



# Veterinary Centre EwesNews

## Stock Integration

**Dave Robertson BVSc BSc – VETERINARY CENTRE Oamaru**

The strength of sheep and beef cattle operations is the synergy between having different stock classes. It is unique when compared with other animal protein production systems. Maintaining pasture quality and stock performance is a constant dynamic that requires a unique skill set. With regards to control of pasture parasites this stock integration model of lambs – ewes – calves – cows is critical. From my experience with drench resistance in the last few years one of the key contributions to drench resistance being an issue is the lack of pasture rotation between different species. Being late autumn a priority is to get lamb grazing blocks “cleaned up”. This can be achieved with cattle grazing

removing sheep parasites and then un-drenched ewes re-seeding susceptible sheep parasites to the mix. We cannot rely on drenches alone to achieve sustainable winter lamb/hogget performance. A conscious effort to identify and utilise an undrenched ewe population on breeding farms is highly valuable for suppressing the emergence of super worms in lambs. One thing I have learnt recently is that a drench that doesn't work effectively is very costly in lamb systems and that all ewes do not always need a drench. An integrated stock grazing plan is a key part of any drench/worm control programme.



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Zac Howell and Mathew O'Riley Drenching Ewes before being put to the ram.  
**Brookdale Farm Holdings** (Middlemarch)



Some extra staff over school holidays was greatly appreciated during the annual round of pregnancy testing at Tony & Julie Kearney's at Shingly Creek, Pig Route.  
LEFT to RIGHT: Hamish Robertson, Sam Kearney (11) and Blake Rowland (13)

## TOXICITY WARNING



May is the month for acorns to drop. These are toxic to cattle and sheep in large quantities. They cause lethargy, scours and eventually kidney failure.



### Products of the Month

ACVM A010353



### Startect

broad spectrum oral combination drench for sheep

**Active ingredient**  
Derquantel, Abamectin

**Controls**  
Itch Mite, Lungworm, Nasal Bot, Roundworm

**Withhold**  
Meat 14 Days

**83c** Per 40kg Lamb Dose  
Excluding GST



OVER 15KG AND 6-12 WEEKS

## Autumn Exit Drenching with Novel Active Drench Products

### Zolvix Plus

broad spectrum oral drench for sheep and cattle

**Active ingredient**  
Monepantel, Abamectin

**Controls**  
Roundworm

**Withhold**  
Meat 14 Days

**\$1.01** Per 40kg Lamb Dose  
Excluding GST



OVER 15KG AND 3 MONTHS



# What is Vitamin B12 and Why is it Important?



**Aroha Te Hiko BVSc – VETERINARY CENTRE** Waimate

Cobalt/Vitamin B12 is an important mineral for grazing sheep in New Zealand. Dietary cobalt is incorporated into Vitamin B12 by microbes in the rumen, which is then absorbed by the animal and used to aid in nutritional metabolism of energy. Because of this, cobalt/B12 deficiency in growing lambs can be similar to malnutrition and lead to reduced growth rates, general ill thrift, emaciation, poor appetite and anemia.

The main source of cobalt for ruminants is from pasture/soil. Sandy coastal soils, soils with a higher pH and soils which have been used for prolonged or intensive cropping tend to have lower levels of cobalt causing deficiency in the animals grazing them. Seasons favoring fast growing lush pastures, particularly in spring, tend to be lower in available dietary cobalt.

Unweaned lambs' main source of stored Vitamin B12 is absorbed through the placenta with less amounts available in their mother's milk. These stores begin to deplete within 5 weeks of birth and lambs need to start producing their own B12, using pasture cobalt, as their rumen becomes functional.

## Do my sheep need supplementing?

Lambs are very susceptible to cobalt related ill-thrift and if not being supplemented, B12 levels should be monitored over successive seasons if farming in a potentially cobalt deficient area. Through our Tracecheck for sheep programme we recommend monitoring:

- Autumn – liver sample x 5 works lambs (Optigrow – contact us to arrange this)
- Weaning – liver sample x 5/blood test x 10 lambs (if there are any concerns lambs could be deficient prior to weaning and are not supplemented at tailing)

Cobalt deficiency in older sheep is very uncommon, however pregnant and lactating ewes have a increased demand needed for the growing lamb. On properties with deficient soils and diagnosed deficiency in lambs, testing of B12 levels in blood of 5 x 2 tooth in the autumn prior to tugging would be the cautious approach if choosing not to blanket supplement.

## Calf Castration

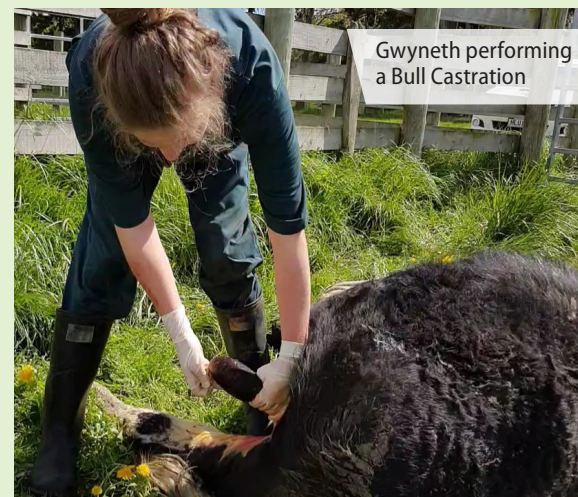


**Gwyneth Mark BVSc**  
**VETERINARY CENTRE** Oamaru

Castration of bull calves at calf marking is a practice most farmers don't need to think too much about, but it is important it is done correctly and at an appropriate age for the animal's welfare. Animal welfare regulations state that a calf over the age of 6 months cannot be castrated without an appropriate local anaesthetic authorised or performed by a veterinarian.

We have come across some animal health issues in the last few months in larger calves (5 - 6 months old) that have been castrated with rubber rings. While rings are convenient, easy to use and work well in young calves, larger testicles make it difficult for the castration rings to completely stop blood supply to testicles. This results in granulomatous lesions when the testicles drop off, these lesions normal resolve with time and antibiotics but are unsightly and may prevent calves going to sale when you were planning to.

The best way to prevent castration issues is to ring calves as early as possible when the testicles are smaller. If you are in doubt about the calves age and/or the testicles size, call us to castrate them to ensure animal welfare standards are met.



## Beef Cow PD Data



**Dave Robertson BVSc BSc – VETERINARY CENTRE** Oamaru

There is a lot of little pieces to getting the beef cow repro right. Will Heckler at Uplands, Dunback, takes the opportunity at pregnancy testing to utilise the data and make best use of his winter feed. Cows are wanded into their mating groups.

- BCS > 6 (fat cow mob) are wintered separately
- 3rd cyclers set stocked in different block.
- Blood tests taken to ensure BVD free status is maintained. Selenium is supplemented.
- Twinning cows removed and run

with heifers.

- Cows are structurally assessed for feet and udders.
- Bulls booked for pre- bull sale service test.

The extra attention to the details help ensure the herd is in an upward spiral of genetic improvement. With less than 4% empty and 6% 3rd cycle it means more culling for type and production can be done and pasture management is easier when feed demand and cow bcs is more uniform across the herd.



◀ Will Heckler making sense of the data.

▶ Not even the best farmers can get their free-martins in-calf. Nic getting a lesson on using the Heckler "family heirloom" recording device from Will.



◀ Fatter cows for separate wintering.

▶ 3rd cyclers drafted out.



# Nitrate Poisoning

**Vanessa Love BVSc**  
VETERINARY CENTRE Ranfurly



Nitrate poisoning is due to a buildup of the compound in plants that cattle are grazing or accidental fertilizer ingestion. The nitrate ion in the plant becomes nitrite in the rumen, enters the blood stream and combines with red blood cells. This causes non oxygen carrying methemoglobin to form instead of hemoglobin. While all ruminants get nitrate poisoning, sheep are more resistant than cattle, deer and goats.

Clinical signs can occur within an hour of exposure to the toxic feed and include:

- Salivation and frothing
- Diarrhoea
- Abdominal pain (especially if fertilizer is the cause)
- Laboured breathing
- Staggered walking
- Body tremors
- Blue/grey gums
- Coma and death

Nitrate poisoning cases usually involve multiple animals. The treatment is methylene blue dissolved in saline given intravenously, which replaces methemoglobin with hemoglobin and if given quickly enough will save the animals life. While waiting for your vet to arrive, all animals that seem unaffected should be moved away from the toxic feed and monitored closely.

Eye fluid and blood from deceased animals can be tested for nitrate levels, and the blood usually has a characteristic chocolate brown colour. It is not uncommon for affected immobile sheep to lose their eyes and gain other injuries due to bird scavenging and this may affect treatment decisions.

Plants use nitrates for growth as a protein source, this process requires energy from photosynthesis. Nitrates build up in plants during periods where photosynthesis is limited such as during prolonged foggy weather, low temperatures and during frosts. When rain breaks a drought, plants rapidly pick up nitrates and commonly become toxic.

Feeds often affected are annual ryegrasses, some new pastures, oats, kale, rape and brassicas. Suspect feeds can be tested either at your local Veterinary Centre clinic or test kits can be purchased for use on farm. The test turnaround time is approximately 40 minutes and only requires two handfuls of the feed. Toxic feeds should be retested at weekly intervals until safe to feed.

Risk can be managed by feeding suspect pastures or crops in the afternoon during winter, and filling stock up on hay before changing breaks.

# NEWTRITION

## Winter Feed Budget

**Lucy Cameron BVSc BSc – VETERINARY CENTRE Waimate**



*“If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail”* – Benjamin Franklin

There are very few people who are likely to be overjoyed by the thought of doing a feed budget, but autumn is the most important time of the year to make an attempt. Getting set up for your planned spring pasture cover needs to happen now, so get out your laptop or put pen to paper and do a **100 day winter feed budget**. It can be as simple or complicated as you like. Don't get bogged down in the nitty gritty, being 5-10% off is far less concerning than having no idea at all what your situation is. You could involve the whole farm and every stock class, or just the lambing platform – for example you may aim to have a cover of 1400-1500kg DM/ha on this at set-stocking.

### What information is required?

- **Feed demand:**
  - Requirements in kg DM or MJ ME for each stock class
  - Number of each e.g mixed age ewes, lambs, cows etc
- **Feed supply:**
  - Pasture covers & estimated pasture growth rates (shouldn't vary much over winter)
  - Supplements on hand & expected quality
  - Crops & approx. yields
- **End goal:**
  - Target pasture cover at e.g. end of winter/set-stocking
  - This is the key - if this is not going to be met, it can be addressed now

### What can you use to do it?

- There are plenty of templates available online, from basic to complex – [www.beeflambnz.com](http://www.beeflambnz.com) is a good place to start
- The back of an envelope is better than nothing!
- Our vets are happy to help with any part of this process, whether it involves assessing stock requirements, yielding winter crops, feed testing silage or a full feed budget

### What if it doesn't balance?

- If there's obviously going to be a deficit come spring, act now to increase feed supply or decrease feed demand
- This may also involve reprioritising feed now or at scanning time from well-conditioned stock to lighter stock so that feed is not wasted on those that don't need it. Consider scanning early/late so these can be treated differently at lambing and feed saved

Spring is when it all happens, so putting a plan in place now gives you the best opportunity to improve lamb and ewe survival, colostrum and milk production and thus lamb and calf growth rates.

## 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.



## PRICING

### Full Kit

\$189.40 incl GST  
(25 tests = \$7.60 per test).

### Testing Strip Refill only

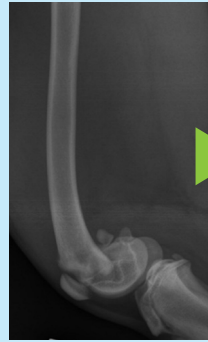
\$129.50 incl GST  
per Pk/25



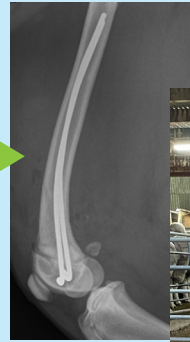
# Successful return to work after major injuries

**Sarah Boys BVSc – VETERINARY CENTRE Oamaru**

The busy weaning/drenching period this year saw a large number of working dog injuries coming out of the Maniototo. For serious injuries these dogs were referred to skilled orthopaedic surgeon Sarah Boys and the team in our Oamaru clinic. Two of these dogs are Jet and Maude Hore. Jet the Huntaway sustained a nasty fracture of her tibia while working and a month later 6 month old Maude followed suit with a fracture through the growth plate of her femur after a fall from a quad bike. We are pleased to report that both dogs have healed well and are ready to return to work.



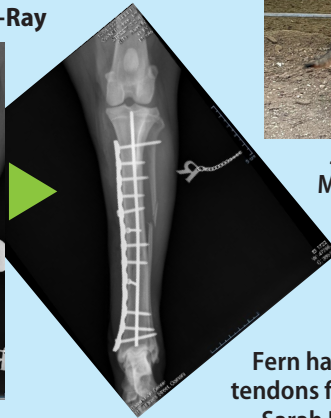
Maude's X-Ray



Jim Hore with Jet on the left, and Maude the smaller dog on the right



Jet's X-Ray



Fern had her tendons fixed by Sarah Boys



**Jim Hore RANFURLY**

*"Couldn't get a better job done than what Sarah Boys and the local Ranfurly team did. Both dogs walked down a hill for 6 hours yesterday driving sheep. The black and grey dog is Fern, Sarah fixed her tendons a while back."*

## Animal Health Plans

**Lucy Cameron BVSc BSc VETERINARY CENTRE Waimate**



Before all the critical animal health decisions of late winter and spring it's a good time to have a discussion around drenching, animal health treatments, antibiotics and much more – that is a comprehensive Animal Health Plan. For many of you these may be required by your processor to fulfil audit requirements, but they are also an excellent opportunity to discuss your animal health and production and identify any key areas of focus for your farm e.g. lamb survival, calving pattern, ewe wastage, drench resistance.

Discussion points can include:

- KPIs for benchmarking/monitoring progress
- Parasite control/drench sustainability programmes
- Monitoring stock performance – when/how
- Mineral supplementation options
- Vaccinations – key timings
- Reproductive management – scanning, bull testing, rams
- Footrot management
- Prescription medicines and antibiotic use

Get in touch with one of our sheep and beef team to make a time.

**ABC Any Farm Limited Cattle Animal Health Planner 2021/2022**  
SEASON OF ARRIVAL ON FARM

Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eclipse Pour On Arrival</li> <li>• Project B12 + Selenium</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eclipse Pour On Arrival</li> <li>• Project B12 + Selenium</li> <li>• Copper max (2mls)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eclipse Pour On Arrival</li> <li>• Project B12 + Selenium</li> <li>• Copper max (2mls)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eclipse Pour On Arrival</li> <li>• Project B12 + Selenium</li> </ul>
<p>Start of Autumn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cydectin Pour On</li> <li>• Project B12 + Selenium</li> <li>• Copper max (2mls)</li> </ul>	<p>Start of Winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cydectin Pour On</li> <li>• Project B12 + Selenium</li> </ul>	<p>Start of Spring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cydectin Pour On</li> <li>• Project B12 + Selenium</li> </ul>	<p>Start of Summer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cydectin Pour On</li> <li>• Project B12 + Selenium</li> </ul>

Prepared by your Prime Vet: **George Smith 03 434 5666**

**Veterinary Centre by the Big Blue Cross**

Oamaru • Waimate  
Ranfurly • Palmerston  
Glenisly • Kotowai • Oamarua  
www.vet111.co.nz | 0800 VET 111



JAB Registration day in Kurow April 2022

## Product of the Month

## Royal Canin Energy 4800



- Elevated fatty acids (30%) for sustained endurance
- High protein levels (32%) for muscle condition
- The premium food for keeping condition and sustaining working dog energy through winter

20kg

**BUY 3 BAGS**  
**\$142.00**  
including GST

**PALLET DEAL**  
**\$129.90**  
including GST