

Eastland Vets Newsletter

Autumn 2022

Drenching Weaners

Weaning is generally the earliest opportunity to give calves their first drench. Unless calves are late weaned it is generally recognized that when calves are on their mothers the risk of worms is quite low. Local unpublished work has shown no benefit in a mid-February pre-weaning drench despite a moderate worm challenge.

Ideally weaner calves should be drenched with a combination oral drench. This is because young cattle have little natural immunity to worms and Cooperia in particular at this age. Cooperia is the hardest worm (dose limiting) for the ML (macrocytic lactone) family to kill. There is widespread ML resistance/inefficacy in Cooperia across the country and emerging ML resistance in Ostertagia. ML's are the active ingredient in nearly all single active cattle drenches available so young stock need a combination product which contains the active ingredient Levamisole to kill Cooperia and resistant Ostertagia. Levamisole is very effective against Cooperia. Cooperia can reduce growth rates in young stock, but by 12-18 months of age cattle usually have built up a solid natural immunity to it.

There are oral, injectable and pour-on combination drenches available for use in cattle. More recently oral drenches have been recommended as the most effective and cost sensitive way to treat weaners. Ideally combination oral products should be used monthly until the cattle are too large to treat safely or in a timely manner.

If weaners or Friesian bull calves are being brought onto farm, a triple combination oral drench is recommended as a quarantine drench on arrival to prevent resistant worms inadvertently being introduced. Consider using a fluke drench as a quarantine drench also if you are fluke free and animals come from an infected source.

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Autumn Ewe Management

The period of ram out to scanning is really the last chance to put weight on light ewes and set yourself up for the final round before set stocking. From ram removal until a few weeks after scanning the feed demand of ewes is really at maintenance. If second shorn add an extra 20% above maintenance, for up to 3 weeks, depending on weather. This means is relatively easier to put on body condition early compared to later in pregnancy when demand goes up.

It also means ewes will eat more than they need to if you allow them to. Some sort of calculated control of intake helps push covers further into winter, especially if ewes are already in good condition.

Animal health wise, the period is relatively risk free, though it does pay to monitor FEC and satisfy yourself ewes are handling the worm challenge, especially after a wormy summer when there will be plenty of larvae over wintering. Liver fluke is good at taking weight off ewes and needs intervention on a lot of properties.

For those sticking with second shearing, it's a great time to re-draft the tail end to put ahead of the round. Shearing takes care of up to 90% of the lice burden, if you really want to be sure lice is controlled then a pour on off shears offers the best control by far. For those not shearing, lice in late pregnancy can have a significant impact on ewe performance, ewes rubbing on a fence and not eating lose body condition faster than those they don't, control options are more limited, so have a yarn to us about it.

I am really interested to monitor the copper status of dry ewes at scanning, especially in the Wairoa region. We know copper levels will halve between scanning and lambing, if they are not adequate at scanning, they will drop into a deficient range. It is prudent to ensure ewes are well supplemented to manage risk around poor lamb survival, sway back and broken legs at docking. If you want to check the status of your ewes, give the clinic a ring with details of where and when ewes are being processed and we'll get that arranged.

Greg Tattersfield

How well are our drenches working? 2021/22 Summary.

We have done 18 faecal egg count reduction tests (FECRTs) this season throughout Gisborne and Wairoa, testing all five drench families. 13/18 (72%) of these tests identified triple resistance (resistance to a mectin, white, levamisole combo), where the drench did not kill more than 95% of worms. These farms would have experienced subclinical production loss and some farms obvious clinical disease.

FECRTs give farmers information on which worm types are resistant to which drenches. This is different for every farm. Based on this information we have been able to tailor specific parasite management plans and advice to each property. This aims to help farmers to reach their production goals whilst maintaining sustainability of drench actives.

The 18 farmers who carried out FECRTs this season will follow up with a Wormwise workshop in the winter and continued monitoring support using FECs with veterinary interpretation and advice. If you farm sheep and have not done any testing in recent years we highly recommend that you talk to us about getting information about your drench status. FECRTs are best done on new season born lambs at weaning that have not had a drench before.

Hannah Wakelin, BVetTech

The Dog Box - Rat Bait Poisoning

Rat bait poisoning is one of the most common toxicities we see, especially at this time of year. Rat bait interferes with the blood's natural ability to clot, resulting in **bleeding** within the body. The site at which bleeding occurs is highly variable and therefore dogs arrive at the clinic with very different clinical signs. They may:

- be depressed and off colour
- have trouble breathing or a cough
- be lame and have a swollen joint
- have blood in their poo
- have blood streaming from their nose and mouth
- present collapsed and in shock



Clinical signs of rat bait poisoning take at least 48-72 hours to appear and vary depending on the time since ingestion and the amount eaten.

When it is known or highly suspicious that a dog has eaten rat bait recently, we can induce vomiting. Inducing vomiting can reduce the need for further treatment and greatly lower the risk of fatality.

When dogs present with clinical signs of rat bait toxicity, Vitamin K therapy is started immediately to help the blood to clot and prevent further bleeding. Vitamin K is now only available in injectable and syrup forms and has become very expensive. A minimum of ten days treatment is necessary.

When bleeding is already very advanced blood transfusions may be required.

A blood test at the lab can help us to confirm toxicity but only after 48 hours of suspected ingestion. The blood sample must be sent away to the laboratory so sometimes it is necessary to start treatment on suspicion of poisoning rather than waiting until it is too late. The blood test also helps us to confirm that everything is back to normal 48hr after a course of treatment.

Dog Trials

It was great to see the Centre Championship dog trials at Whatatutu go ahead after a postponement. Congratulations to all those in the run offs, in particular the Eastland Vets Long Head, won by Leo Edginton.

Eastland Vets are proud to be major sponsors of the Poverty Bay Sheep Dog Trial Association.

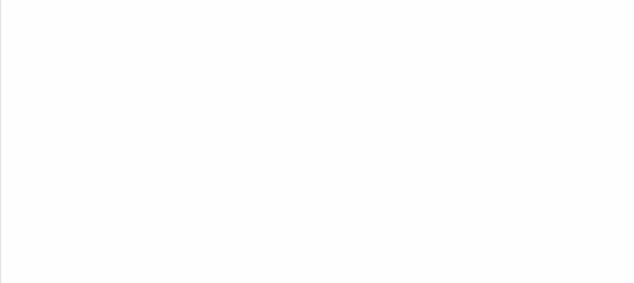


East Coast Farming Expo

The East Coast Farming Expo was a great event once again.

Eastland Vets sponsored the dog training event with demonstrations from dog triallists Allen Irwin and Guy Peacock.

Vet Adele, completed the session with a discussion on working dog nutrition and health.



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