



# EWES NEWS



## Bull soundness

**Dave Robertson BVSc BSc**  
Oamaru Veterinary Centre

Coming up to bull sales it is a good time evaluate the bull team, especially for those bulls still under insurance.

### 2 options of evaluating bulls

- **Mating Ability Test (MAT)**
- **Semen collection and soundness exam**

What test is done is determined by the situation. Best to discuss with one of our beef cattle vets to determine which test is appropriate.

The MAT works well on farms that do it routinely each year. Most faults with bulls are functional ones associated with the physical aspects of breeding. Bulls that were sound last year are not always sound the next. 5 year+ bulls are the age group with the most problems with servicing. If you have an aging team, it would be well to have them checked.

We have upgraded our semen collection equipment and evaluating systems and it is working really well to calmly and efficiently assess breeding soundness and fertility of young sale bulls.



## Product of the month

### Nitrate Test Kit

- For checking nitrate toxicity in crop or pasture.
- The kit provides for on farm analysis of nitrate levels in at risk crops.

### Risks

- Slowed plant growth caused by cold and cloudy weather.

- Excess Nitrogen uptake in crops following fertiliser application going into winter.

### Price

- Full kit - \$187.90 including gst (25 tests = \$7.50 per test).
- Testing strip refill only - \$126 including gst per pack of 25.



## IN THIS ISSUE

- Bull soundness
- Product of the month
- Yersinia deer
- Hogget Mating – A flexible option
- Weaner beef cattle animal health
- MEG - Not your typical GDV
- “Newetrition” - Feeding ewes over mating – BCS is key
- RVM Reminder



**Collie Club (Haka) dog trials, with Matt Smith (Maud) and Les Scott (Quake)**



**Gordon Lucas, Nine Mile Station – out and about at Omarama dog trials**

## OUR CLINICS

**Oamaru** Ph 03 434 5666

**Waimate** Ph 03 689 7213

**Palmerston** Ph 03 465 1291

**Glenavy** Ph 03 689 8118

**Kurow** Ph 03 436 0567

**Omarama**  
Ph 03 438 9868

**Ranfurly**  
Ph 03 444 1020





# Yersinia deer

Luke Smyth BVSc  
Oamaru Veterinary Centre



I often get asked the question at this time of year "should I be vaccinating my weaner's with Yersiniavax".

Yersinia is a bacterial disease that can cause a severe green watery scour and death in young deer in the autumn and winter. The bacteria live in the intestines and are spread in the faeces, bacteria survive well in soil and on pasture, especially in the cooler autumn months.

**Yersinia is everywhere in the environment it is not possible to eradicate it- We must manage around it.**

When young deer are under stress their gut slows down which can allow proliferation of the Yersinia bacteria to massive numbers. The bacterial toxins damage the intestines leading to diarrhoea. The resulting dehydration and toxin absorption into the bloodstream frequently result in death unless picked up and treated early. Mass medication with injectable antibiotics usually puts the brakes on an outbreak most reliably. This is very expensive and time consuming, plus you have usually lost a fair number of fawns before taking this step - so prevention is much better than cure!

As mentioned above Yersiniosis outbreaks are precipitated by stress, and common tipping points are:

- Underfeeding
- Sudden changes of feed (including an inadequate lead-in time when introducing grain supplements)
- Sudden cold/wet weather especially if associated with either of the above
- Prolonged yarding and/or transport
- Weaning

- Parasitism  
Obviously, you have no control over the weather, and fawns must be weaned at some point, so it's difficult to eliminate these stressors, but the others are manageable. By

keeping young deer well fed and sheltered, avoiding extended periods in the yards, treating for parasites and ensuring trace elements are adequate we can minimise stress.

A really good tool for reducing the risk of Yersiniosis is the Yersiniavax<sup>®</sup> vaccine. Yersiniavax is a specific vaccine to protect young deer. It does require some attention to detail to get the most out of it.

- Two doses should be given one month apart around weaning.
- Fawns should be 12 weeks of age when the first shot is given.
- It is too late to vaccinate once an outbreak of Yersiniosis has started.
- No annual booster is necessary because older deer develop immunity to the disease.
- I always reinforce the point that the vaccine will not prevent 100% of fawn deaths from Yersiniosis, however it will grossly reduce the number of deaths and shorten the disease course if a Yersinia outbreak occurs.



## B1 deficiency

Dave Robertson BVSc BSc  
Oamaru Veterinary Centre

Blind staggy lambs and calves. How often have you seen this?

It goes by a few names and is probably not always reported or picked up by farmers. B1 or Thiamine deficiency or polioencephalomalacia (PEM) occurs sporadically in sheep and cattle.

The clinical signs are a gradient of brain dysfunction. Firstly twitching, high head carriage and teeth grinding. Progressing to staggering, falling over and seizures, death within 1-3 days. The classic is the apparent blindness. When you wave a hand in front of an animal behaving oddly with B1 deficiency it will not blink.

Cause is a change in rumen bugs. Where one bacteria becomes dominant and produces an enzyme that breaks down B vitamins before they get absorbed in the blood. The B vitamins help to provide energy to the brain, hence the brain dysfunction with this disease.

It is more a disease of young stock 1-3 months after weaning. Low fibre diets are a factor. There other possible causes of these clinical signs (sulphur poisoning, salt toxicity ryegrass staggers, lead poisoning)

It is amazing to see the response to treatment. The key is to get it early and inject B1 vitamin (duojet) repeatedly over 48 hrs (every 6-12 hrs). An oral drench is available for the whole mob if multiple causes arise.





# Hogget Mating – A flexible option

**Daley Watson-Krawitz BVSc**  
Waimate Veterinary Centre

Careful consideration should be given to whether to go ahead with mating all, or part of, your hogget flock each year. It should be seen as a flexible tool to achieve higher production in good years, but keeping in mind that long term detrimental effects can occur if hoggets are not up to weight or not fed adequately.

While there can be some big advantages

- Production of a 'bonus' lamb in their first year of life
- Provides an early screening tool of potentially more fertile animals
- A higher lifetime performance if fed correctly
- Reduced generation interval if selecting hogget lambs as replacements
- Higher profits

There can also be some major disadvantages:

In particular relating to if hoggets are underweight at breeding or if they are not fed appropriately after mating

-Increased feed requirements

- Potential for reduced 2th liveweight and reduced longevity in the herd if hard done by
- Increased number of rams/teasers
- Increased workload

Currently in NZ about 30-35% of hoggets are mated each year

achieving an average lambing percentage of 60%. This is with a huge range from 20-140%+.

Some key things to consider are:

-MINIMUM live weights of 40Kg and BCS of 2.5 should be the target at ram in date.

-Additional feed requirements will need to be accounted for, both for the growing hoggets and additional lambs.

-Monitoring of live weights should be done throughout pregnancy period. Total live weight gains of 130-150g/day throughout pregnancy are required to ensure performance of the dam and their lambs are not affected.

- Stock numbers should be adjusted accordingly. The extra feed required by 4 mated hoggets is equivalent to the feed eaten by 1 ewe in a year.
- Teaser rams are a great tool to increase hoggets mated and condense the lambing spread.
- Ram ratios of 1:75-100 or lower should be used, particularly if teaser rams are used.

If things are looking tight this year on your farm or hoggets are not up to weights, consider either not mating, or only mating a portion of them.



**Weaned Charolais x calves about to get their oral triple drench and 1st 10 in 1 before they hit the fodder beet in 2 months time.**



**Ryan Ambler's beef cows Fuchsia Creek**

2% dry and >75% 1st service conception rate. A great result for a tricky season.

- Cow condition optimised and well managed.
- BVD removed
- Selenium and copper pre calving
- Sound, hi fertility bulls single sire mated.
- Not many late calvers from previous year.



# Weaner beef cattle animal health

**Finja Schmidt BVSc**  
Waimate Veterinary Centre

Eclipse E +B12 and Selenium. A combination product that is convenient and effective for beef calves. The injectable is a reliable way to deliver the drench without having to get in the race too much.

Matrix mini-dose is a good oral drench option

Beef calf animal health program for R1 beef. Replacement heifers add BVD vaccination in the spring.

Time	Animal health	Weight and feed targets
Weaning April	1st covexin Eclipse E Se+B12 injection	220- 250kg 6-8kgDM/day
May (6 weeks later)	2nd covexin 2mL Coppermax (or Cu bullet) Eclipse pour-on (for lice + worm control)	
September	Selovin LA 3mL Eclipse pour-on 1st BVD vaccine	260 – 280kg 7-9kgDM/day
October	2nd BVD vaccine	300+



**Some impressive bull calves at weaning. Progeny from last year's AI programme**



# MEG - Not your typical GDV

**Anna McLeod BVSc**  
Waimate Veterinary Centre

Meg, a 21kg Heading Dog, recently presented to the Veterinary Centre Waimate with a very bloated abdomen and in distress. Though Meg was attempting to retch and vomit, she was unable to bring anything up. X-rays soon confirmed her stomach was extremely distended and starting to twist - preventing anything from passing out or coming back up despite continuing to fill with fluid and gas.

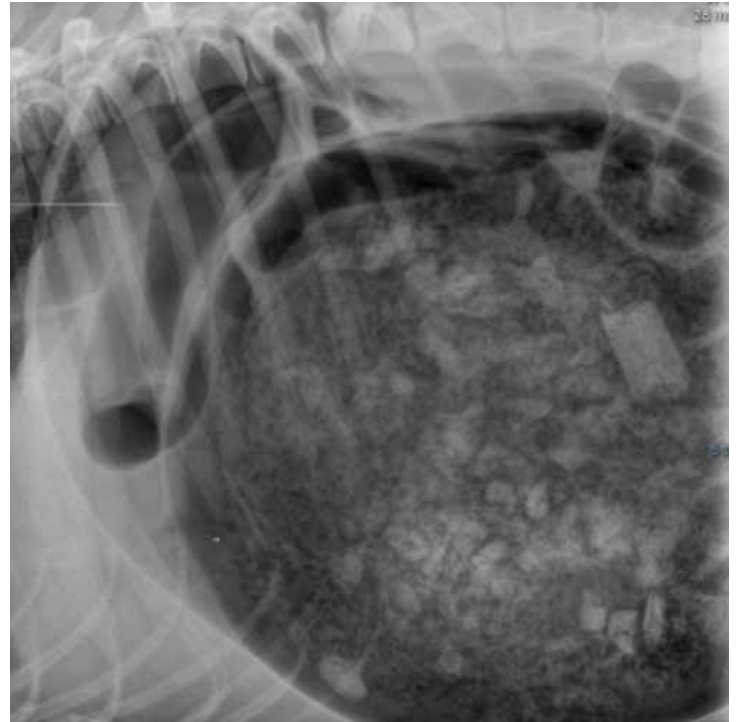
Meg was stabilised with IV fluids and pain relief, and a stomach tube was passed to relieve some of the trapped fluid and gas before emergency surgery was performed. During surgery, the partially twisted stomach was rolled back into the normal position, then opened to remove the large chunks of meat and bone that were unable to pass. Before closing her abdomen, a small patch of Meg's stomach was sutured to the body wall just behind her ribs - a procedure called a gastropexy that prevents the stomach from being able to twist in the future.

After close monitoring in hospital following her surgery, Meg recovered without complication and has continued to bounce back to full health!

A GDV (Gastric Dilatation-Volvulus) is an emergency situation that is often fatal without immediate treatment.

Most commonly, it affects large, deep-chested dogs - the big Huntaway is the poster child within your working dog team! Many additional risk factors can increase the likelihood of developing a GDV, including feeding directly before or after working, or having a close relative that has also suffered a GDV. Considering a prophylactic gastropexy for any of these high risk dogs could be potentially life-saving!

Meg's saving grace was likely her owners rapid response, combined with her smaller frame and narrow chest preventing the distended



stomach having enough room to fully twist. Though dogs don't always follow 'the rules', an awareness of risk factors and recognition of early symptoms will help prevent losing a valuable member of your team!

## “Newetrition”

**Lucy Cameron BVSc BSc**  
Waimate Veterinary Centre



## Feeding ewes over mating – BCS is key

Feeding ewes at mating is made a lot easier if you know what body condition score your ewes are in. Your biggest gains will be in the lighter animals.

For light ewes (BCS <3):

- Give additional feed.
- Put in a separate mob.
- Flush with higher quantity and quality of feed before mating and for the first 14-17 days of mating – this will increase ovulation rates and potentially lambing percentages.

For most ewes (at BCS 3 – 3.5) feeding levels should remain at maintenance or just above as they head into mating.

- If they're being flushed, they can continue to be for the first couple of weeks, but there is no benefit to carrying on past their first cycle (17 days).
- Don't give them a lot of extra feed – use on lighter animals and save it for winter, thus improving spring covers and hopefully lamb growth rates.

Can you over feed ewes at mating?

- In some cases... increasing the feeding level to over-conditioned ewes – BCS 4.0+ – will actually have a negative effect on their fertility, kind of the opposite of a flushing effect.
- Another reason to BCS your ewes before mating – draft off the skinny ones and don't waste feed on all those at BCS 3 or above.

If they were flushed on lucerne is it safe to continue feeding it through mating?

- In most cases, if the lucerne is healthy, green and leafy – yes.
- If there is any risk that oestrogen levels in the lucerne may be elevated, ewes can be flushed on lucerne but should be removed 2 weeks before mating and mated on pasture
- Oestrogen levels are elevated when the crop is stressed e.g. from aphid attack, leaf spots, moisture stress, fungal disease (warm, wet weather) etc



## RVM Reminder

**Andrew Muir BVSc BSc (Hons)**  
Oamaru Veterinary Centre

A reminder that you can be subject to an audit of your Restricted Veterinary Medicines (RVM) use by the MPI Verification Services on farm verification programme. RVMs are the vaccines, antibiotics etc that you have to sign for when they are dispensed at the Veterinary Centre or a Vet examines an animal on farm. The documents you will be given will be completed versions of the following.





# EWES NEWS

## 2021 SHEEP & BEEF ROADSHOWS



Building a Beef breeding plan out of building blocks



### THREE TOPICAL TALKS WERE GIVEN

- **The Beef fertility equation.** What is the ideal cow? Why are fertility aspects of beef cow production 10x more profitable than beef characteristics? What can you do about it?
- **Veterinary Centre footrot research.** A preliminary update on custom vaccine trials and fielding your questions.
- **Autumn worm control.** Monitoring and navigating drench resistance build up.

### 2020 Veterinary Centre Roadshow Parasite Summary



George Smith  
BVSc BSc  
Oamaru

- When less than 95% of worms present are killed by the anthelmintic

#### Agenda

- Definition of drench resistance
- Summary of FECRT data 2020
- Monitoring – How and When?
- How to protect triple drench products with the strategic use of Novel actives
- Refugia – Time to take it seriously

Service and Advice You Can Trust

- Summary from 15 FECRT in 2020
  - 66% of farms had resistance to Levamisole and Benzimidazole drench families, 42% of farms had Abamectin resistance. A number of farms are now showing reduced efficacy to triple combination products.
- Regular drench checks, 7-10 days post drenching. Has the product done the job???
- Number One is Monitoring!!!
  - Use the power of the cube.
  - Strategic use of novel active products into your lamb drenching regime

- Leaving a wild population of parasites in some sheep, not exposed to drench chemicals.
- Leaving as few as 5-10% of lambs untreated at any one time can be beneficial.

# WEANER BEEF

## REQUIREMENTS



*This is an example of an R1 weaner beef animal health program.  
This may vary depending on individual farm circumstances.*

### APRIL

#### Weaning

- 1st Covexin\* / Multine
- Eclipse & B12 + Se Combination Drench



### MAY

#### 1 month post weaning

- Eclipse Pour-on
- 2nd Covexin\*
- Selovin LA Injection



### JUNE

#### 2 month post weaning

- Coppermax\* / Copper-Bullet\*



\*Only available with Veterinary prescription

#### OUR CLINICS

**Veterinary Centre Oamaru**  
**Veterinary Centre Waimate**  
**Veterinary Centre Palmerston**  
**Veterinary Centre Glenavy**  
**Veterinary Centre Kurow**  
**Veterinary Centre Omarama**  
**Veterinary Centre Ranfurly**

311 Thames Street, Oamaru  
 128 High Street, Waimate  
 29 Stonsa Street, Palmerston  
 19 Redcliff Road, Glenavy  
 32 Bledisloe Street, Kurow  
 13 Chain Hills Highway, Omarama  
 16 Charlemont Street East, Ranfurly

Ph 03 434 5666  
 Ph 03 689 7213  
 Ph 03 465 1291  
 Ph 03 689 8118  
 Ph 03 436 0567  
 Ph 03 438 9868  
 Ph 03 444 1020

