



Eltham Vet Services



Welcome to the **November 2022** edition of our dry stock newsletter. Ongoing changeable weather created a difficult spring. This made it challenging for some tasks to be completed on farm, like docking being delayed, but at least grass growth has started in most places and will continue into December. Stock around the district look as if some sustained sunshine would be appreciated. I've had plenty of reports of lambs not really 'doing well'. Lambing percentages were reflective of how tough the autumn got in different areas but docking numbers seem to be similar. Internal parasites have been the main challenge and coupled with soft grass, it looks like the dagging gear is going to get a work out this year. Watch out for early cases of fly if this sounds familiar. We are dealing with product supply shortages due to Boehringer withdrawing sheep products so please plan ahead the products you will need so we can come up with alternatives.

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DOG VACCINATION RUN 2022

Its that time again when we get out of the office and get on farm to vaccinate your dogs and offer health checks for those crucial employees which do the tough miles on the hills so you don't have to!

The cost of working dogs continues to increase year on year and a good one is worth its weight in gold. This makes vaccination a non-negotiable way to protect your mate and asset. The good news is that during the vaccination run we make it easier and cheaper to protect your team by coming to your farm and discounting the cost. This is a one off discount which we get from the manufacturer and pass it directly to you. We can also check out any of those things that have been niggling your team but haven't had a chance to get them into the clinic yet

We will be heading out your way early December, those who have done it with us in the past should expect a call in the coming weeks to organise a time that suits however if you are new to us and would like to join the dog run, give us a call here at work to get on board.

NEW CONVEYOR ON ITS WAY

As most of you will know, we borrowed a conveyor last winter to help some of our clients administer pre-lamb treatments.

Due to the success of this little venture, we have decided to purchase our own sheep conveyor which should be arriving early in the new year.

Our hope is to offer the conveyor year round with experienced operators to assist with any animal health related product application, whether it be drenching, vaccinations, fly treatment, moulting or uddering ewes or condition scoring stock. The conveyor can take all classes of stock & no job is too big or small!

We were putting through around 400-500/hour capsuling and expect to be twice as fast as this with less invasive treatments such as vaccinations or drenching. We have a very competitive pricing plan with different options to suit your farm and experienced staff ready to help.



So, save your knees and your back and let our new conveyor make those big days in the yards that much easier.

Mineral Supplementation is something which we do year on year for beef cows, whether it be B12, selenium or copper. However not much thought is given to what the ewes require.

As we start to expect more from our ewes we should also start to think about the little things that may affect productivity - trace minerals is one such thing.

Mineral deficiencies can be the cause of ill thrift and poor reproduction and often the only time we give any minerals to our breeding stock is when we give mineralised worm drenches. However, as the trend turns away from drenching adult stock we need to think about how else we should be getting these minerals into them.

This is where long acting boluses like **Smarttrace** come in.

These one off treatments supply your ewe with their trace mineral requirements of Selenium, Iodine and cobalt (Vit B12) for at least 4 months and helps you increase ewe productivity and maximise scanning results when given pre tup. If you're interested in what Smarttrace could offer your farm give Daniel a call to discuss.



Using Teaser Rams?

Although mating is a while away yet, here is some food for thought on the use of teaser rams. A teaser ram is an entire ram that has been vasectomised. They are used during pre-mating to encourage oestrus activity in ewes, and synchronise ovulation. The main benefits of using teaser rams are synchronising ovulation (thus having a more concentrated lambing), advancing lambing date, and improving lambing percentage. Teasers are introduced to the ewes 17 days before the planned start of mating (timing is very important here!) Rams (or teaser rams) produce a natural chemical (pheromone) that has a strong effect on ewes to start oestrus activity. The first cycle of the season in ewes is silent and has much poorer fertility, so getting this cycle out of the way with the teaser first, means that once the rams are joined 17 days later they will be ready for mating. This means a more predictable start to lambing, more lambs born early, earlier docking and more lambs sold at weaning. A study by Paul Kenyan through Massey University compared 2 groups of ewe hoggets, one exposed to the teaser ram for 17 days prior to mating, the other not. The mob exposed to the teaser had 30% more ewe hoggets mated in the first 17 days of mating, and a 6.6% lower empty rate (dry). The best rams for teasers are 2 tooth rams however well grown hogget rams can be used. Rams remain fertile for 6 weeks after being vasectomised so get them sorted at least 2 months prior to when you want them in with your flock. Get in touch if you would like to have a chat about teasers, or if you are thinking of getting some for mating season.

Drench Checks Pre Christmas

Due to the seasonal spread of different internal parasite species, it is a great idea to check how the drench you are using in your lambs is working, especially if you already have some drench resistance present on the property.

You don't have to complete a full 'Drench Test' to do this, instead you can do what's known as a 'Drench Check'.

This is much simpler way to quickly establish whether the drench you are using is effective against the worms present. You simply bring the lambs back in 10 days after drenching and get 10 faecal samples OR if you can hold the lambs in a clean corner of a paddock 10 days after drenching you can collect the samples off the pasture as long as they are fresh (warm!). Bring them into us for a faecal egg count and we can get the results back to you within 48 hours.

For each different drench that you use, a drench check should be performed each year. This way any potential issues can be detected and addressed at an earlier stage than waiting until your next reduction test. That said, a full reduction test is still going to give you the most comprehensive information about which drenches are working on your property and drench checks are not a substitute for this.

With drench resistance a serious emerging issue that has significant production limiting effects, you cannot afford not to have this information at hand.



The beautiful summer days are coming but unfortunately so is the cheeky blowfly.

Flystrike continues to be a condition that causes management headaches on many properties and is a major cost to farm business. Each year in New Zealand, it is estimated that 1.3-2.3 million sheep are affected by flystrike with at least 250,000 lambs dying from flystrike.

Due to the removal of several products from the market, and others suffering from supply issues, your options this year for fly control are slightly different to previous seasons. For those wanting a product for dipping that treats and prevents both maggots and adult fly you will have to use a combination of either **Cyrosshield** or **Vetrazin** (fly control) with a product like **Extinosad** or **Seraphos** (active strike and lice treatment). For details on how to use, withholds and length of

activity, get in touch with Dan to talk through the best options for your stock.

The ready to use spray on products available this season are **Strikeforce** or **Clik** which both contain Dicyclanil and can be used for fly prevention.

With flystrike being such a huge animal welfare issue, as well as massive cost to those farmers unlucky enough to be affected by it, it is imperative you get control of fly right on your farm.

Ram Check Pre Tup

Getting your rams tested pre tup is an important date on your mating calendar, not just to look for Brucellosis but also to rule out rams unfit for the upcoming season. As you all know Brucellosis main damage to your flock is through ram infertility and ram wastage. We can see poor scanning results in flocks with B.Ovis positive rams, however the most common issue we see is high wastage of rams when B.Ovis is found as it is very contagious and spreads easily through your rams. It can be very expensive to have to replace up to 80-100% of your ram mob due to B.Ovis! Some golden rules for your rams:



- Never buy a ram without seeing a current B. ovis accreditation certificate. There are still some breeders around the country with no accreditation program in place so to make sure your money is being well spent, assure the stud and rams are accredited free of Brucellosis.
- Remove stray/neighbours rams as soon as possible. And if needed by any means necessary! Stray rams can very quickly spread Brucellosis throughout your rams so treat any unknown ram as infected.
- Get your rams checked every year by your vet. All rams should be palpated and at least 20 bled every year to reduce the impact on your flock if you are unlucky enough to have an outbreak.
- Don't buy dog tucker rams. These are being 'retired' for a reason and a high percentage can be infected!
- Keep ram paddocks away from any boundaries and your boundaries well fenced.
- Communicate with your neighbours!

Compared to many diseases, Brucellosis is an easy one to keep on top of with some good habits and regular testing.

If you have been following these guidelines, keep it up! If you haven't then now is a good time to contact your vet to work out the best plan for your flock - the sooner you test the more time you have to get any problems sorted!