

## STAFF COMMENT DECEMBER

Another year winds up – I think it is fair to say many will be pleased to see the end of a drawn-out Spring. Looking forward to a positively better summer!

Our staff were eagerly awaiting the annual staff Christmas party, this year hosted in Te Anau. Hopefully we didn't cause too much of a scene as we completed our version of 'The amazing race' and refreshed ourselves at 'The Club' over the weekend.

We have also revived our staff 'spud-in-a-bucket' competition, I hope the end date isn't too soon as mine only just met soil last weekend! (any tips direct to me please).

We have one sad resignation for the new year of our lovely, ever capable Taylor, (front desk and Vet technician) who leaves to commit more time to the farm. She will be greatly missed. We also sadly farewelled Jan from our Lumsden branch as she takes up an amazing opportunity through her nursing career. Bubbly local lass Mo is filling in there for us over summer while we seek a permanent replacement in the new year. We will also welcome another vet to the team early next year, Mikaela has been a vet for 5 years and is relocating with her husband to the sunny south. Mikaela is chummy with both Laura (previous vet) and Holly, which is great as she must surely have heard everything about us (and you guys - the clients) and still hasn't been put off!

So, to help you out, going into the new year our vets are Morgan, Jill, Mike T, Rochelle, Rebecca, Andrew, boy Sam, Nuria, Kate, Holly, Lochie, Kayla, and Mikaela!

Support staff: Julia, Fiona, Tamie, Ashley, Julie, Taylor, Paul, Gayleen, Mo, Alicia, Tracey, Tash, Shelley and Arley

Nurses: Ashleigh, Sahra, Courtney, Shbourne, Melissa and Cherise, (what a fantastic bunch!)

We all wish you a wonderful and safe Christmas and a fabulous 2025!

Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS

## Pet Reminders

- Vaccinate pets prior to boarding kennels
- Get pets Christmas presents
- Check for barley grass
- Keep them cool and hydrated over summer

## KENNEL COUGH

Most years over summer we hear or see cases of coughing dogs. This often coincides with the busy time in the dog's social calendar, be it holidays to the beach, time in the boarding kennels, dog trials, or casual summer work on a sheep station. While generally not life threatening, it can be very distressing for your dog, with constant coughing sapping all his energy and appetite, affecting his bark, not to mention the risk to other dogs as it is highly contagious. The good news is there is a vaccine that can help prevent it, and it starts working in just a few days. Book in for your canine cough vaccine, or look out for our 'vaccine runs' in your area.

Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS



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## Holiday Hours 2024-2025

<b>Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December</b> <i>Riversdale, Lumsden, Mossburn &amp; Te Anau</i>	<b>CLOSED</b>
<b>Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> December</b> <i>Riversdale, Lumsden, Mossburn &amp; Te Anau</i>	<b>CLOSED</b>
<b>Friday 27<sup>th</sup> December</b> <i>Riversdale, Lumsden &amp; Te Anau - MOSSBURN CLOSED</i>	<b>OPEN</b>
<b>Weekend 28 -29<sup>th</sup> December</b> <i>Riversdale, Lumsden, Mossburn &amp; Te Anau</i>	<b>CLOSED</b>
<b>Monday 30<sup>th</sup> December</b> <i>Riversdale, Lumsden &amp; Te Anau - MOSSBURN CLOSED</i>	<b>OPEN</b>
<b>Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> December</b> <i>Riversdale, Lumsden &amp; Te Anau - MOSSBURN CLOSED</i>	<b>OPEN</b>
<b>Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> January</b> <i>Riversdale, Lumsden, Mossburn &amp; Te Anau</i>	<b>CLOSED</b>
<b>Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> January</b> <i>Riversdale, Lumsden, Mossburn &amp; Te Anau</i>	<b>CLOSED</b>
<b>Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> January</b> <i>Riversdale, Lumsden, Mossburn &amp; Te Anau</i>	<b>OPEN</b>

**MOSSBURN CLINIC WILL BE CLOSED 27<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER**

Guess who is coming to  
**NSVETS TOTAL VET CARE RIVERSDALE**  
Come and get your photos with Santa on  
**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> December 10am -12.45pm**  
pets and kids welcome  
Donations to St John  
**Free BBQ from 11.30am**  
Give us a call to book your spot on **03 202 5636**



## Horse Reminders

- Keep bot eggs off legs
- Hoof care

### WEANING POINTS TO PONDER

Is it odd that although each year, weather patterns, stock condition and numbers, pasture growth and feed supply change, farm weaning dates largely stay the same? Below are some things to consider if you can find some flexibility in your weaning date.

Ewes with lambs at foot have a higher total feed demand than a weaned lamb and ewe. However ewes do put on weight more efficiently when lactating compared with when dry. With this in mind if you have

- High cover, good quality:
  - You can afford to delay weaning, even if ewes are light
  - Feed can be better utilised and less likely to go rank
- Low cover with ewes holding or losing condition:
  - Wean early to reduce total farm feed demand (with or without culling ewes)
  - preferentially feed groups of stock
  - prevent the ewe and lambs competing for feed
  - weaned ewes can clean up paddocks, but not those that have a fair bit of weight to gain before next mating

While usually good leafy feed is reasonably high in protein, young lambs may not be able to physically eat enough of it to replace the protein lost from milk, so there will likely still be a check in growth.

It would be reasonable to think that lambs may be wormier this season.

- A ewe under more stress this season may have had a lower immune system that is unable to suppress worms, increasing paddock contamination
- The ewe under more nutritional stress, produces less milk, forcing the young lamb to eat more pasture than would be usual.
- With the pasture being short, and knowing pasture tends to be wormier lower down, more larvae is ingested (some from the ewe but most from worms over-wintered from last year's lambs in autumn)

As usual there is not one answer for timing of a prewean vs weaning drench as there are many variables including pasture covers and paddock larval contamination. Some may have had to do a prewean drench earlier this year, others may be holding off. The risk of going too soon in a wormy season may mean lambs are fading by the weaning draft. If you wait and go as close as the withhold period allows (usually 10 or 14 days) some of them may have made the cut without the drench, and others may have already suffered and may not have had enough time to show a growth response to the drench!

I haven't seen much fly yet (too wet or too windy or both) but I guess it's coming, so this is something to consider too. While

jetting can and is often done pre-weaning, it is not advised to run lambs and ewes through together as dose delivery - and therefore efficacy - will vary.

Consider running an opti-grow on lambs through the works, while these are your better lambs it can still help gauge where the farm is heading – ask us for the form if you don't have one, and test selenium and B12 (I generally wouldn't ask for copper or zinc down here).

*Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS*

### BVD

If the constant driving rain, mud and wind wasn't enough, we have seen an increase in the number of positive BVD tests amongst our dairy farms this year. Understanding BVD is not always straightforward, but there are a few fundamentals that are important to know.

1. Persistently Infected (PI) animals are "created" while they are still inside mum (days 40-120 of pregnancy). This happens when the dam is infected with BVD. This could happen on your farm if BVD is present, or on your graziers if the status of the other cattle is unknown.
2. Animals who are not born PI's cannot become PI's (woohoo!)
3. Having PI animals within a breeding herd will continue to produce more PI's
4. The only way to identify BVD is to test
5. Blood tests can be taken for exposure (15 animals) to gain an understanding of whether it is likely BVD is active on your property. Take 10 more (25) to meet the M.Bovis scheme requirements and you get to hang out with us for free and just pay for the lab fees.
6. In dairy herds testing on bulk milk, PI animals who show up will have been created 2 years prior. Exposure testing of your R2 heifers and calves (after 10 months of age) means you can get an idea of this a whole year and a half earlier.
7. Vaccination is a great tool, but not as good as proper BIOSECURITY. Best practise would be to blood test any new animals on farm before mixing (especially bulls). Vaccination needs to be 4 weeks before joining, with previously unvaccinated bulls given a shot 4 weeks before that.
8. As mentioned above and in previous newsletters, we currently have the ability to bleed your animals for only the cost of the BVD test through the M.Bovis scheme. This will be the cheapest time you can eradicate BVD from your herd. Eradication may take 3-4 years of regular bleeding – there are no guarantees that this scheme will be around forever.

BVD control cannot be explained for all farms in one article, but it is worthwhile taking the time to discuss with your vet to come up with a plan for both control and prevention.

*Lochie Chittock BVSc*

## Deer Reminders

- Fawning
- De-velvetting



## Cattle Reminders

- Dairy calves—copper, selenium
- Dairy calves—worm control & boost clostridial & leptospirosis vaccination
- Bulls—watch for unsoundness
- Cows monitor SR and NRR

## WORMWATCH DECEMBER 2024

There is no doubt that spring has been challenging for most of you and it would be reasonable to expect that the parasite challenge for young stock might be higher than normal. Most of you will have started drenching lambs and dairy calves by now and if we continue to get regular rainfall it would be prudent to stick to a 28 drench interval. However, faecal egg counts can help guide this and are a useful tool to assist decision making around drench intervals (especially as our drenches become less effective). Weaning drenches for lambs are arguably the most important drench they receive and should be a triple combination drench. This will ensure they get a good clean out during a particularly stressful time. Make sure you consider refugia, especially if these drenched lambs end up on a “clean” paddock – one such option may be leaving some light ewes in the mob. In general light adult stock do not need drenched – preferential feeding is much more important at this time.

Faecal egg count reduction tests (FECRT) and drench checks  
**You need to know which drenches work on your property, you will not see resistance until it is much too late. If you are interested in finding out what drenches work on your farm, please get in contact ASAP.**

Andrew Cochrane BVSc

## BIT OF A LAUGH

What's the difference between the Christmas alphabet and the ordinary alphabet?

The Christmas alphabet has Noel

JK MN O



## GET TO LAME COWS EARLIER AND BREAK THE LAMENESS CYCLE

Why is lameness so darn hard to minimise on-farm? More than 80% of lameness in NZ dairy cows is due to claw horn lesions (white line and sole disease). The longer a cow is lame, and with each subsequent bout of lameness, inflammation within the hoof can result in permanent damage, putting the cow at risk of further lameness. One of the biggest risk factors for lameness is a previous lameness case.

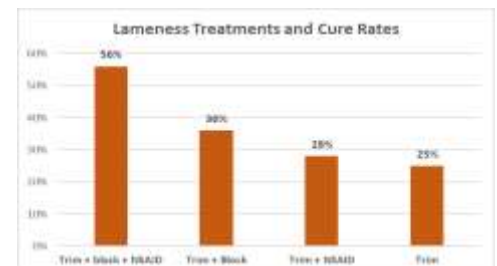
So how can we break this cycle of lameness leading to more lameness? The bottom line is we need to take action earlier. There are 3 key steps:

1. **Monitor** – identify lame cows earlier. Lameness scoring needs to be done regularly by farm staff and/or your vet/vet tech.
2. **Manage** – treat lame cows ASAP after identification with a trim, block and 3 days of pain relief such as KetoMax to reduce pain and inflammation.
3. **Minimise** – Reducing pressure on the cows with good management will help to keep hooves healthy, however, identifying and treating lame cows earlier are 2 of the best tools we have to minimise further lameness. You have to do both, there is no point doing one without the other!

### The importance of earlier detection & prompt effective treatment

A UK study<sup>1</sup> assigned lame cows into 4 different treatment groups, they were then assessed 35 days later to identify their “cure rate”. The group that received pain relief (3 days of KetoMax), trim and a block had by far the best outcome, with 56% of cows not being lame 35 days after treatment compared to only 25% in the trim only group. Effective treatment such as this will also get that lame cow feeling better and grazing quicker, which will help to reduce any drop in productivity and body condition. Also, of note with this study is that lameness scoring was done fortnightly to detect lame cows, showing that: **Earlier detection AND prompt effective treatment gives the best outcomes for lame cows.**

The following cure rates were observed: (based on sound lameness score 35d after treatment)



The challenge on farm is finding the time to do it...and if no one enjoys the job it just won't get done. So, upskill the farm team in how to identify and treat lame cows (contact your vet clinic for training options), build time into the day to get it done – just like you do for monitoring other diseases such as mastitis, and break the lameness cycle! And don't forget to give pain relief for at least 3 days to reduce the pain and inflammation.

<sup>1</sup>Thomas, HJ et al, 2015. Evaluation of treatments for claw horn lesions in dairy cows in a randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Dairy Science*. AgriHealth

# NSVETS TOTAL VET CARE

*As always we are grateful to all our clients  
for supporting us in 2024.*

*We appreciate working with you and wish you  
all the best over this holiday season.*

