

Wintering - Don't let it go pear-shaped

Wintering is an important time in the dairy calendar and it doesn't take much for it to go pear-shaped. Setting yourself up for success starts now. There are always seasons like these, its planning for them that's the key. Body condition and winter feed are two important things you want to get right and this is where we can help you. Just give us a call.

Body Condition:

- Aim for as many cows at 4.5 BCS prior to winter as possible, focus on BCS from now until June.
- Use management tools (OAD milking, preferential feeding) to partition feed into condition.
- Use age of cow, calving date, BCS and last herd test info to make staggered dry off decisions.
- Studies show the animals generally put on no more than 0.5 BCS in winter, so don't rely on a last minute rush to the finish line. Our accredited BCS testers can help assess your stock.
- R2s should be closer to 5.0 in June, work on under-performing young stock now, separating them out and preferentially feeding them. Ensuring all stocks' mineral levels are sufficient and supplementing if not.

Winter crops:

With quite a dry summer, and dryish autumn its time to be thinking about winter feed.

- Reassess the original figures in the feed budget, crops may be less tonnage than expected or winter supplement supplies depleted. Review feed budgeting, sit down and work through all the options.
- Destocking is a good option, culls should be gone now/soon and an end of season scan will stop any empty cows getting a free ride. Consider removing poor producing and late calving cows.
- For those on crops, the calculated yield of the crop must be as accurate to measure and plan daily allocations. Make sure the person allocating the feed has a good understanding of what is being offered and how much is being eaten.
- Transitioning cows between grass and crop is well known. The way it is done and the time it takes makes a difference. No one likes seeing cows going down to nitrate poisoning or acidosis.

A few more days transitioning can set your winter up. Remember to transition them back off crop to grass slowly too, don't undo the good work you did at the start!



Don't forget we are here to help but more information is available through DairyNZ and LIC. For example the 6 Week Challenge website at www.6weeks.co.nz Register there for free, and you will receive a 6 Week Challenge resource pack in the mail to help you get started as well as access to a range of online tools, information and stories from other farmers taking the Challenge.

Deer Reminders

- Drench weaners
- Check copper & selenium status and treat if necessary
- Put chaser stags out

Sheep Reminders

- FEC ewe lambs
- Record mating data
- Check and change ram harnesses
- Foot conditions in rams
- Teasers out with hoggets



1. Situation comment, Welcome to Andrew Cochrane, Dog WOF

2. Dairy pregnancy testing results and Horse parasite control

3. Who can go to the works?, Pinkeye, and Are you worried about your pet going under anaesthetic

4. Wintering don't let it go pear-shaped

Horse Reminder
Vaccinate foals for salmonellosis, tetanus and strangles

Situation Comment

Great grass growing conditions have been tempered (in some areas) by the prevalence of clover root weevil which leads to the double whammy of less clover and less nitrogen fixation for other grasses. This is very evident by the amount of visible urine patches on many farms. Hopefully many of you will have had access to the Irish wasp used as a biological control.

Unfortunately Mike is very happy about the result of the cricket and Justin is in the acute stages of grief!!

No major disease issues out there at the moment apart from the usual glut of worms in the mild wet conditions. There are certainly some skinny sheep around but most should be on the rise given weather conditions. Cow BCS also appears in general to be pretty good for this time of the year.

Pet Reminders

- Worm cats & dogs
- May - Booster vaccination for cats prior to winter

Duck Dog WOF

Duck shooting is rapidly approaching....bring in your shooting companion for their annual warrant of fitness this April and make sure they are in tip top shape for May. This includes a full physical exam and is a good chance to make sure your dog is up to date with worming and vaccinations, especially if going onto sheep and beef farms. One lucky dog will win the cost of their consult back. Ring the clinic now to book an appointment.

Rebecca Morley BVSc BSc



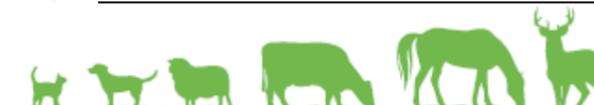
Welcome to Andrew Cochrane

Andrew started here in February after spending a year off work travelling through Europe, prior to this he was working in mixed practice in Oamaru. A southerner at heart Andrew originally hails from a sheep and beef farm near Clinton, where his parents still farm. Whilst comfortable with all species, it is production animals that Andrew enjoys most, particularly sheep, beef and deer work, with dairy close behind. Outside of work Andrew enjoys getting into the great outdoors and is excited at the opportunities that the Northern Southland backcountry has to offer. He is also an avid sports fan and you will likely see him on the footy field for Riversdale, swinging a squash/tennis racquet or occasionally even some golf clubs.



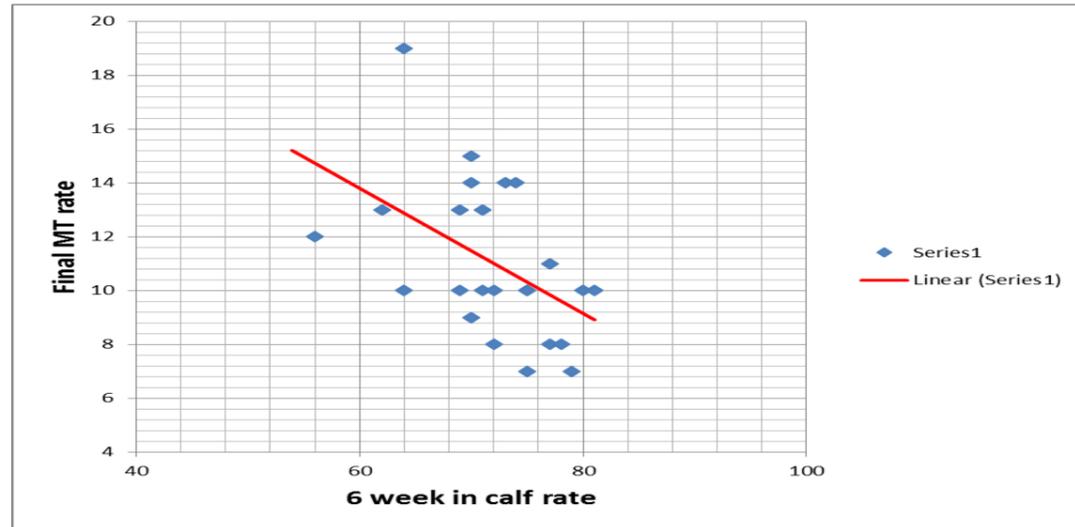
Cattle Reminders

- Pregnancy test
- Beef weaners - drench
- Review mastitis control - plan dry cow therapy
- Vaccinate for Salmonella
- Liver biopsy check for copper and selenium or check cull cow livers at works
- Lepto herd
- Drench cows at least 4 weeks pre dry off
- Dry off poorer condition cows and culls
- Lepto booster for calves vaccinated early



Dairy pregnancy testing results – where do you score???

This chart represents the pregnancy testing results from some farms that we have pregnancy tested and have aged test results **plus** a final empty rate (other results excluded)



The 6 week in calf rate (ICR) varies from 55% to 81%

Average 6 week ICR just a shade over 70% vs LIC regional figures 67% average

Final empty rates range from 7% to 19% with average 11%
(caution is needed when interpreting final empty rates as can be dependent on length of mating)

This data shows that the higher the 6 week ICR the lower the final empty rate.

The graph predicts for this area this year a 9% MT rate from an 80% ICR vs 14% MT rate from a 60% ICR.

\$93,210.00 is the value difference between these example ranges, based on In Calf financial modelling for our average farm of 717 cows.

Yes nearly \$100K!! Is it worth considering how to increase the 6wk ICR and reducing MT rate.....???

Morgan Greene MVB MANZCVS



Be smart about your horse's parasite control

Drenching your horse unnecessarily increases your chances of encountering **drench resistant parasites**, whereas under drenching can lead to **weight loss and poor growth** as well as **life threatening colic**. With increasing evidence of drench resistance in equine parasites, we must take a more proactive approach to drenching our horses.

Faecal egg count monitoring is a good way to determine whether your horse needs to be drenched. This involves bringing a freshly produced sample of dung into the clinic for us to count the parasite eggs. We will then advise you if you need to drench and what drench to use. We recommend seasonal faecal egg count monitoring in conjunction with **proper pasture management**. Removing manure

either manually or mechanically is the most effective method of parasite control. Spreading manure is only effective in very dry conditions and usually just helps to spread the parasites around. Parasite eggs are not killed by the cold. Cross grazing with sheep or cattle can also help keep the parasite burden down.

Regardless of faecal egg count results we recommend **always drenching with a moxidectin and praziquantel combination in Autumn** to prevent encysted cyathostomes ('red worms') which are not seen in faecal egg counts. If you are unsure which drench to use just ask us at the clinic.

Foals should be drenched from 2 months of age and every two months up until one year old when faecal egg counting should be used for monitoring.

Natasha Leamy BVSc



Who can go to the works?

- No signs of injury, sickness or poor health
- Must be able to **bear weight evenly** on all four feet
- Must go to **closest slaughter premises**
- No open wounds
- **No discharging wounds** (blood, pus or other fluid)
- Untreated broken legs or dislocated hips cannot go
- **Poor body condition**
- Certificates are only **valid for 7 days**



Are you still using single active drenches?

Farmers using single active drenches for either ewes or lambs is considered a high risk practice and numerous studies, along with practical experience, have shown that drench resistance can develop quickly if it is continued. Are you one of the people doing this? How long have you been using the same drench? Are you confident your drench is still working 100%? Fortunately there are numerous combination drenches on the market designed to combat the development of resistance and ensure parasites don't limit production on your property. Furthermore, a simple faecal egg count drench test can quickly tell us just how well your drench is working and allow you to act now before the problem escalates.

There is a feeling "it must be working because my lambs aren't dirty".. The problem with this is there are usually no outward signs of drench failure until it is only 65% effective! The losses in production before resistance is visible can therefore be marked, with huge reductions in growth rate potential. Can you afford to lose this production as lamb prices continue to drop later in the season? **What is your cheap single active drench really costing you?** Please contact myself or one of my colleagues at NSVets if you have any questions or if you would like help to set up an **effective and sustainable parasite management plan**.

Andrew Cochrane BVSc



Are you worried about your pet undergoing an anaesthetic?

Ask us about our **pre-anaesthetic blood testing**. Performing a blood test prior to anaesthetic can help in minimising the risk of anaesthesia by ensuring your animal is healthy and able to cope with the anaesthetic.

It is commonly performed on our older patients, although any age animal may benefit from testing. Testing ensures a healthy patient, allows changes in the drug protocol used and may identify if the procedure needs to be delayed. The cost for testing is as little as \$68, giving you peace of mind and reducing the risk for your pet.



Rebecca Morley BVSc BSc