



EWES NEWS



Product of the month

Bionic Capsule - The Proven Performer for long acting drench control of internal parasites in sheep!

The Bionic Capsule provides -

100 days of Combination Drench treatment

- Abamectin
- Albendazole

PLUS

100 Days of Combination Mineral Treatment

- Cobalt
- Selenium

Bionic is the only combination sheep capsule on the market that can be stored/administered in temperatures below 0°C.

The Bionic Capsule undergoes a stringent ongoing Quality Programme -

- Bionic is machine assembled in New Zealand for consistency of product
- The active ingredients selected are premium quality and sourced from regularly audited sources.
- Production batches are tested to ensure consistency and duration of drench payout
- The Bionic/Maximiser/Extendor capsules have given over 20+ years proven performance

Note 128 days meat withhold

Long acting Drench treatments provide significant production advantages. However they must be used in a sustainable way to mitigate the risk of drench resistance.

Talk to one of our vets about how to ensure you get the best return in the most sustainable way from using long acting anthelmintics.

Time to review your animal health decisions for the next season

Dave Robertson BVSc, BSc



Challenging old habits, looking at new opportunities and rationalising what is required to ensure your livestock remain in optimal health is worth spending some time on.

We are presently conducting many animal health plan reviews on- farms. It has been pushed along somewhat by some food and fibre processors requiring a veterinary authorised animal health plan document. This aside, it is still a vital part of any farming business. We focus on what you want to focus on. Blending treatments, monitoring and performance targets to suit your program.

Topics include

- Targeted use of drench products.
- How and when to monitor stock performance, drench efficacy, disease levels, mineral status.
- Best timing of vaccines.
- When to scan cows, test bulls, check rams, sort out dogs etc. for best results.
- Prescription medicine review and use of antibiotics.

There have been many motivational speeches and writings on the benefits of planning

“A person who does not plan ahead will find trouble at their door” Confucius
 “Always plan for the fact that no plan ever goes according to plan” Simon Sinek

“Give me 6 hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first 4 sharpening the axe” A. Lincoln.

Choose one to motivate you to get your AHP sorted before scanning, fencing, shearing, lambing..... rolls around.

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Timely reminders

Beef cattle production.

- Long acting selenium and boost of copper prior to calving.
- BVD vaccine can be given as a sensitizer prior to calving, boosting again prior to mating

OUR CLINICS

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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





Feeding after scanning

Daley Watson-Krawitz BVSc
Waimate Veterinary Centre

Scanning of our flocks gives us valuable information and not only for the obvious advantage of being able to take the dries out and know who your multiples are. If you are able to get an aged scan, or an early vs late, then you can make some powerful management decisions to help make the most of your winter feed. The ewe flock should not be fed as one group, within the flock there will be a range of body conditions, multiple vs singles and early vs late lambing ewes. Scanning gives us the ability to measure all of these at once. The scanner can obviously give you the pregnancy status of your sheep but while you are pushing each ewe into the crate this is a great opportunity to also have a feel and mark any ewes which are in poor condition. This will give you a great base to make some decisions on. Winter feed is always in short supply so it makes sense to target the available feed to ewes which will benefit the most. Notably this will be light conditioned ewes and multiple bearing ewes. These ewes will have little reserves and a large demand at lambing time results in low birthweights, poor lactation and low

lamb survival if nothing is done about it. After scanning and out to about 100 days of pregnancy is the last time we can put any condition on these light ewes before foetal demands and rumen fill limits BCS gain. Feeding these lighter sheep well is the best use of feed at this time as putting 0.5 condition score on a BCS 2 ewe takes almost 3.5 times less feed compared with putting it on a BCS 3 ewe. Knowing early v's late lambing ewes again can help allocate feed as the ewes which are due to lamb in the 2nd and subsequent cycles can be held back for 3 weeks and set stocked later. Ewes do not need to be all set stocked at once and 3 weeks can make a big difference in spring. After scanning %, lamb survivability is the next biggest driver of farm profit. With targeted winter feeding you can achieve heavier birthweights, improved colostrum and lactation from the ewes and greater feed efficiency. By focusing your feeding on your early lambing, lower BCS and multiple bearing ewes you are maximising survivability as best you can.



Dave Robertson BVSc, BSc eating a suede "Ice

Best way to assess winter feed quality

- **Twin ewes need 30% more feed post shearing for 2 weeks.**
- **Twin ewes need 50% more than maintenance 5 weeks out from lambing.**



Shirley Hayes and her texel ewes. Happy with her scanning results this year. Now planning the next phase of winter feeding for multiples.

Listeriosis in Ewes

Gwyneth Mark BVSc



As pasture is in short supply coming into the winter, there will be a large amount of feeding out of stored feed. The quality of this feed is important for many reasons, one of which is poor quality silage and baleage can grow the bacteria *Listeria* which can cause listeriosis in stock. The *Listeria* organism can live for a long time in soil but can't survive in well preserved silages which have a low pH (less than 5.5) limiting the bacteria's growth. In silage which is poorly stored the pH increases (pH>5.5) creating an environment where *Listeria* is able to grow and multiply. For example punctured bale wrap or the edges of silage stacks that have been exposed to the air and deteriorated before feeding out.

Listeriosis can occur in several forms:

- 1) The neurological form: the most common and well known form of listeriosis affects the brain. Clinical signs are classically severe depression, circling in one direction and facial paralysis. These signs occur a few weeks after exposure to *Listeria*.
 - 2) The enteric form: this is less common and normally occurs in winter. The *Listeria* can cause a severe gastroenteritis which quickly results in death. Often sheep are found dead a few days after being fed silage, occasionally sheep will be scouring prior to death.
 - 3) *Listeria* can also cause abortion in pregnant ewes. Sudden death a few days after feeding out silage/baleage or neurological signs a few weeks later would indicate *Listeria* as a possible cause of death in ewes. A post-mortem on a freshly dead ewe can confirm the diagnosis and rule out other causes e.g. salmonella or clostridial disease. Treatment of animals with listeriosis is usually unsuccessful therefore making sure silage and baleage is of high-quality and stored correctly is very important.
- If you are experiencing ewe losses this winter, please do not hesitate to contact your veterinarian for advice.

“Newetrition”

Lucy Cameron BVSc
Waimate Veterinary Centre



Sheep nuts or grain

With a wee bit of grain being fed out around the country right now, many of you may have considered sheep nuts as an alternative, especially for younger, growing stock. But with nuts significantly pricier than barley, what are you getting for your extra investment?

Energy – levels should be pretty similar – check the ME and work out the price on a cents per MJME basis. Compare this with grain – barley is typically 12.5 – 13 MJME per kg dry matter.

Protein – with barley around 11% protein, sheep nuts with higher levels will complement a poor quality diet – check advertised levels and ideally get a feed test to confirm.

Fibre – also known as “NDF”. Levels will vary. Some products will have higher fibre levels making them a “safer” feed than grain, with less risk of acidosis. However, this extra fibre could bring down the energy content.

Minerals – grains are not well balanced for minerals, calcium and sodium in particular. If they’re being fed at a high level, and/

or for an extended period of time, supplementing with salt and possibly limeflour might be advised. Most pelleted products will have additional minerals incorporated, and in some cases extra flavouring, making them a more balanced and tastier alternative. **Utilisation** – nuts are easier to pick up off the ground than grain, so more of what you’ve paid for will end up down their throats. **Self feeders** are another option here of course. **Making the decision** – look at the stock class to be fed, and what else they are getting in their diet. For example, growing hoggets on dry poor quality tucker could benefit from additional protein and calcium, in an easy to access form. Mature ewes in early to mid pregnancy are unlikely to need more than what they can get from grain.



Growing Weaners for the Spring Venison Market

Luke Smyth BVSc
Oamaru Veterinary Centre

Most deer farmers are pretty happy to see weaner deer “ticking over” during the winter months and budget on a pretty conservative growth rate of 50-70 grams/day.

Growth rates of 100-120 grams/day are possible but bear in mind the challenges of a winter climate, the reduced appetite of weaners and consequent lower feed intake. If you failed to reach target weights in autumn, the opportunities for catching up in winter are very limited!

- Provide 4-6 kg DM/weaner/day of reasonable quality pasture or winter crop. There is little benefit in feeding expensive high energy supplement at this time of year.

Weighing weaners now can be a worthwhile exercise as June weights are an accurate predictor of weights in the spring and feeding levels can be adjusted if necessary to ensure animals hit their target slaughter weights.

- Weaners should be averaging 70kg.

In late winter, from about mid-August, weaner appetite picks up rapidly over a period of about 6 weeks and weaners will grow 4-6 times faster than over the winter. To maximise growth rates coming out of winter

- Provide 6-8 kg DM/weaner/day of quality feed. This is a good time to feed high quality supplements like grain/nuts to boost growth rates.
- Drenching is no substitute for feeding. That being said, lighter animals that have been under-fed will have compromised immune systems and be more susceptible to the impacts of internal parasitism
- The main parasite species of concern at this time of year are gastrointestinal

- worms, rather than lungworm. A combination oral drench is still recommended and we need to consider the withholding periods of any drench used.
- Avoid putting young animals into blocks that weaners were running on in autumn and winter. This will help to minimise larval build-up.
- Leaving pasture residuals of 1400kgDM/ha will aid pasture quality and help reduce larval challenge.





Waimate dog trials

Benefits of Optimising Ewe Condition



Bridget Roulston BVSc

There isn't much you can do about a

cold southerly blast in the middle of lambing but it doesn't mean you should give up trying to increase your lamb survival. Even seemingly small gains in lamb survival can lead to increases in profitability.

Pregnant ewes (especially multiple bearing ewes) only have a short window after scanning where they are able to gain body condition. In the last 30 -40 days of pregnancy, multiple bearing ewes simply cannot eat enough to maintain themselves, grow lambs, and gain body condition.

Ewes generally need a hand getting into the scanning crate so scanning makes for a really easy time to pick out the light condition ewes. Preferentially feeding these ewes will increase body condition and lead to optimal birth weights (higher survival).

Holly Young and Dave Kenny (Stock Managers at Ida Valley Station) value the use of body condition scoring at strategic times of the year including at scanning –“At scanning, anything less than BCS 3, are put in a smaller mob and fed better feed (often supplemented with silage). These ewes go back with the main flock at set stocking in better condition, more capable of raising their lamb/(s). This is helped lift the lamb survival on the farm and fits in with a year round focus on body condition scoring. Over the last four years the farm has seen a ~ 20% rise in overall weaning percentage. The focus on body condition is a key part in the station's management plan.”

Working dog health



Anna McLeod, BVSc
Waimate Veterinary Centre

'Lady Bits'

The vast majority of female working dogs are kept entire (unspeyed) for potential breeding in the future.

However, it is important to know that due to the hormonal influences of repeated heat cycles, an entire bitch is at risk of developing several conditions, including a pyometra.

What is it?

A 'Pyo' is a serious infection, basically involving a pus-filled uterus. It is potentially life-threatening, usually requiring emergency stabilisation and surgery to remove the infected uterus.

When does it occur?

A pyometra typically occurs around 4-6 weeks after a previous heat, most commonly in older bitches (6 years +) Almost 25% of bitches develop a pyometra before the age of 10! They may have been noted to have 'funny' heats in the past - prolonged heats, irregular heat intervals, unsuccessful matings. Heat delay or suppression injections can also increase the likelihood of developing a pyometra.

What are the signs?

- Lethargic, off food, reluctant to work
- Drinking and urinating more than usual
- Vomiting
- Bloated looking abdomen

An open pyometra, with significant smelly discharge from the vulva, can be quite obvious in a bitch that has recently been on heat. She may also be seen to be licking at her back end more than usual, and attracting the attention of other dogs.

A closed pyometra may not be as obvious and is often much more dangerous - the pus accumulates within the uterus, increasing the risk of rupture and spread of infection throughout the abdomen.

What to do

Being familiar with the signs of a pyometra, and keeping track of heats, will mean early diagnosis and treatment can ensure the chance of survival.

If you do not plan to breed from a working bitch, or she is not having further litters, consider speying her. A common concern a bitch will not work as well once speyed is not in fact a consequence. Also, several healthy bitches can be speyed for the same cost as one pyometra surgery - prevention is always better than treatment!

Pre-lamb drenching Dave Robertson BVSc, BSc

We sell quality products with sound advice, supported by a commitment to monitoring effectiveness. This pre-lamb we want you to maximise your return on investment by making sure you target the sheep that are going to need it most.

The sustainable worm control message is a targeted approach. Long acting drench to give the best return on investment in ewes under nutritional stress, multiples and in hoggets and 2 tooth. Managing an un-drenched population of ewes on farm is also best practice for delaying the onset

of drench resistance. This undrenched population is generally better condition ewes and/or singles. Tagging undrenched ewes is important for monitoring. These ewes can be drafted at weaning to supply refugia to lamb finishing/hoggets. Ask your territory manager or Jeff Spillane for some refugia tags with your order. The fact is parasitism is always going to be a cost to production, so we need to ensure the drenches we have now continue to work in the future.

I do encourage farmers to discuss with

our Veterinary team how best to manage parasitism this pre-lamb.

To Do:

- Get a plan for worm control. It is also a good opportunity to develop a general animal health plan and rationalise prescription medicines.
- Work some refugia into your plan.
- Long acting drenches have worked well, but it is essential now to plan their use with application of sustainable management principles.