



Eastland Animal Health News

EASTLAND VETERINARY SERVICES LTD

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View from the top

Welcome to our summer newsletter.

Long awaited rain in mid December was good news for some and hopefully brought slight relief to the dry period that was developing.

In this edition we cover *Mycoplasma bovis*, another cattle disease that has found its way to our emerald isles. Also covered is the old foe, facial eczema which seems to be worsening with climate change.

Mycoplasma bovis highlights the need for a biosecurity plan for all farms and is especially relevant on properties with a trading component.

FE is a disease that is not insurmountable with long

term control (genetics) and good short to medium term planning (monitoring spore counts, crops, zinc treatments and pasture spraying). Don't forget to keep an eye out for worms and fly.

Make sure you plan time out with family and friends over the festive season.

I wish you a Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year from the EVS team and thank you for your support in 2017.

John

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Facial Eczema Monitoring

Facial eczema (FE) is a fact of life for farmers on the East Coast.

The liver damage from facial eczema affects the lifetime production of sheep and cattle. There is no treatment for FE therefore prevention is the key.

Limiting the impact of FE on your farm is multi-factorial but a good place to start is by watching what spore counts are doing on our monitor farms. Monitoring will start mid January and run thorough to April or longer if necessary. We have five monitor sites at:

1. Nuhaka
2. Tolaga Bay
3. Te Karaka
4. Gisborne Flats
5. Waerenga-o-kuri

Results go into the Gisborne Herald on Saturdays and onto our website www.evs.co.nz or alternatively call the clinic for results. When counts begin to rise – it is time to start spore counting on your own property to establish safer areas to graze and when to start preventative treatments.

Your Summer Checklist ✓

Bulls: Keep an eye on them during mating. Are they working? Better to identify a broken bull and swap him now than find out at scanning time.

Young cattle/lambs: Keep on top of parasites with routine effective drenches, depending on the season, weather, pasture covers etc. Are they fully vaccinated?

Rams: Have they been palpated? Brucellosis is the biggest cause of ram wastage/infertility and is still present in the district.

Farm dogs: If you've got dogs coming and going, new staff, dog trialling etc then there is a risk of spreading disease (Parvo, Kennel Cough etc). We can come out on farm to vaccinate your team and frequently tie it in with another visit such as ram palpating.

Hoggets: Toxovax and Campyvax are cost effective sheep performance vaccines. They need to be looked after and administered properly in order to work effectively. Talk to Phil well in advance to order your vaccines.

Fishing: Have you had a break this summer? Make time to get off farm and enjoy the sunshine.

Mycoplasma Bovis – what’s the deal?

No doubt you have heard of this disease through the media. However this week it has arrived on our doorstep with the first positive North Island farm confirmed near Napier.

In July of this year, *Mycoplasma bovis*, a bacterial disease of cattle was found for the first time in NZ in the South Island. Since then MPI has been working hard via a large scale biosecurity operation to contain the outbreak. MPI has put in place movement controls, wide spread testing, some culling and some biosecurity controls on and off farm to minimise its spread.

It is worth mentioning that all major cattle producing countries have this disease already, it is not a risk to humans and has no food safety issues and is also not a trade risk for NZ animal products.

What are the signs?

M. Bovis only affects cattle! There are quite a range of signs shown in the picture below, the common theme is that these animals do not respond to treatment. If you have any concerns, contact us at the vet clinic or MPI directly on 0800 80 99 66.

Can you treat it?

M. bovis is notoriously hard to treat because unlike most bacteria it does not have a cell wall. This makes treatment by existing antibiotics near impossible.



How does it spread?

The greatest risk of *Mycoplasma bovis* infection is through close animal contact (cattle only) and less commonly on equipment used on infected animals such as at milking/AI/vet procedures. It spreads through bodily fluids such as mucous and vaginal secretions. Frustratingly some animals do not show signs but can spread the disease without looking sick.

What should you do?

Don't panic. Farmers should look out for animals with the signs listed above and call the clinic if they are worried. MPI does compensate for testing if your case history fits certain criteria. Familiarise yourself with the online resources about the disease (see below). Be vigilant with NAIT and stock movement records – up to date records enables accurate tracking of cattle as this is one of MPI's biggest tools to clamp down on the further spread of this disease.

Buying in cattle?

Do your homework on sources of stock, as far as practical limit cattle movements onto your farm. Be vigilant with Animal Status Declarations and NAIT records. There is a great checklist on the MPI website of things to check for before buying stock. We have a copy of this in the clinic also.

Hygiene/disinfection

While the greatest risk of this disease spreading is via buying in animals or close cattle contact, this is a timely reminder to be vigilant with cleanliness and biosecurity. Put some thought into biosecurity on your farm, the staff at the clinic can help you develop a biosecurity plan. Have a think about contractors that come onto farm such as AI technicians, vets, scanners, branders, stock agents, transport companies etc. The picture over the page gives some good pointers.

Protect your farm from disease

Separate

Does it need to come on farm? – if not keep it off

- Limit visitors
- No used equipment unless cleaned and disinfected
- Boots, overalls, protective clothing must be clean
- Provide a rubbish bin for dirty gloves, disposable overalls and other rubbish
- Keep stock trucks away from animal areas – have loading facilities close to the tanker track



Clean

Things have to be clean before they can be disinfected – disinfectants don't work through dirt

- Provide a place to wash boots and other equipment, and scrubbing brush for visitors
- Have somewhere to wash hands, provide soap
- Wear gloves to keep hands clean



- Clean farm clothing regularly
- Keep the tanker track clean – no-go zone for stock



Disinfect

Disinfect to destroy or inactivate the "bugs"

- Provide ready to use disinfectant
- Leave to soak so it works
- Change disinfectant regularly



Recommended disinfectants:

- 1% Virkon – 50g in 5 litres water
 - 0.2% Citric acid – 1 teaspoon in 1 litre water
 - Trigene
- Any other approved disinfectant used according to label instructions.

New Zealand Government



Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua



Further information

Come and chat to the vets at the clinic. The DairyNZ website, Beef&Lamb NZ and the MPI website have some excellent information on M.bovis, they also put up a lot of media updates. You can sign up for email updates as well.

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/protection-and-response/responding/alerts/mycoplasma-bovis/>

<https://beeflambnz.com/>

<https://www.dairynz.co.nz/>



Welcome to Tessa Boys

Tessa comes to us from the coastal town of Oamaru in the South Island. She grew up in Timaru and trained at Massey University.

Tessa has spent the last three years at a mixed animal practice and enjoys dealing with a variety of both small and large animals. She has a particular interest in working dog surgery and medicine. In her spare time, Tessa enjoys playing soccer and netball, tramping, fishing and is excited to swim in a warmer ocean!

She joins us in mid December and is looking forward to becoming a member of the Eastland Vets Team.



Heat Stroke

With summer approaching heat stroke is an important issue to keep in mind when out working your dogs.

During periods of high temperatures and humidity, exercising or close confinement in an area with poor ventilation, (eg. car or dog box), can cause heat stress in an animal. Normal mechanisms of body cooling such as panting are not enough to dissipate the heat when body temperature becomes extreme.

As well as direct cell and tissue damage from the heat (cooking of cells), organs can become damaged as the body starts to focus on opening blood vessels at the skin's surface to improve evaporation. As blood flow to the skin increases, blood flow to the organs is diverted and organ damage can occur.

For example, reduced blood supply to the gut can result in destruction of its lining, leading to vomiting, diarrhoea or even septicaemia (bugs in the blood) and endotoxaemia (toxins in the blood). The kidneys are particularly sensitive to poor blood flow and can quickly start to fail.

Symptoms of heat stroke include excessive panting, becoming wobbly, vomiting and diarrhoea, collapse and sometimes sudden death.

Treatment is aimed at reducing body temperature to normal as quickly as possible and treating for shock with IV fluids. If out on the farm, putting an affected dog straight into a dam or water trough can be lifesaving. Assessment is still necessary at the clinic however and treatment for any organ damage can greatly improve the chances of recovery. A dog that has survived an episode of

heat stroke is more prone to subsequent episodes of heat stress as the heat regulatory centre in the brain is damaged.

AVOID HARD WORK OF DOGS IN THE HEAT OF THE DAY

ALLOW FOR DOG DRINK BREAKS AND REST

NEVER LEAVE DOGS IN VEHICLES OR OVER CROWD DOG BOXES

COOL THE ANIMAL AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE

SEEK VETERINARY ATTENTION

