



Disappointed with your deer weaning?

Ovine footrot

Managing internal parasites

Ram management

Pneumonia in lambs/hoggets

Dry cow: can you improve on the best?

Carry overs: are they worth it?

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Disappointed with your deer weaning?

A number of clients often express disappointment with the number of fawns weaned versus their expectation from scanning. Are you one of those?

During the 1990s, the South Canterbury North Otago Deer Farmers' Association funded a project that looked at the various factors that reduce deer farming productivity - apparent fawn losses were one of those variables.

Hinds were scanned in calf, and checked again before set stocking, and then the fawns weaned were counted. Some farms and some paddocks were notorious for poor results, year after year.

In the end we grid searched those paddocks with a team of people and believe it or not we found enough dead decomposed fawn (sometimes outside the fence lines) to explain these apparently vapourising fawns.

Mixed aged hinds were bad enough but R2 first calvers were almost twice as bad. A whole medley of factors were involved, mis-mothering, fawns lost outside fences, crypto, rogue hind attacks, late fawners, mothers who were prior year dry, etc., etc. were all implicated. Of note, abortions post-scanning were unseen or rare and were not responsible for this 1-10% (or more) drop off in reproductive rate.

Today these same variables exist and left unsorted still plague our weaning percentage.

The findings of that extremely useful work are all published in an excellent book - "Deer Industry Manual". If you are among the deer farmers that were all sent one, but cannot find it now, then Tony Pearse at DINZ (Deer Industry New Zealand) still has many copies. I have a

number of spares. The information is still relevant and up-to-date.

However, today we do see abortions in hinds. These can occur during the mating season (when they will often show up as late calvers after being re-mated) through to later in pregnancy when you see them as extra dries, abortion having occurred after mating has finished.

The cause of these abortions remains unconfirmed. Toxoplasmosis has been questioned and indeed people have gone so far as to try off label sheep vaccine, but the jury is still not only out but missing in verdict!

One thing that is no brainer is to screen your breeding hinds for leptospirosis. The process involves 15-20 hinds for a simple blood test for leptospirosis.

Again while leptospirosis has yet to be even implicated in these cases, leptospirosis is biologically logical as a cause of repro wastage.

So to conclude - if you are dissatisfied with your weaning percentage try the following!

1. Get a copy of the Deer Industry Manual, read it, and apply the lessons in it to your herd.
2. Involve your vet in a discussion and diagnosis and most certainly understand your herd's leptospirosis status.
3. Watch and listen for the latest news on toxo.

Adrian Campbell



Practice Principal
Adrian Campbell (Vet)



News flash: Deer Conference Cervetec Conference 2013

Approximate dates - 2nd June 2013: Buenos Aires and San Martin de los Andes - Argentina

Hosted by the Argentinian Association of Veterinary Experts in Cervids.

Be there, an amazing conference for deer farmers and deer vets and advisors - all welcome.

Google - cervetec.co.nz

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Ovine footrot

What is footrot?

Ovine interdigital dermatitis (OID) is thought to be caused by the bacterium *Fusobacterium Necrophorum* which gains entry into the skin between the claws following constant wetting of the skin. This is considered the necessary predisposing factor leading to the development of footrot due to secondary invasion by another bacterium, *Dichelobacter nodosus*. This bacterium primarily lives in the feet of sheep with footrot and has an environmental survival time of 7-14 days.

Clinical features of footrot

OID lesions are less obvious and include inflammation of the skin between the claws resulting in varying levels of lameness. This may progress to footrot which is characteristically diagnosed due to the characteristic foul smell, cracking of the hoof and the presence of black necrotic material.



Treatment

Treatment options differ depending on the presence of either OID or footrot. Topical antibiotic sprays or foot bathing are generally effective at treating OID and **very mild** cases of footrot. Foot trimming is useful in the aid of diagnosis of footrot, however sheep with moderate or severe footrot should be treated with injectable antibiotics rather than just foot trimming or bathing.

Injectable antibiotics result in good recovery rates and, in most cases, only a single dose is required. The antibiotic proven to be the most efficacious in the treatment of footrot is an Oxytetracycline (Bivatop). Resolution is more rapid if treatment is given early in the course of disease; this may also help reduce transmission to the rest of the flock. Affected sheep should therefore be treated with injectable antibiotics and isolated from the flock until resolution of clinical signs. Post treatment management is

vital in improving the efficacy of treatment. It is imperative that affected sheep are moved to DRY ground for a minimum of 24 hours post treatment. This may involve housing in the woolshed with supplementary feed or housing in yards. Paddocks are not appropriate as even the morning dew is enough to limit the efficacy of treatment.

Prevention of footrot

1. *Foot bathing* is effective at treating OID, so strategic use of foot bathing should aid in preventing footrot. The most commonly used chemicals are zinc sulphate (10%), with or without an added penetrant, or formalin (3-5%).
2. *Grazing management.* Given that wetting and maceration are thought to be important predisposing factors for the development of OID and subsequently footrot, avoiding wet or pugged paddocks is essential. High stocking densities are also associated with increased footrot transmission
3. *Breeding for tolerance.* Culling sheep with chronic footrot lesions, or that have repeated cases, is likely to reduce the incidence of disease in a flock.
4. *Vaccination.* There is currently one commercially available vaccine in New Zealand (Footvax ©) which has a period of protection for up to four months. This vaccine is best used strategically in the prevention of footrot and is best given before the expected risk period.

Vaccination programme

In previously unvaccinated flocks, a sensitiser vaccination of Footvax should be followed at least six weeks later by a booster shot. The booster should be timed to coincide with the lead-up to the period of greatest challenge. This is usually early autumn or spring, because the bacteria that cause footrot are less active during the cooler months. Ewes **must not** be vaccinated within four weeks of tupping or lambing due to the vaccine causing a short-term suppression of appetite which can then subsequently alter cycling and ovulation during the pre-mating period or lead to metabolic effects pre-lambing. In subsequent years, a single booster shot is required to maintain protection. The booster provides 8-10 weeks protection for fine-wool breeds and up to 14 weeks in English breeds. Strict hygiene and safety guidelines must be followed when using the vaccine as it contains an oil adjuvant, therefore the vaccine must be given by subcutaneous injection only.

Contact your nearest Vetlife clinic to learn more about how to manage/treat footrot in your flock.

Deborah Bartrum
Vetlife Temuka

Images kindly provided by MSD Animal Health.



Managing inte

With most farmers in the midst of routine lamb drenching, as well as considering options for ewes pre-tup and calves come weaning, now is a good time to review your parasite management plan. There has been a lot of research done in recent years regarding anthelmintic use and the development of resistance, a lot of which has caused confusion. At the recent International Sheep Veterinary Congress, held in Rotorua, a huge proportion of the sessions were focussed on parasites and their management, reflecting the global importance of this issue.

Recent studies in New Zealand have found that approximately two thirds of sheep farms have resistance detectable by faecal egg count reduction tests (FECRT), whilst 94% of beef farms have resistance to at least one drench family. In addition to this, they have identified cases where several different worm species are resistant to one anthelmintic (drench) family or individual worms are resistant to multiple anthelmintic families.

Most farmers are now aware of anthelmintic resistance, but how do we detect it? And how do we minimise the risk and rate of its development?

Resistance can be present within a flock with little visible signs of parasitism. Two recent trials in New Zealand measured productivity losses as a result of using an anthelmintic that was only 95% effective. They showed a 10-14% reduction in carcass value of lambs, an increase in dags, and reductions in both body condition score and wool weight. Yet most of the lambs in these trials did not look "wormy".

Currently the only practical tool we have for assessing anthelmintic efficacy is faecal egg counting (FEC) and FECRT. FEC have their limitations, and can be affected by the degree of scouring, the worm species present, and an animal's inherent ability to cope with a parasite burden - so called "resilience". For this reason, FEC results need to be interpreted in conjunction with clinical signs and management

practices. This is why we ask all those questions on the FEC forms!

The main guidelines for minimising the risk of anthelmintic resistance are:

1. Identify and mitigate high risk practices, such as drenching onto clean pasture and use of long-acting products.
2. Quarantine drench brought in stock (both purchased or your own if grazed off).
3. Maintain refugia.
4. Use combinations of effective anthelmintics. Studies have shown that use of combination drenches is more effective at slowing the development of resistance than annual rotation of drench families.

Parasite management needs to involve an integrated control strategy, including grazing management, pasture species and selection for resilient animals, as well as targeted



Internal parasites

anthelmintic use. Use indicators such as diarrhoea score and liveweight gain to assist your decision about who to drench.

Ideally a FECRT should be performed every three to four years to get a picture of drench efficacy on your property. It helps identify any resistance, even at low levels, and allows you to make informed decisions regarding drench selection. The best time to perform a FECRT is between February and May, using lambs. Talk to your local Vetlife clinic about having this performed on your property.

The development of new action families offers a great opportunity to prolong the life of the older and cheaper anthelmintics provided these new drugs are used wisely. Strategic use of these products, namely Startect and Zolvix, includes quarantine, exit and knock-out drenches. Quarantine drenching is important to ensure that any new stock introduced on to your property do not introduce resistant worms. Exit drenching is using a triple or novel drench

combination to remove any resistant worms developing after a long-acting product is used. Knock-out drenching is a relatively new concept, aimed at eliminating any resistant worms before they hibernate over winter. It involves using Startect (or another effective combination, depending on your resistance status) as the last drench given to young stock before winter.

Refugia is a term that is often met with confusion. Essentially it means leaving a proportion of animals untreated so that they pass out susceptible worms that can then dilute the population of resistant worms on pasture. The question this raises is "how many animals do I need to leave untreated to provide adequate refugia?" Unfortunately there is no straightforward answer, as it depends on the efficacy of the anthelmintic being used. Studies have shown that if an anthelmintic is 99.9% effective, adequate refugia is achieved with only 1% of animals untreated. If a product is only 95% effective, however, the requirement

increases to 34% untreated. Obviously, providing refugia needs to be balanced with animal production and welfare, so talk to your Vetlife vet about how best to achieve refugia on your property. A useful option is to graze untreated ewes in rotation with lambs, which offers refugia as well as helping to reduce pasture larval contamination.

Your Vetlife vet can discuss all these options with you and advise what products and strategies are best for you and your property.

Georgina Mckerchar
Vetlife Fairlie



Ram management



Lamb numbers on sheep farms largely drive profitability on these enterprises. The ram team obviously is an important cog in this system yet is largely forgotten until the time autumn mating occurs. Now is an ideal time for inspection of your ram team prior to the mating season. All rams should be examined at least a month prior to being required for mating. This

involves palpating the testicles for abnormalities such as swellings of the epididymis, irregular testicle size, missing testicles, scrotal mange, abscesses etc. The main problem we check for of course is infection with *Brucella ovis*, a bacterial infection of the epididymis that will render a ram infertile. This can be picked up by palpation and a simple blood test confirms any suspicious lumps. Any problems that can affect sperm production could render a ram infertile for at least 60 days even if the problem has been successfully treated on the day. Wool length over the testicles is critical over the summer months as wool that is too long means too much heat which then leads to poor sperm production. Ram sales are currently occurring so defective rams can be replaced in time if some rams are not up to scratch.

Consider putting out some vasectomised rams one cycle earlier than you normally mate. The

“ram effect” of having vasectomised rams out with the ewes means that more ewes will cycle earlier so that when the rams are normally joined more ewes are on a highly fertile second cycle which should lead to a more compressed lambing with hopefully more lambs. Again, now is the time to vasectomise rams as they need at least six weeks to recover from the surgery and to ensure all fertile semen has passed out of the system. Vasectomisation of rams is a relatively simple procedure that can be done on farm under local anaesthetic. Talk to your Vetlife vet as ram palpation and vasectomisation can all occur on the same visit.

Ivan Holloway
Vetlife Oamaru

Pneumonia in lambs/hoggets

Pneumonia in young sheep is a complex disease involving several micro-organisms and their interaction with the host's immune system. Micro-organisms implicated include the bacteria *Pasteurella* spp and *Bordetella* spp, *Mycoplasmas* and several viruses. These organisms are common in lung tissue and when the antibacterial defences are compromised then pneumonia develops. This may be an acute form with septicaemia and often death, or chronic resulting in permanent lung damage and usually pleurisy. Most commonly the disease occurs in late summer/autumn through to early winter.

Chronic non-progressive pneumonia occurs regularly on many farms and goes unnoticed until lambs are sent to slaughter. However outbreaks of acute pneumonia causing widespread coughing and some deaths often occur subsequent to a period of stress especially mustering and yarding in dry dusty conditions. Other stressors include post-shearing cold shock, post-dipping with deaths four to seven days later, lungworm and internal parasites and live shipping where ventilation is inadequate with toxic gas accumulation.

Acute cases may be found dead but most affected mobs will exhibit coughing especially when driven and many will have a runny pussy nasal discharge. Lambs may continue to die for four to six weeks or longer and many will be chronically unthrifty. There is usually pleurisy with adhesions and yellow fibrin in the pleural

cavity while the lungs are dark red and solid. Chronic cases show lighter red/grey areas especially in the lobes of the lungs at the cranial (head) end.

Treatment with antibiotics is generally ineffective.

Prevention is aimed at minimising the predisposing factors by avoiding unnecessary stress. Thus yarding in hot dusty conditions should be avoided; however it is also important to maintain parasite control. Options include early morning mustering when cooler and some farmers in high risk situations dampen down dusty yards or use portable yards to avoid long periods of droving. It is also important to drive them slowly as coughing and mouth-breathing exacerbates the condition. All measures to

maintain good animal health and nutrition need to be attended to.

Economic losses result directly from deaths but more importantly from reduced weight gains and wool production. Because the lung damage is permanent they never really recover and there have been instances of deaths during the second winter when under severe stress of lambing and snowfall. There are also the losses associated with condemnation and downgrading of carcasses.

Contact your local Vetlife vet where sudden deaths are occurring or excessive coughing is occurring for post-mortems and advice.

Chris McFarlane
Vetlife Dunsandel



Dry cow: can you improve on the best?

Over the years Vetlife has been proud to support Cepravin dry cow as the premium dry cow product available to our clients. We believe that Cepravin still occupies this position but recent trial work carried out as part of Vetlife's Dairy Excellence initiative to provide scientific evidence for questions that clients ask us, shows that you can do better than 100% Cepravin for your herd.

For dairy cows at drying off, there is a lot of talk in the farming and veterinary press about combining dry cow treatment with teatseal. Much of the trial work has been done with shorter acting products than Cepravin or in overseas systems. At Vetlife we wanted to see if adding teatseal to Cepravin could reduce the amount of mastitis in the next lactation and whether it would lower cow cell counts. We approached a Vetlife client, obtained sponsorship from an industry partner and set out to test the theory:

Is Cepravin plus teatseal better than Cepravin alone?

600 cows were dried off on the same day with half receiving Cepravin in all four quarters and the other half receiving Cepravin followed by teatseal in all four quarters (the "Combo" group). Cows were allocated at random to each treatment group and then after calving, the number of cases of clinical mastitis and the individual cell count at the first herd test were recorded for all the cows in the study.

In brief:

Combo cows were just over half as likely to get clinical mastitis in the first 100 days of lactation as Cepravin alone cows.

Combo cows were just under a third as likely to have a cell count over 150,000 cells/ml at the first herd test in the spring as Cepravin alone cows.

Figure 1 shows the "cumulative hazard" of a cow getting mastitis in the first 100 days after calving. Combo cows have a lower risk of developing clinical mastitis throughout the study period.

Putting these figures through the DairyNZ "SmartSAMM" mastitis cost calculator, the extra cases of mastitis in the Cepravin alone group cost \$2,800 dollars and the increased cell count in the Cepravin alone group cost an extra \$7,900 dollars (at a \$6-50 pay out). Treating the cows with the extra teatseal cost \$3,840. This is a return on investment of \$6,860 or a return of 2.8:1 on the money spent on teatseal.

The trial looked at other risk factors.

Unsurprisingly, older cows are more at risk of clinical mastitis and a high cell count and cows with a high cell count in the previous lactation are also more at risk in the next lactation. However, the benefits of teatseal and Cepravin combined applied across all ages and for all cows, irrespective of their individual cell count

in the preceding lactation. Interestingly, there was no effect of dry period length on the benefit of adding teatseal to Cepravin; the reduction in clinical and sub clinical mastitis applied to all cows irrespective of the length of their dry period.

This was a small scale study and with more cows involved we might be able to tease out the effect of dry period length on mastitis and how this affects the benefit from combo therapy. Vetlife is currently undertaking a study to look at part of this question. In the meantime, we can be confident that in this trial, using South

Canterbury cows under local conditions the beneficial effect of Combo therapy in reducing clinical and subclinical mastitis was real AND cost effective (\$10,700 dollars back for a \$3,840 outlay). Talk to your Vetlife vet about the role that Combo therapy might have on your farm at your Milk Quality consult.

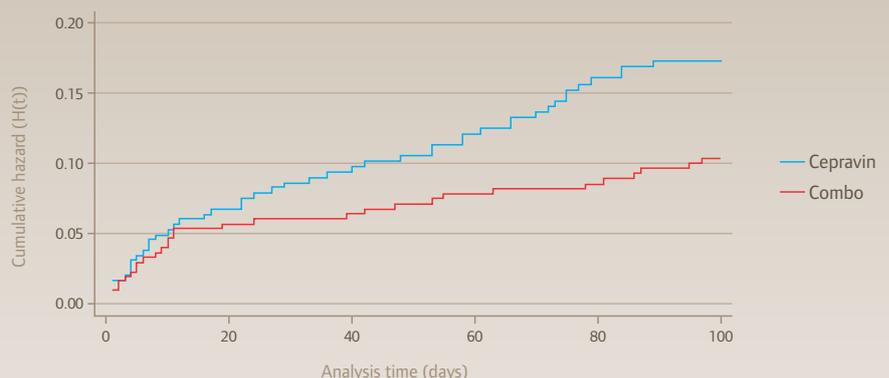
Andrew Bates
Vetlife Temuka

Special thanks to the farm involved for help and cooperation in this project, to all Vetlife staff that helped and to Zoetis Animal Health for financial support and encouragement.



Figure 1

Cumulative hazard (H(t)) estimated by treatment Nelson-Aalen estimate



Carry overs: are they worth it?

Most farmers will have their final pregnancy test results now and will know who is in calf and who is empty. Some of you will have already sent all the empties off to the works, which is probably a good idea especially if you are struggling for condition in the herd. Removing ten dry cows could add 1 kgDM/day to the diets of 160-170 cows that might benefit from some extra condition next year. Many of you might be considering carrying a few over, but how worthwhile is it?

Heifers

It is difficult to justify carrying over any heifer. Admittedly these animals represent future genetic progress for your farm and, as has been said in this newsletter before, retaining as many of these animals is important to drive genetic (and production) progress for your business. However, these animals are completely unproven. We can detect freemartins and the occasional other abnormality in the process of pregnancy testing but there is no doubt that some percentage of those heifers who are not in calf cannot ever get in calf due to some abnormality with the reproductive tract too subtle to be detected at pregnancy diagnosis. At least a mature carry over has had a calf and may be able to do so again if given another chance. For those heifers who can conceive but have not, assuming she is not under-grown, getting in calf at 15 months should be the easiest conception of that animal's life. At fifteen months she basically just has to eat, grow and get in calf only competing with animals of similar size and maturity as herself. From that point she has to produce a calf, recover from that and conceive again within around 80 days, produce milk and compete for food in a much bigger herd in the presence of older more dominant animals. If an animal

cannot do it at fifteen months and she is carried over to be successful at 27 months will she then be able to foot it in the herd when she does calve down? Or will she simply calve down and struggle to get in calf again becoming an ongoing late calver or even be culled as an empty four year old that has produced just one lactation?

Cows

Below there is a table that shows on the left a cow who successfully calves and milks every season for six lactations. Over this time she produces about 2300 kg of milk solids and consumes around 37 tonnes of dry matter to do this. On the far right is a cow who is found empty as a five year old and carried over to calve again as a seven year old. In this time she produces only 1900 kg of milk and consumes about 33.5 tonnes of dry matter (80% production for 90% of the feed intake of the first cow). Clearly there is a loss here; this is no revelation as she is missing a lactation. However it is worth noting that the longer she stays in the herd the closer she gets back to the production of her normal herd mate on a percentage basis. Had she been found empty at

the end of her carry over year her lifetime production would be only 74% that of the normal cow at that stage of life having consumed 87% of the feed of the normal cow. This effect is even more significant if she is carried over young. The carried over heifer demonstrates the extreme of this; once she is four she has only produced 50% of that of herd mates but consumed 80% of the feed that a herd mate has. So for a carry over to be worthwhile she really needs to remain in the herd for a long time to pay back her year's holiday. Given that she has let the side down once will she do it again against a herd mate who reliably gets in calf every year?

Carrying over cows is a bit of a gamble. If she gets back in calf and continues to do it year after year after that then it was not a bad bet but if you carry her through and she is empty again then her production affiance is significantly reduced. This effect is most costly if she is very young when carried over.

Duncan Crosbie
Vetlife Temuka

Table 1. Feed required and milk produced for a cow getting in calf every year compared to a carry over.

Age	Normal cow		Heifer carry over (% of normal cow)		4yo carry over (% of normal cow)	
	Milk	Feed (tonnes)	Milk	Feed (tonnes)	Milk	Feed (tonnes)
0	0	0.0		0.0		0.0
1	0	1.0		1.0	100%	1.0
2	0	4.0		4.0	100%	4.0
3	320	9.5	0	6.5	68%	320
4	720	15.0	360	12.0	80%	720
5	1120	20.5	760	17.5	85%	1120
6	1520	26.0	1160	23.0	88%	1120
7	1920	31.5	1560	28.5	90%	1520
8	2320	37.0	1960	34.0	92%	1920
						33.5
						83%
						74%
						87%
						89%
						91%



Running on empty?

At the time of writing, drought has been declared across the North Island with many of our friends in the northern dairy industry drying off their herds due to lack of adequate feed resources on farm. With little opportunity for respite once the autumn rains do arrive, the hard decisions have already had to be made to maintain cow condition. Fingers crossed, touching wood and reciting the Hail Mary all in unison, you will be reading this article to the glorious pitter patter of a gentle and steady rain upon the veranda roof.

With near record low rainfall on the West Coast, non-irrigated farms under the ranges are struggling for feed and with water restrictions in many areas being enforced there is limited water availability. As a result, pasture covers on many platforms are relatively low for this time of year and further to this, many cows across farms are in a lower state of body condition than they would usually be compared to the same time of year in previous seasons. The figure below shows a range of BCS grades across five mid-Canterbury herds in early March; as can be seen, three of the five herds have at least 40% of the cows in BCS grades of 4 and less. Target BCS for this time of year is around 4.4 BCS units and as such many of these cows across these farms are under their required grade. If you are unsure of the BCS profile of your herd, speak to your Vetlife vet and arrange for a DairyNZ BCS accredited Vetlife staff member to visit your property so that we can work with you to make a plan until dry-off.

From a herd level perspective, what are the options we have to ensure an increase in cow condition is made now to take some of the pressure off during the last round? Drying off or at least preferentially feeding and putting cows with a BCS of 3.5 on a once a day milking regime and removing cull cows are the most important steps to take in the short term. Using the pregnancy testing and herd test results,



empty and low production cows can be selected, dried off and removed from the herd. When moisture levels improve, consider the use of gibberellic acid foliar applications to increase covers on the platform. Gibb can comfortably provide an increase of 300-500 kg DM/ha if grazed within a three to four week window and should be applied to pasture at around 1500 kg DM/ha within five days post-grazing. Through making more feed available now and through reducing demand, the use of additional fertilisers and the strategic use of supplement

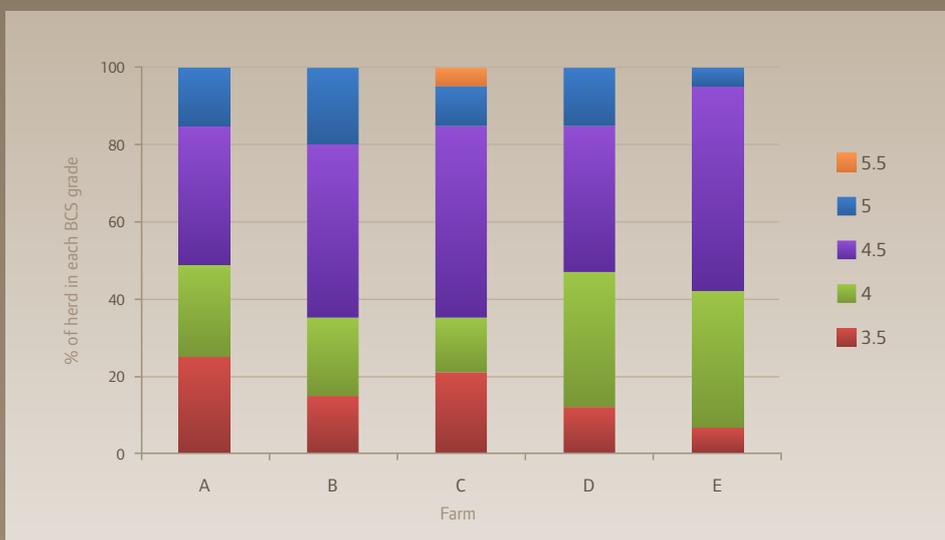
will aid in increasing round length, hold a stable cover and improve feed available to improve cow condition.

Unfortunately, with these dry conditions through the key months of January to March, damage to much of the current dryland winter feed crops may have already occurred with losses in potential yield. This means we may well achieve considerably lower yields than anticipated (and budgeted) for. Of course this certainly puts a pinch on feed reserves available and puts considerably more emphasis on silage and straw feed stores. Re-evaluating feed budgets as soon as possible with some of these worst case scenarios will allow you to make decisions sufficiently early and avoid feed pinches in the late winter when demand is high.

On a more positive note, the production levels to date on many farms are near or above last year's stellar records, well done! In conjunction with this, many of the banks are forecasting a rise in the payout before the end of season.

Now is the time to ensure we are careful with cow body condition, put plans and procedures in place and talk to your advisors, we are here to help. We must make sure there is enough fuel in the tank to make it through the spring especially in light of potentially lower than expected yields of winter feed crops.

Craig Trotter
Centre for Dairy Excellence, Geraldine



The only good goat is a dead goat

That is what I used to think until I acquired a mob of “gorse-control goats” with a block of land that I purchased a few years ago.

My previous attitude was based on a history of my childhood neighbour’s goats attacking our young shelterbelts and observing profuse numbers of feral goats while hunting deer in certain locations around New Zealand.

My small farm has its fair share of gorse and other weeds and I could see the impression the goats had made on the established gorse in the block where they lived. I could also see that ground that had been bulldozed to replace a boundary fence had an absence of gorse seedlings where the goats browsed (unlike on the neighbour’s side).

Given that I now had some goats there were two main factors prompting me to attempt to farm them properly. An alternative to constant spraying of gorse and the goat meat boom “just around the corner” I keep reading about in various farming publications.

I am definitely not the Vetlife goat specialist but I thought some of my personal observations and experiences combined with a little bit of veterinary knowledge may be of some interest to those of you who farm goats and those of you contemplating investing in some biological weed control.

Firstly, goats are not sheep. They cannot be farmed at sheep stocking rates and forced to graze pastures down to residual levels that sheep can handle. They are browsers and remain healthy if they are able to have a pick of green stuff.

If they are going to be confined to a scrubby block or area of the farm it is important not to chew the grass out completely with other livestock. Alternatively they do well when rotated around the farm in front of sheep or in conjunction with cattle. They actively seek out and thrive on fresh new gorse shoots and



flowers and nodding thistle heads in particular.

I know when they have been in a particular paddock too long because the occasional one will start to scour. They will not eat clover unless forced to and it seems to upset their gut. Give them a fresh paddock and a day or two later the scouring dries up.

Goats are more susceptible to worms than sheep. They also share some of the same species of worms and diseases with sheep which is an important consideration when farming them together.

Along with being more prone to worms, goats also process the active drug in drenches more rapidly than sheep. This means that at sheep dose rates the actives are being broken down and excreted potentially before reaching levels in the blood that will kill worms.

Exposing worms to sub-lethal doses of drench is a good way to accelerate drench resistance. Therefore routine drenching of adult goats with drench is not sustainable. If you need to drench adult goats routinely you need to reassess stocking rates and their grazing management.

Admittedly I am conservatively stocked on my own farm and predominately farm cattle which do not share worms with goats. However, I have been able to avoid mob-drenching adult goats. The kids receive a drench of Matrix at weaning time at one-and-a-half times the sheep dose rate (20 kg goat = 30 kg sheep dose). Last year

I drenched the kids again in the late winter around the time of the wet weather when things were under a bit of stress.

Goats need access to shelter such as scrub as they do not tolerate exposure to wet weather well. I deliberately begin kidding late in September when the weather is improving and quality feed is hopefully abundant. Goats are intelligent at seeking sheltered spots for kidding but the kids are more prone to exposure than lambs if born in unfavourable conditions.

Despite my preconceived ideas about goats, I find that they respect my electrified fences. I also find that they are very easy to muster and move with my averagely-skilled dog. Averagely-trained is probably more accurate! They readily mob-up and behave like a mob of Merino sheep moving rolling-maul style along fences and through gateways.

I am using Boer bucks over my gorse goat mob with the intention of breeding up to a Boer flock. The aim is to produce a worthwhile meat animal while maintaining the easy-care properties of survivability and constitution evident in my feral-base gorse goats.

As a goat-convert who has witnessed their weed destroying and pasture-enhancing properties I would recommend considering goats in the right situation.

Hayden Barker
Vetlife Pleasant Point

Hot off the press from the LUDF!

A quick glance of weekly farm data	19th Feb	26th Feb	5th Mar	12th Mar
Pasture growth rate (kg DM/d)	105	101	83	90
Pre-grazing pasture mass (kg DM/ha)	3571	3357	3417	3303
Average pasture mass	2542	2642	2466	2633
Post-grazing pasture mass	1650	1650	1650	1650
Pasture quality (MJME/kg DM)	11.6	-	-	-
Pasture offered (kg DM/cow/d)	20.2	20.1	22.1	15.2
Pasture silage offered (kg DM/cow/d)	0	0	0	5
Milk solids production (kg MS/cow/d)	1.77	1.76	1.74	1.69
Milk solids production (kg MS/ha/d)	6.87	6.87	6.76	6.61
Herd mean body condition score	4.50	-	4.60	-
Monitor group LWT (kg)	486	482	488	494
Bulk milk somatic cell count ('000)	120	122	100	109

For more detailed information go to www.siddc.org.nz



The next focus day is to be held:
9th May 2013.
Book into your diary now!!

The Reel Deal




VISIT YOUR LOCAL VET CLINIC TO GET THE REAL DEAL ON GETTING BETTER RESULTS USING MERIAL ANCARE CATTLE PRODUCTS AND YOU COULD HOOK YOURSELF ONE OF THESE SHIMANO ROD AND REEL DEALS FOR BETTER RESULTS ON THE WATER TOO. *Shimano fishing rod and reel or Rapala knife yours with qualifying purchases. **SHIMANO**

Soft bait set or TLD15 set qualifying packs: 1 x EPRINEC® 20L, 1 x ECLIPSE® 10L, 1 x GENESIS® Pour-On 10L, 1 x MATRIX-C® Hi-min 20L, 1 x EXODUS® Pour-on 20L, 3 x ECLIPSE® Bulk pack (4x500mL), 2 x NOMECP® PLUS Herd Pack (4x500mL)
 All-in-one set or TR2005 set qualifying packs: 1 x EPRINEC® 5L, 1 x ECLIPSE® 2.5L, 1 x ECLIPSE® 5L, 1 x GENESIS® Pour-On 5L, 1 x GENESIS® Ultra Pour-On 5L, 1 x SWITCH® Hi-Mineral 20L, 1 x EXODUS® Pour-on 5L, 1 x MATRIX-C® Hi-min 10L
 Filleting Knife qualifying packs: 1 x GENESIS® Pour-On 2.5L, 2 x GENESIS® Injection 500mL, 2 x GENESIS® Inj 812 500mL plus SE, 2 x ECLIPSE® Inj 500mL, 2 x NOMECP® PLUS 1% - 500mL, 1 x SWITCH® Hi-Mineral 10L



PROUDLY AVAILABLE FROM YOUR LOCAL VET CLINIC
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*WHILE STOCK LAST

Children's sunflower competition

Hurry, time is running out!

How are your sunflowers coming along? If you have not got them planted by now, it is time to start seriously planning where you are going to plant them, as you have just over one month until the competition ends!



Top tips:

- Sunflowers take about 12 weeks to mature.
- They need a spot that gets plenty of sun and is protected from the wind.
- Keep the soil moist until the seedlings emerge then protect them from pests.
- As your plants reach about 1.5 metres tall, it is a good idea to provide some form of support. You do not want your prize winner falling over now do you!

With the wonderful family trip to Te Papa and an iPad2 up for grabs, what are you waiting for!

While we are talking about planning, have you considered your needs of B₁₂ supplementation for this year?

- If you are not already doing so, take the time to consider SMARTShot B₁₂:
- Long-acting product, so no need for repeat injections.
 - Available in plain formula for lambs or with selenium for sheep and cattle.

Speak to your local Vetlife clinic today to discover the full benefits SMARTShot B₁₂ has to offer.

Remember, in addition to the benefit you will see in your stock by using SMARTShot B₁₂, your child's sunflower entry will also be eligible for the iPad2 should they be the lucky winner!

So let's get growing with Vetlife and SMARTShot B₁₂ today.



Meet the Vetlife field representative team...



Max O'Donnell
Ranfurly
027 608 5523

Jacqueline Manson
Alexandra
027 702 4384

Maurie Niles
Pleasant Point
Fairlie
027 4800 594

Nicola Joyce
Oamaru
027 433 3240

James Ward
Oamaru
027 702 6768

Garry Marsh
Central Otago
027 227 7881

Craig Straw
Ashburton
027 228 9411

Helen Williamson
Eukanuba Field Rep
South Canterbury
027 497 7259

Norma Barton
Oxford
027 432 7321

Lis Rietveld
Twizel
027 430 4644

Sally Christian
Dunsandel
Banks Peninsula
027 333 1782

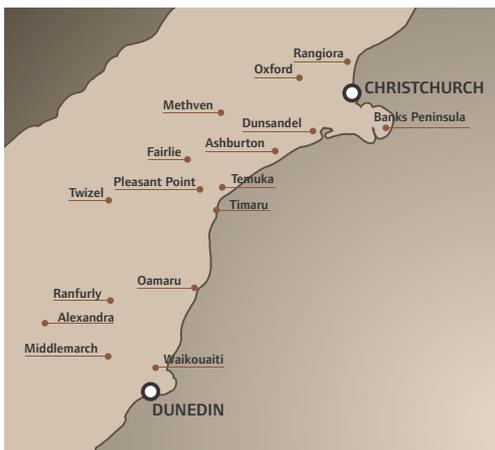
Comments and feedback

We value your feedback. Please feel free to comment or lodge a complaint in confidence on our services, advice and products.

Mid and North Canterbury Raylene Clement
P 03 307 5195 | M 027 557 3619 | E rjcllement@vetlife.co.nz
Vetlife Ashburton, Cnr East St & Smithfield Rd,
Ashburton 7700, PO Box 161

South Canterbury Adrian Campbell
P 027 220 5559 | E adrian@vetlife.co.nz
Head Office, 82 Sophia Street, Private Bag 71000 Timaru

North Otago Ivan Holloway
P 03 433 0411 | M 027 530 4645 | E ivan@vetlife.co.nz
Vetlife Oamaru, 281 Thames St, Oamaru, 9400



Vetlife Alexandra
P 03 448 8115 F 03 448 7277 E alexandra@vetlife.co.nz

Vetlife Ashburton
P 03 307 5195 F 03 308 2452 E ashburton@vetlife.co.nz

Vetlife Banks Peninsula
P 03 325 1006 F 03 325 1053 E littliver@vetlife.co.nz

Vetlife Dunsandel
P 03 325 4155 F 03 325 4156 E dunsandel@vetlife.co.nz

Vetlife Fairlie
P 03 685 8884 F 03 685 8085 E fairlie@vetlife.co.nz

Vetlife Methven
P 03 302 8603 F 03 302 8228 E methven@vetlife.co.nz

Vetlife Oamaru
P 03 433 0411 F 03 434 8059 E oamaru@vetlife.co.nz

Vetlife Oxford
P 03 312 4882 F 03 312 4190 E oxford@vetlife.co.nz

Vetlife Pleasant Point
P 03 614 7777 F 03 614 7701 E pleasantpoint@vetlife.co.nz

Vetlife Ranfurly
P 03 444 9700 F 03 444 9701 E ranfurly@vetlife.co.nz

Vetlife Rangiora
P 03 313 7962 F 03 313 7968 E rangiora@vetlife.co.nz

Vetlife Temuka
P 03 615 7352 F 03 615 5254 E temuka@vetlife.co.nz

Vetlife Timaru
P 03 684 8181 F 03 684 8180 E timaru@vetlife.co.nz

Vetlife Twizel
P 03 435 0212 F 03 435 0213 E twizel@vetlife.co.nz

Vetlife Waikouaiti
P 03 465 7613 F 03 465 8094 E waikouaiti@vetlife.co.nz

