

STAFF COMMENT

We said farewell to Brittany, one of our Riversdale vet nurses, at the end of January. By now she will be just about to start lambing ewes in the far north of Scotland. Her partner Kahil has taken a job managing a 3000 ewe flock – half of whom lamb indoors. What a great experience it will be. As a result of Brittany's departure, we had a nurse vacancy which has been filled by the returning Shbourne who, believe it or not, has been away for almost two years. She has fitted right back in, as if she was never away.

Our social soccer team playing on Friday evenings in Gore, has been going really well so far with three wins and one loss. Mustering a full crew has been difficult at times, with availability restricted due to being on call and a multitude of weddings to attend. Backboned by Rochelle "Chopper Reed" Smith and Sam "El Tigre" Edgar, the defensive line has been very strong with a "take no prisoners" approach. The offensive side has been well marshalled by Andrew "Twinkletoes" Cochrane and Julia "The NZ Messi" Molloy, with 10 goals scored so far. Midfield has had a "good cop - bad cop" feel about it with Caine "If I can't go around you, I'll go through you, even if you are only a teenage New World checkout operator" McIntyre and Rebecca "I'm too nice for my own good as I've adopted another poodle" Morley. The exercise has called for some rehydration afterwards and a lot of fun has been had.

Jill and Cherise have had a few weeks volunteering in Rarotonga neutering stray cats and dogs. They have contributed greatly to controlling the stray animal population over there and enjoyed the weather too! Well done guys.



Jill (Left), Cherise (Right) ...organising some of the donated clinic supplies in Te Are Manu Vet Clinic, Rarotonga.

WORMWATCH MARCH 2019

The rain continues to fall relatively consistently for most, providing larvae with one of the better summers they have had. Expect larval levels to be high, particularly in paddocks that have had plenty of pressure from lambs. Autumn is also the time for knockout drenches, a single drench with a novel combination in March/April is likely to double the length of time before resistance affects the regular drench on your farm.

FECRT

Most of these are underway now, results pending... watch this space!

Cattle Reminders

- Pregnancy test
- Wean, mark & drench beef calves
- Cows & yearlings—lepto vaccination
- Dry off light cows and culls

STAFF PET CORNER



This is Biscuits. She is 14 months old and belongs to the Stewart/Stanton crew.

Biscuits loves to chill with her humans and play chase with her other cat mate in the house, at all hours of the day. She also loves to tease the dog, just because she knows she is faster at getting up the tree.

Horse Reminders

- Worming treatment for foals
- Control bot eggs on horse legs

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BODY CONDITION SCORE - CRUCIAL

Research has proven benefits for achieving a target BCS for cows of 5.0 at calving (5.5 for heifers and first calvers). Barriers to achieving the goal are a combination of feed available, and often more so TIME to gain weight. We must dry cows off before they lose more condition than they can gain back in winter.

It is more beneficial to target more extra in milk and early milk yield than it is to squeeze the last drop out at the end of the season.

Options include:

- drying some cows off sooner
- go to once a day milking

Note that:

- Supplements to milkers in autumn may be partitioned to milk not BCS
- Cows rarely gain more than 0.5 BCS in 30 days
- Cows rarely gain BCS in the month before calving
- Cows need time to adapt to winter crops before any condition gain is made

Grazing Dairy Young Stock?

Don't risk a dispute. Both parties must know the condition of the stock and the expectations from the start.

Condition score animals and weigh young stock regularly. This avoids any doubt around the improvement in stock, and allows for early changes to be implemented if things are not trending correctly. Photos are useful especially if you have concerns, hind sight is a wonderful thing.

We have several DairyNZ accredited Body Condition Scorers that can score your herd (individual or a sample) and can help select cows at risk. We can provide this service for you for peace of mind, and support where needed.

Months before calving	BCS
4 (MARCH)	Dry off Cows \leq 3.0 R3's \leq 3.5
3 (APRIL)	Dry off Cows \leq 3.5 R3s \leq 4.0
2 (MAY)	Target R3 \geq 5.0 R2 \geq 5.5
Dry off day	Target cows 5.0 First calvers 5.5
Heifers at all times	5.5

Target (kg)	For 450 kg mature weight	550 kg mature weight
18 month	330 kg	400 kg
9 month	180	240
6 month	135	165

CLOSTRIDIAL DISEASE IN YOUNG STOCK – ARE YOU PROTECTED?

What is more frustrating than finding a fine replacement ewe lamb, prime lamb or calf belly up, just moments away from reaping any financial reward? Not only does it hurt the pocket, but it's a blow to all the good we have done to this point, such a frustrating, preventable loss.

We are talking about clostridial disease (pulpy, sudden death, blackleg, malignant oedema tetanus etc.). Any protection to the lamb offered by pre-lamb vaccinated ewes has well and truly departed, so many will have already given the first shot of clostridial vaccine to lambs. But remember while you will get some protection from one shot, animals are not fully vaccinated until they themselves have had two shots, ideally 4-6 weeks apart (Mum's vaccine doesn't count!).

Our dairy calves are usually well protected by now, having had two or often three shots of 7 in 1 (leptospirosis plus 5 in 1). Their beef cousins on the other hand, whose mothers are seldom/never annually vaccinated, often receive nothing or get their first shot at marking which could be leaving them vulnerable to tetanus and other clostridial diseases. Ideally they are fully vaccinated prior to marking, but if they have had nothing you might consider using 'Lamb Vaccine'. This provides immediate short term tetanus protection only, plus some protection against pulpy kidney. These animals will still need to go onto a full vaccination program.

The two shot vaccine program should be completed before any rocket fuel finishing feed, or winter crop is started. There are lots of products on the market now containing 5, 8 or 10 clostridial components plus or minus vitamins and trace elements. Talk to us about what may be best for your farm.

SALMONELLA

Every year we continue to see outbreaks of both Enteric (gut form) and Brandenburg (abortions) strains of Salmonella.

Remember you can have some success vaccinating in an outbreak of the gut form, but this will not help with the abortion form. While mixed age ewes can abort, the most common age group affected is our two tooth's.

We recommend two shots, a sensitiser and a booster, with the second (booster) given on or before day 80 of pregnancy (i.e. 2-3 weeks before the risk period). Sheep are then boosted annually. Avoid vaccinating for salmonella at the same time as campy vaccination as this may result in metabolic issues.

Pet Reminders

- Check for barley grass - especially between toes, under arms and around ears.
- Flea prevention and treatment
- Senior wellness Month—save up to \$122.60

Deer Reminders

- Weaners—treat for parasites
- Put stags out
- Yersiniavax—second injection
- Certified velveters—return drugs and book

HYPERTHYROIDISM

Hyperthyroidism (excessive thyroid hormone) is a common disease in older cats, especially in cats older than 8 years old. Some of the clinical signs to look out for include drinking and eating more, weight loss despite good appetite, change in behaviour such as hyperactivity or lethargy and decreased grooming. Thyroid hormone affects numerous organ systems in the body, but one of the most detrimental effects of excessive levels, is on the heart – Animals can go into heart failure due to it's effect on the heart muscle (hypertrophic cardiomyopathy).

There are 4 options for managing this disease. The first is medical management which consists of daily medication (either an oral tablet or a gel that goes on the ear and is absorbed across the skin). The second is dietary management (Hills y/d) which is a diet designed to lower circulating thyroid hormone by limiting iodine. The third is surgical removal of the thyroid gland and the fourth is radioactive iodine treatment.

Griffin is a Burmese who was diagnosed with hyperthyroidism after being off colour and having blood tests performed at the clinic. His owners opted for radioactive iodine treatment and he was referred to Dunedin to have this almost a year ago. The great news is that Griffin's thyroid level has been in the normal range since then without the need for daily medication!



March is senior wellness month, so if you have a senior or geriatric cat a routine blood test may detect this disease early, before we see significant (sometimes irreversible) changes to the heart and other organs. Book your senior pet in for their consult and save up to \$122.60.

AGED HORSE

March is Senior Month so let's consider the old nags (not the mother in-law or former vet nurses – Nola!) The following occur at any age but can be more common in our aged equines.

Weight loss - The most common causes are low feed input or poor teeth! Pasture alone may not be enough for golden oldies. In general, supplements should have quality digestible fibre, 12-16% protein, balanced in Vits + Mins, be dust free and palatable but avoid sugary additives that may trigger laminitis. Poor dentition can be very painful reducing appetite and poorly chewed food can increase the risk of choke and colic as can dusty foods. Shelter +/- rugs will reduce energy spent on warmth but ensure they fit well.

Laminitis - Poor feet care can increase risk of laminitis causing immense suffering. Older horses may develop PPID ('Cushing's') or EMS (Metabolic Syndrome) which can increase risk. Testing is available to see if your horse has an underlying condition that may be preventatively managed.

Colic – Impaction colic may be due to gut tumours but feed type, dental care, access to fresh water and regular worming are all important. It is vital to monitor faecal output to be sure what goes in, does come out!

Stress - Horses are happiest with company of some sort but be sure that they are not competing for food, or being bullied. Stress can trigger bouts of metabolic issues and colic also.

Assess them every day – Arthritic horses may become cast in their paddocks. Continue to check body condition, lameness, lumps, toileting and eating behaviours and that water is fresh.

Sheep Reminders

- Monitor B12 levels
- FEC lambs
- FEC ewes
- 2nd dose Campy vaccine
- Review winter feed budget
- Exercise rams—check feet
- Flush ewes
- Re—vaccinate lambs clostridial vaccine
- Teasers out with ewes 17 days before ram
- Weigh ewe lambs and assess for mating

BIT OF A LAUGH

A blonde and a redhead have a ranch. They have just lost their bull. The women need to buy another, but only have \$500. The redhead tells the blonde, "I will go to the market and see if I can find one for under that amount. If I can, I will send you a telegram." She goes to the market and finds one for \$499. Having only one dollar left, she goes to the telegraph office and finds out that it costs one dollar per word. She is stumped on how to tell the blonde to bring the truck and trailer. Finally, she tells the telegraph operator to send the word "comfortable." Skeptical, the operator asks, "How will she know to come with the trailer from just that word?" The redhead replies, "She's a blonde so she reads slow: 'Come for ta bull.'"

