wiltshires are a good option as a terminal sire too.

If you can turn a blind eye to wool coating your fences, then Wiltshires may be a good option to reduce shearing costs in the future.

Holly Gardyne BVSc
(No, I'm not a Wiltshire ram breeder)



Pet Reminders

- Check teeth and clip nails
- Check warmth of bedding
- Book Arthritis or senior wellness Check

MANAGING STAGS TO MAXIMISE VELVET PRODUCTION

Velvet production has doubled in the last 20 years. While much of this is due to genetic progress, good feeding is needed to realise the genetic potential of the stags.

Nutrition is important all year round but there are critical times of the year that under feeding can have adverse effects on production. In young spiker deer, this is most important when they reach puberty and older stags prior to button drop, velvet growth and post rut.

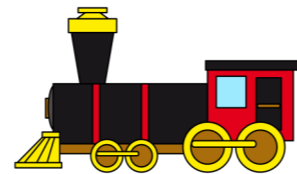
Deer differ from other domesticated livestock in that they have strong patterns of seasonality dictated by changes in daylight length. Button drop is triggered by increasing daylight length and age of stag, but poor body condition and suboptimal nutrition can limit velvet yield by 20%. Velvet is a phenomenal tissue that can grow up to 2cm/day. A high protein and energy diet is required to do this. Young stags require >12MJME and CP >20%, older stags require >10.5MJME and CP of 15-18%. Fortunately, spring grass can fulfil the needs with a ME of 11.5-12.5 and CP 20-30% but it does need to be in adequate quantity. This means it needs to be at least 15cm in height and unsoiled.

If quality pasture is not available yet, then it is important to offer high quality supplement such as deer nuts and lucerne or red clover baleage. Remember to spread out the feed to allow access for all stags and minimise fighting when competing for food.

Jill MacGibbon BVMS

BIT OF A LAUGH

My boss said to me, "you are the worst train operator ever. How many trains have you derailed in the past year?" I said, "I'm not sure. It's so hard to keep track"



Deer Reminders

- Copper as required
- TB test
- Supplementary feed stags
- Weaners—check parasite levels
- Sort stags into velveting mobs

COLOSTRUM: THE THREE Q'S – QUICKLY, QUANTITY & QUALITY

As many of you may, colostrum management plays a vital role in disease prevention in your calves. Gold colostrum is the first milk that is produced by a cow after calving and contains high levels of antibodies. When the calf ingests colostrum (within the first 12hrs of life) the antibodies are absorbed through the gut mucosa, which provides a temporary immune system. When giving our calves the best start at life, we need to think about the 3 Q's.

1. Quickly

The calf is only able to absorb antibodies available in the colostrum for a short period of time. By 12hrs of age, the calf is only able to absorb 5% of the available antibodies in colostrum and by 24hrs, the gut closes and no further absorption of antibodies can occur. Ideally, the calf should be fed 2hrs after birth, to ensure effective passive transfer has occurred prior to gut closure.

2.Quantity

How much to give? Calves should receive 10-15% of their body-weight in colostrum before gut closure occurs. This equates to 4-6L of high quality, gold colostrum per calf. This can be achieved by bringing calves in from the paddocks a minimum of twice a day. Once in the shed, the calf should be offered a 2L bottle of fresh gold colostrum. They should then be fed again a few hours later to ensure that they receive 10-15% of their body-weight prior to 12hrs of age.

3.Quality

The quality of colostrum is measured by how many antibodies are present and how much bacterial contamination has occurred. The more antibodies contained within the colostrum equates to a higher level of quality of colostrum. A Brix Refractometer is used to measure this. A measurement of 22 or higher indicates a high level of antibodies present and should be used in one day old calves. The quality of colostrum is also directly influenced by the time between calving and the first milk collection. The more time between the two events will result in a decrease of antibody levels in the colostrum.

Research has demonstrated by following the 3 Q's of having calves that receive 10-15% of their live body weight of high-quality gold colostrum within the first 12 hours of life, not only gain weight faster, thereby meeting targets earlier, but also produce more milk in their future lactation and have decreased veterinary associated costs.

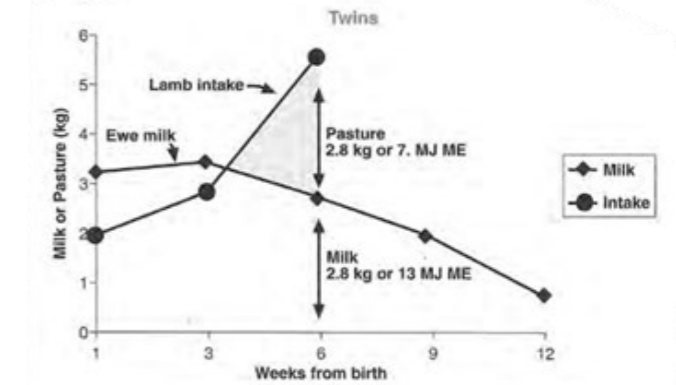
Kayla Burton BVSc

Horse Reminders

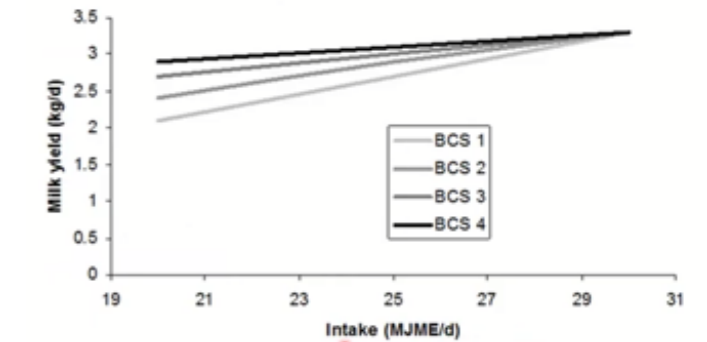
- Hoof care reminder
- Check for lice
- Boost pregnant mares diet
- Arrange brood mare consorts for coming season

LAST TRIMESTER SHEEP FEEDING

A ewes milk production peaks very early at just week 2 or 3. The plan is to reach a high peak and try to sustain it for as long as possible.



Lactation is the most expensive physiological state your ewe will go through. Lots of quality feed needs to be available. For a 70 kg romney to produce 2.7 kg of milk for twins she will need to eat around 2.8kgDM per day for the first 6 weeks. Anything below this and the importance of BCS will really show in lambs at weaning. I recall Tom Fraser saying the average BCS of NZ ewe flocks was half a score lower than it should be at lambing. This half score less results in a 3kg lower weaning weight per lamb in a set of twins.



What does this look like? Basically as much as she can physically eat, you need to be offering 3-4 kg to allow this level of intake, if on pasture, not grazing below 4 cm cover.

Don't be feeding your multiples on swede within the last few weeks of pregnancy, the volume required would be 30 kg of bulb (a wheelbarrow full) which she just can't fit in.



Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS