

Ergot Warning

There is a lot of ergot around this year. Ergotism is a devastating disease presenting most commonly as irreversible gangrene of the limbs and resulting in euthanasia. There is no treatment so prevention is key. Check your baleage and ryegrass paddocks for ergot seed now.



Figure 1 Ergot looks like black seeds on this ryegrass plant

Ergot (*Claviceps purpurea*) is a parasitic fungus that grows on grain and grass plants, it particularly likes ryegrass. The fungus contains toxins that damages the lining, and causes constriction of, blood vessels which leads to tissue death. This leads to a gangrene of the extremities (feet, tail and ears). The toxin remains when ensiled or made into baleage.

Watch for signs of lameness or foot swelling in your stock. The incubation period for the disease is approximately 7 days.



Figure 2 Notice the line of gangrene near the claws on the top leg, and the shin on the bottom leg. The limb below these lines is cold and necrotic.

A convulsive form of the disease can also occur, as can abortions as a result from the damaged blood vessels.

Rebecca Morley BVSc BSc



fully developed rumen (i.e. no need to drench lambs at tailing)

- Long acting drench use **will** increase drench resistance
- Drenching adult ewes **will** increase drench resistance
- There is wide spread resistance of Cooperia to ML drenches in cattle
- There is developing resistance of Ostertagia to ML drenches in cattle which has serious consequences
- Pour-ons are not very effective at getting to the parasite
- The only true quarantine drench option for cattle is a triple oral combination
- Graziers may need to take ownership of grazing animals parasite plans as it is their farm that gets the resistance if not done well
- FECRT should be performed on sheep and cattle every three years and is much cheaper than hidden drench resistance.

For more information call the clinic. Rochelle Smith BVSc MANZCVS



Staff Comment

The NSVets family has grown! Congratulations to Megan and Damian on the birth of their son Leo Ross Tutty on 7th May. We have also welcomed 3 new staff members to our Riversdale branch. Julie Lyttle joined Ashleigh at the reception desk as Retail Assistant in March. Sherree Simpson, our new vet nurse started in April and Kate Taylor our new vet began the following week. They are all settling in well and looking forward to working with me for a long time. Julia celebrated her 50th Birthday (You can't tell, she barely looks a day over half a century). The Vet Club did too and it too has aged well. Danielle has recovered well from surgery and is returning to work gradually.



From Left: Sherree Simpson, Julie Lyttle and Kate Taylor

1. Staff Comment, Mud Fever, Arthritis

2. Annual Health Checks for Pet Goats, Pinkeye

3. Ratbait Warning, Staff Training

4. Ergot Warning, Beef and Lamb 'Meat the Future—Farming for profit programme'

Mud Fever

Mud Fever, also known as Greasy Heel, is an inflammatory condition of the lower limb particularly in the area behind the pastern joint. The area may become reddened, crusty, hairless and itchy if not treated. Lameness is another common feature. Treatment involves the debridement of the crusty lesions, bathing the affected skin with an antiseptic solution and applying topical antibiotic/antifungal creams once the skin is dry. Horses will often need to be sedated for wound debridement as the procedure can be very painful. The condition can be prevented by minimising exposure to wet environments (this may mean stabling the horse for a period of time) and drying the skin following exercise. For more information contact 03 202 5636.

Kate Taylor DVM



Horse Reminders

- Supplementary feed horses over winter
- Clip horses for hunting
- Lice treatment

Arthritis: slowing down old friends and workers!

Has your pet or working dog become reluctant to jump, run or get up in the morning? This is not just a part of getting older, they could have arthritis. **Arthritis is very common in both cats and dogs** and whilst it cannot be cured completely, there are many options to manage the pain it causes and halt its progress.

1. Weight loss
2. Exercise
3. Nutrition (Joint diet or supplements)
4. Anti-inflammatory drugs
5. Stem cell therapy

Whether you want to see your family pet more comfortable, or you want your older farm dog to perform better, there are always options available to reduce the effects of arthritis. **June is arthritis month- bring your pet in for an arthritis consult and receive 50% off your consult price.** Let us help to relieve their winter aches and pains!

Natasha Leamy BVSc



Cattle Reminders

- Lice control
- Milking machine annual check
- Calf rearers
 - organise suitable housing
 - organise milk powder requirements
- Rotavirus vaccination
- Salmonella vaccination
- InCalf fertility focus review
- Preferentially feed light cows
- Teat seal heifers
- Winter seminars - staff training

Deer Reminders

- TB test
- Pregnancy scanning
- Weaners - drench for lungworm
- Liver copper and selenium on dry hinds

Beef and Lamb 'Meat the Future-Farming for profit programme' Parasite Seminar

For those of you who missed the excellent seminar in May here are some take home messages.

- A main aim from regular 21-28 day drench intervals is to reduce the autumn larval challenge.
- Once the pasture is contaminated and lambs 'stop doing', no amount of drench will fix them
- Worms won't develop if the animal doesn't have a



Annual Health Checks for Pet Goats

Now is the perfect time to examine your goats for signs of illness before winter sets in. Listed below are some important areas to consider when assessing your goat's overall health.

Nutrition and Body Condition

Goats are ruminants that are healthiest when the majority of their diets are composed of forage. Inappropriate nutrition can result in goats that are too lean, too fat or in cases of engorgement, make them very sick. If you are worried about the condition of your goat, please give us a call to discuss what changes can be made to the diet. Remember that goats that are fed good quality feed will be able to mount a better immune response to other disease challenges.

Internal Parasites

Goats are more susceptible to the effects of gastrointestinal parasitism than cattle and sheep. Sheep and goats share the same types of internal parasites. The most common and easily recognisable signs of parasitism are scouring and weight loss, although this can sometimes go unnoticed by owners until the infection is overwhelming and life threatening. Faecal egg counts (FECs) are a great way of diagnosing the level of worm burdens. If you suspect that your goat may have intestinal worms, drop a fresh faecal sample off at the clinic and we can determine whether a treatment is necessary.

External Parasites

Lice are a common cause of goats becoming itchy particularly over winter. The most obvious sign of an infestation is excessive scratching. The lice can be seen by parting the fleece around the poll, wither and inguinal regions. If you suspect that your goat has lice, topical knock-out treatments are available.

Vaccination

As with sheep and cattle, goats are susceptible to infections caused by Clostridial bacteria (Tetanus, Pulpy Kidney, Black Disease, Malignant Oedema and Blackleg). A 5-in-1 vaccination should be considered as part of any general preventative health plan.

Kate Taylor DVM



Pinkeye

Calves which are perfectly healthy in all other respects can be lost due to blindness from Pinkeye.

The bacteria frequently causes ulcers which may result in a punctured eyeball. The disease is contagious and spreads rapidly through susceptible animals. Spread is often helped on its way by management practices and environmental conditions.

In a recent outbreak we saw about 80% of calves affected in at least one eye, 20% had eye ulcers, of whom half have permanent white scars on their eyes and 10 required surgical treatment to help save their sight. They were being break fed and had access to hay in feeders. The combination of close proximity, potential damage to eyes from dust/grass seeds and a nasty strain of the bug caused a serious and expensive outbreak.

To discuss treatment and control options for your calves give one of our vets a call.

Michael Baer BVSc



Sheep Reminders

- Vaccinate 2 tooth 2nd vaccine Salmonella Brandenburg
- Re-evaluate winter feed budget
- FEC ewe lambs
- Introduce winter feeding
- Condition score hoggets and ewes
- Vaccinate mixed aged ewes Salmonella Brandenburg

Dinner at Marion's

An elderly lady was invited to an old friend's home for dinner one evening.

She was impressed by the way her lady friend preceded every request to her husband with endearing terms such as: Honey, My Love, Darling, Sweetheart, etc. The couple had been married almost 70 years and clearly, they were still very much in love. While the husband was in the living room, her lady friend leaned over to her hostess to say, "I think it's wonderful that, after all these years, you still call your husband all those loving names." The elderly lady said, "I have to tell you the truth, his name slipped my mind about 10 years ago, and I'm scared to death to ask the cranky old fool what it actually is."

Ignore the Parrot

Vesna's dishwasher was broken, so she called in a repairman.

Since she had to go to work the next day, she told the repairman, "I'll leave the key under the mat. Fix the dishwasher, leave the bill on the counter, and I'll mail you a cheque."

Oh, by the way don't worry about my dog Spike. He won't bother you, but, whatever you do, do NOT, under ANY circumstances, talk to my parrot!

"I MUST STRESS TO YOU: DO NOT TALK TO MY PARROT!"

When the repairman arrived at Vesna's apartment, he discovered the biggest, meanest looking dog he has ever seen, but, just as she said, the dog just lay there on the carpet watching the repairman go about his work.

The parrot, however, drove him nuts the whole time with his incessant yelling, cursing and name calling. Finally the repairman couldn't contain himself any longer and yelled, "Shut up, you stupid, ugly bird!" To which the parrot replied, "Get him Spike!"



Pet Reminders

- Check diet for winter
- Check bedding warmth for winter

Ratbait Warning

As the colder weather approaches and rodents seek shelter inside barns and houses be careful where you place rodenticides! Dogs commonly ingest ratbait and we have seen a number of cases recently of dogs presenting with toxicity. Clinical signs are generally seen 4-10 days after ingestion. The poison interferes with an animal's ability to clot blood, so clinical signs are extremely variable but include lethargy, pale gums, coughing, lameness, nose bleed, bloody faeces or urine. Left untreated ratbait toxicity is fatal. However, there is an effective treatment for ratbait and we can easily test clotting times with a blood test using our in clinic machine. Depending on severity of clinical signs dogs may require a blood transfusion to replace lost red blood cells and replace clotting factors. If you are suspicious your dog has ingested ratbait it is better to be safe than sorry and talk to one of our vets. Rebecca Morley BVSc BSc

Staff Training - Up-skill them now so they're ready for the season ahead

You might be lucky enough to have kept the same team from last year, or it may be you've got a new bunch to work with. Now's the time to get your staff upskilled before the hard yards hit with calving; skilled staff will hit the ground running faster than the calves.

This can be as simple as you spending a few days with your team teaching them the ins and outs of your own farm, why you do what you do, and what you expect them to do. There's always plenty of training events in your area as well as more formal courses. Don't forget about the internet – there are some great websites specific to dairying information.

Here are a few suggestions of places you can go to in order to upskill your staff:

- **Our training courses & seminars** - With a lull in clinical work we provide training seminars on a variety of topics such as spring first aid, lameness, mastitis, calving, and calf rearing. Call in to see which ones suit your staff and book in early as these are very popular!
- **DairyNZ training events** - Throughout the year DairyNZ puts on plenty of regional training days. Keep up to date with those opportunities by visiting www.dairynz.co.nz/events and filtering by region.
- **DairyNZ website and In-Calf book** - Check the revamped DairyNZ website at www.dairynz.co.nz, use the search tab to look up whatever you like and get reading! Don't forget about the In-Calf book; download it for free at www.dairynz.co.nz/publications/animal/incalf-book
- **LIC E-Learn Website** - Head to www.lic.co.nz, click the blue Learn LIC tab at the top to gain access to learning modules, quizzes, and to find out if there're any training events within earshot of your farm.
- **Other agricultural courses** - There are lots of courses out there run by agricultural institutes like universities and primary ITO. Enrol in one of these and see how far you can go!
- **6 Week Challenge** - Go to www.6weeks.co.nz, register, and get learning. Find out how the Challenge farmers do things and use the seasonal checklists to make sure you're on track. You'll also receive a 6 Week Challenge resource pack in the mail. Watch this space for a new training tool coming soon!

Make sure to check out our monthly mailer to see what seminars we have to offer this winter!

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