



SHOP TALK

After-hours Order Collection

Just a reminder that the new location for collection of orders after-hours is on the north side of the building alongside the outside dog kennels. You will be given an access code for the door when you call to place your order, however this code is different for each order so please ensure that you don't forget it!

OVL Seminars

We are in the process of planning our Winter/Spring seminars, so be sure to keep an eye out for the flyers. On the Dairy side, the 'Ladies Night' and 'Spring First Aid' seminars will be going ahead as usual, and we are also planning an evening seminar on Mastitis with a guest speaker from Bayer Animal Health. For the Sheep farmers, a seminar covering the latest on Drench Resistance should

encourage some good discussion, so please come along and share your thoughts and concerns.

Rumenvite Magnesium Capsules

Rumenvite Magnesium capsules aid in the control of hypomagnesaemia or "Grass Stagers" in Cattle and are used when farmers find it difficult to offer more traditional forms of supplementation such as pasture dusting with Mag Oxide or water treatment. The capsules have classically been used in beef breeding cows, but may also be a useful option in late-calving dairy cows. Reliable magnesium supplementation of water in spring can be challenging as the low dry matter content of the pasture means that water intakes are often reduced and in addition, the palatability of the water is reduced. If you would like any further information regarding this product or would like to discuss the management of metabolic disease on your farm this spring, please contact us at the clinic.



Merial Ancare Drench Promotion

Alan Findlay & Mary Napper were the lucky winners of the Merial Ancare summer drench promotion and are now the owners of a fantastic garden chair & umbrella set. We only hope that they have had the opportunity to enjoy them throughout the somewhat variable summer.

STAFF NEWS

We are very pleased to welcome **Jenny Paterson** to Otautau Vets. Jenny is local to Otautau, having grown up on a sheep farm in Eastern Bush and now living on a Sheep & Deer farm in Scott's Gap. Jenny worked at Northern Southland Veterinary Services for three years after graduating from Massey and will be working part-time here at OVL.

Jen (Gordon.....just in case there's any confusion) and her husband Jason welcomed a daughter, Eilidh on 9th January. Despite arriving five days early, Eilidh managed to hold on long enough for her Grandparents to arrive from the UK, although 8 hours after they touched down in Invercargill was cutting it a bit fine.



STAFF PROFILE

Jen Campbell - Veterinary Surgeon

Jen joined OVL in January 2014 having spent two and a half years working in mixed practice in the Scottish highlands.

Jen grew up outside Glasgow on a family hunting/point-to-point yard and also had a keen interest in cows. Before starting her veterinary studies, she worked in Scotland as a race horse trainer, relief milker and farm hand on local dairy and beef/sheep farms before travelling overseas. She spent some time in Texas working with racehorses and then volunteered in South Africa at a game and marine wildlife reserve for a few months before starting vet school in Glasgow. Jen also spent many of her Uni holidays overseas, working with trotting/pacing horses in Canada, Equine reproductive scanning in Belgium and charity-based vet student placements in both Spain and South Africa.

Jen is a keen sportswoman, with a particular interest in hockey, women's rugby, surfing and snowboarding. Easy to see the appeal of Southland!

CATTLE SECTION

Minimising Heifer Mastitis

There appears to be great variation in the level of heifer mastitis seen on our farms and equally as much variation in the management methods used to achieve the low levels of mastitis that can be seen within this age group. Some of you are experiencing low levels of mastitis with little or no intervention, whereas others of you have managed to achieve a similar level as a result of the use of internal teat sealants. Unfortunately, many factors contribute to the incidence of heifer mastitis on farms and as a result, there is no single management tool to reduce the level on your farm.

The SmartSMMM team has reviewed the ways in which to manage heifers in order to minimise the risk of mastitis and I have summarised below, the strategies that have proven effective in preventing mastitis at and around calving. The SmartSMMM 'trigger for action' is herds with more than 15% heifer mastitis cases within the first 14 days after calving, but there are also likely to be considerable economic and health benefits experienced from intervention at a lower levels of mastitis. For those of you who found yourself battling high levels of mastitis in your heifers in Spring, I hope that this will give you something to think about ahead of next season, but please remember that we are here to help you with these battles, so come in and have a chat with one of our vets.

Internal Teat Sealants

Infusion of an internal teat sealant (ITS) approximately one month prior to first calving has been shown to reduce the risk of new intramammary infection and of clinical mastitis associated with *Streptococcus uberis* by around two thirds.

The teat sealant provides a physical barrier in the teat canal preventing the entry of bacteria and also acts to reduce the incidence of milk leakage pre-calving, which is itself a risk factor for mastitis. At the current milk price, it has been shown to be economic to use an ITS in heifers where the incidence of clinical mastitis around calving is greater than 7-8%.

Good hygiene at the time of application is essential to reduce the risk of introducing infection and so we would recommend getting our help if you are thinking of using an ITS this coming

season. We have the facilities and staff numbers to make this an easier job for everyone and as a result, standards are less likely to slip.

Pre-Calving Teat Spray Application

Regular application of teat spray pre-calving is associated with a 50% reduction in the risk of clinical mastitis due to *Strep uberis*. Studies have shown that application of an antiseptic teat spray three times a week, pre-calving tended to reduce the bacterial contamination of the teat end 24-48 hours before calving and as a result, also reduced the incidence of subclinical mastitis associated with *Strep uberis*.

This may not be the easiest option for those of you with young stock grazing off farm, but would be worth implementing if heifers are wintered on farm. It also has the added advantage of getting the heifers used to the milking shed prior to calving and so easing the stress of training newly calved heifers.

Milking Heifers within 12 hours of Calving

We know that this is not going to be a popular management option for next season, but removing calves from heifers on a twice (rather than once) daily basis with immediate milking results in a 45% reduction in the clinical mastitis incidence rate. Studies have shown that reducing the interval between calving and first milking, from an average of 19.5 hours to 9.8 hours, resulted in a significantly lower prevalence of both clinical and subclinical mastitis at calving.

Further benefits were seen from this management change as a lower incidence of udder oedema was observed and farmers also reported less mis-mothering and greater ease of dealing with smaller batches of freshly calved heifers.

Obviously, any pre-calving management strategy introduced must be appropriate for each individual herd and this will depend on cost, potential risks/benefits, labour availability and heifer winter grazing management. However, there are also simple management strategies that should be routinely practiced on all farms in order to try and keep the mastitis levels as low as possible;

- Train heifers in the milking shed prior to calving in order to maximise production and reduce difficult behaviour post-calving.
- Attend to heifers with severe udder oedema and get veterinary advice if heifers are very uncomfortable or if you are experiencing a high incidence of oedema; nutritional factors can contribute to the incidence and can be rectified if necessary.
- Ensure that all quarters are milked out fully and if need be, use let-down hormone (oxytocin) for those heifers that have not had a full let down within 24 hours after calving.

As mentioned earlier, we are here to help you so if you want to discuss the best ways to reduce the level of heifer mastitis in your stock, please call the clinic.

Mamyzin Milk Quality Award

We are pleased to announce that Robert and Catherine Willis are the 2013 recipients of the Mamyzin Milk Quality Award.

An holistic approach to herd health management has enabled them to improve both their bulk tank somatic cell count and the incidence of clinical mastitis. Improved nutrition and a planned approach to reproductive management has improved in-calf rates, thus reducing the pressure to cull late and empty cows. This has given scope to cull cows with persistently elevated somatic cell counts, resulting in reduced bulk somatic cell counts and new infection rates. In addition they now run their heifers in a separate herd, further reducing their exposure to intramammary infections.

Individual cows are well known to Robert and his manager, David, and cases of mastitis are identified and treated promptly. This consistent hard work has resulted in their average bulk tank somatic cell count from August to December dropping from 150 000 SCC in 2012 to 94 000 in 2013



SHEEP SECTION

Are you 'Wormwise' this Winter?

There has always been uncertainty around stock drenching requirements pre-winter as the pasture larval challenge is generally lower and young stock are beginning to develop their natural resistance to worm infection. In general, the risk to your stock over winter is influenced by the wintering systems used and the level of pasture larval contamination in autumn; worm larvae are capable of surviving winter so paddocks will remain contaminated. Drought conditions, will also have an effect as stock are forced to graze much lower when feed is in short supply and as a consequence, worm larval challenge is greater.

Early winter is a particularly high risk period for young stock as they are still very susceptible to infection and grazing management can influence larval challenge. Winter grazing those pastures grazed in autumn will result in higher worm challenge; if this practice can be avoided then higher weight gains can be expected. Drench intervals can usually be extended in winter as the challenge is generally lower and immunity is starting to develop, but continued monitoring is still recommended; a Faecal Egg Count (FEC) around 4 weeks after the last drench will give an indication of how much they have picked up and how safe it is to extend the drench interval.

Winter crop feeding will also change the level of worm challenge, but this can still be unpredictable. The challenge is generally low if hoggets have transitioned quickly onto winter crop, but if the transition has been long and pasture in the crop area has been grazed in preference, worms could still be a threat.

Two-tooths have greater protection in winter, due to their immunity-related age advantage and most will not require drenching. However this can change as pregnancy progresses and their immunity is reduced. A useful recommendation is to assess feed levels, body condition score and FEC at scanning; treating the lighter end of the mob based on condition score may be a sensible approach for this age-group.

Mixed-age ewes are generally safe over winter, although feed shortages or drought conditions will change their susceptibility. As with younger stock classes, increases in susceptibility to worm infection will occur later in pregnancy, and this will be increased further if feed is short. Scanning is again a good time for monitoring feed levels and condition score, but it is likely that any lighter ewes given a drench will also require an increase in feed in order to improve their condition.

As mentioned earlier, the interaction between feeding level and worm susceptibility increases dramatically as pregnancy reaches the final stages. Feed availability for ewes coming in to lambing is particularly important as increased feed levels are both production enhancing and protective against worm challenges. Pre-lamb drenching of the whole flock is unlikely to be of any benefit unless the ewes are under expected pressure e.g. severe feed shortages, and so any drenching decisions should be based on feed and body condition at the time. If whole-flock drenching is deemed necessary, always leave some in the mob untreated in order to maintain refugia.

Severe feed shortages in late winter will increase the drench requirements for all stock classes and not just those heavily in-lamb. Deteriorating feed levels will limit growth and increase worm susceptibility for younger, growing stock, thus increasing their need for drenching.

It is important to remember that worms can affect the health of your stock at any stage of the year and susceptibility varies greatly from one year to the next. Changes in weather conditions and feed availability may increase or decrease the drench requirements of your stock and if you are concerned about the condition of your stock at any time of the year, the sensible decision is to check FEC. Remember that monitoring the worm levels in your stock on a regular basis is an important part of both worm and resistance control and could save you a lot of money either through increased weight gains or avoidance of unnecessary drenching.

Scanning - Time to boost survivability and profit

Low feed levels in autumn can add extra stress to ewe flocks. In addition to this, the increased supplement feed required may increase the risk of vitamin and mineral deficiencies over pregnancy. Unfortunately, Lamb survivability as a result of a deficiency in vitamins and minerals may also be reduced.

Scanning time is the signal to start focusing on your flock's nutrient and mineral needs; this is the time when the organs, nervous system, skin and wool follicles of the fetal lambs are developing. All these critical growth aspects are particularly dependent upon adequate iodine levels. The outcomes for poor iodine levels are at worst poor lamb survival rates or at best impaired lamb growth rates, both of which will unfortunately drain feed and profit from your farm system.

Moving pregnant ewes on to crop after scanning may induce deficiencies, but lambs born to ewes on high quality pasture can also suffer deficiencies such as Iodine and vitamin E deficiency. Lambs born to ewes on brassicas are at particular risk due to the presence of goitrogens in the crop which increase the need for extra Iodine.

If you haven't already supplemented your ewes pre-mating, mineral supplementation of Iodine can boost lamb survivability, health and ultimately farm profits. Products such as LSD also contain additional vitamins including A, D, E, and C, which are important "anti-stress" vitamins to protect ewes through their toughest period.

Options for Supplementation are

- 1. Potassium Iodide;** drench pre-lamb +/- pre-winter or pasture spray 3 weeks pre-lamb.
- 2. Flexidine Injection;** Treat ewes 1 month before mating, or no less than 2 months before lambing. Treat all stock at least 2 months prior to the feeding of Brassica or other goitrogenic crops (if you have treated the ewes pre-mating, there is no need to repeat treatment).
- 3. LSD;** for maximum results, dose pre-mating, at scanning and just prior to lambing.

Following supplementation with Iodine, Ewes remain healthier through pregnancy, lamb survivability and health improve and ultimately farm profits are boosted through lower losses and heavier weights.

DOG SECTION

Gastric Dilatation & Volvulus (GDV) "Twisted Stomach"

A "Twisted Stomach" or GDV occurs when the dog's stomach balloons up with air, putting pressure on other organs and the diaphragm. For some reason, dogs affected by this condition are unable to burp up and release this air and once the stomach is full, it easily rotates on itself which can interrupt the blood supply to the stomach by pinching the blood vessels. If this rotation occurs and the blood supply is cut off, the stomach begins to die and the entire blood system of the animal is disrupted leading to rapid deterioration. GDV is a very serious and life-threatening condition and a proper understanding of how this condition occurs, how to prevent it and what to do if you suspect your dog has a GDV are essential to ensuring a long and healthy life for your dog.

What are the risk factors for GDV?

- 1. Breed** There is a definite link between breed or build of dog and risk of GDV; large, deep-chested dogs are high-risk breeds (in NZ, risk of GDV is 19 times higher in Huntaway's than other working dog breeds).
- 2. Genetics** No direct genetic link has been shown, however dogs with a mother or father that had a history of GDV are also at an increased risk of developing the condition.
- 3. Age** A recent Massey study indicated that older dogs are at increased risk of developing GDV; risk appears to increase with increasing age.
- 4. Weight, Meals & Rate of eating** These factors may well be linked; underweight dogs, dogs fed only once-a-day and dogs that eat quickly have all been shown to be at greater risk of developing a GDV.
- 5. Temperament** Fearful or nervous dogs are more prone to developing a GDV.
- 6. Exercise** Vigorous exercise, both immediately before and for two hours after feeding, is linked to an increased incidence.
- 7. Season** The Massey study also showed that the risk of GDV was higher in summer; possibly due to climate or because the

farm dogs are fed and exercised differently over the summer months.

What symptoms do I need to be looking for?

The main symptoms of a GDV include restlessness, pacing, rapid onset of abdominal distension until the abdomen becomes tight and taut, rapid or shallow breathing and vomiting which progresses to dry retching. The dog may also become depressed and salivate more than usual, which is an indication of severe pain. As the dog deteriorates, it may go into shock with collapse, pale gums, rapid heart rate and a very weak pulse.

How can I prevent my dog developing a GDV?

Unfortunately, a dog may still develop a GDV even if all recommendations to prevent the occurrence are put in place. These recommendations are as follows;

- Large dogs should ideally be fed two or three times daily, rather than once a day, but unfortunately this is impractical for working dogs,
- If the dog is a rapid eater, place a large, heavy object in the feed bowl so that the dog has to eat round it and can't gulp it's food,
- Water should be available at all times, but should be limited immediately after feeding,
- Vigorous exercise, excitement and stress should be avoided one hour before and two hours after feeding,
- Dietary changes should be made gradually over 3-5 days,
- Susceptible dogs (fearful/nervous) should be fed individually & preferably in a quiet location,
- If you are buying a puppy which is a susceptible breed, enquire as to whether the parents have a history of GDV.

If you suspect that your dog may have a GDV, it is important that you call us **immediately**.

REMINDERS

Cattle

- Late pregnancy test at least 6 weeks after the bull has come out
- Pre-winter mineral check for cows
- Pre-winter drench for calves & Clostridial/Lepto vaccination
- Lepto vaccinate whole herd at drying off
- Check cows 7-10 days after dry-off
- Manage brassica feeding carefully with sufficient supplementary feed and allow at least two weeks transition from crop to grass feeding
- Consider Pink Eye vaccination if high challenge
- Book in Restricted Veterinary Medicines (Prescription) consultation for 2014/15 season
- Book in Heifer Internal Teat Sealant visit
- Investigate any abortions
- Milking Machine Test
- Consider Lice Pour-on (e.g. Temporo)
- Rotavec®/Corona/Scourguard®4 vaccinate cows pre-calving
- Start Magnesium supplementation with Mag Chloride pre-calving

Sheep

- Drench hoggets prior to going on to Winter crop
- Delay putting pregnant ewes onto winter crop for six weeks after the joining date
- Consider Louse pour-on for Off-Shears
- Book in Restricted Veterinary Medicines (Prescription) consultation for 2014/15 season
- Investigate any abortions
- Flexidine/Pre-lamb Iodine or LSD drench

Deer

- Last Lungworm drench for fawns
- Mineral check Copper/Selenium to assess winter reserves
- Organise TB test before spring rush
- Book in Restricted Veterinary Medicines (Prescription) consultation for 2014/15 season

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Best Wishes from the vets: S Giles Gill BVM&S, Louise F Ingram BVMS (Hons) MACVSc, Jen E Gordon MA VetMB, Rosemary R Gill BVM&S, Teresa A Skevington BVSc, Ashleigh S Braithwaite DVM, Aileen Scott BVMS, Julia E Nuttall BVSc, Ruby A Davidson BVetMed, Jennifer Campbell BVMS, Jenny Paterson BVSc.



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