



Welcome to this issue of the Clutha Vets newsletter for the managers of young dairy stock. We are now well in to autumn, and we know from experience the two biggest issues facing calves at this time are internal parasites and trace elements.

Worms have been a particularly challenging in the past couple of autumns. We have seen some cases of coughing calves and lungworm just 2-3 weeks after drenching. If you are seeing parasite issues in your calves less than 4 weeks after drenching then please get in contact with us so we can help figure out what might be going on and make the best plan to combat it. Going into the winter, it is also important to make sure that trace element deficiencies are not growth limiting. It is outside the scope of this newsletter to cover all the different drench and trace element products that we offer so be sure to use our vets and retailers to make a specific plan for your farm.

Parasite management

Parasites have a negative impact on the growth of young animals in two ways. The first being appetite suppression and altered grazing behaviour which cause a reduction in food intake. The second is the generation of an immune response to ingested larvae which requires both energy and protein from the calf. The limited resources available for growth and production must be diverted away to fight the parasites instead. This impact is of greatest importance in young cattle as they don't develop maximum immunity to worms until 18-20 months of age.

The purpose of any worm management programme is to maintain or enhance calf growth (profitability) by:

Minimising contamination of pasture with infective worm larvae

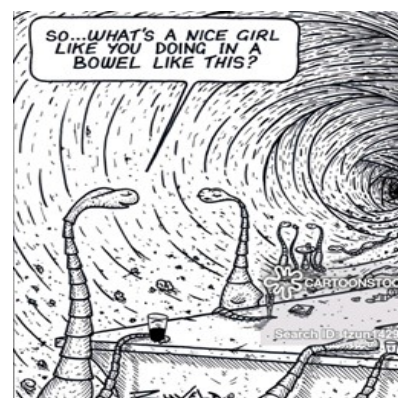
- This is the reason for strict 28 day drenching intervals with oral drenches. Longer intervals will allow young stock to contaminate pasture more than necessary, leaving more larvae for others to pick up.

Minimising uptake of infective larvae by susceptible stock

- Rotational grazing, and increasing your post grazing residuals, reduces the number of larvae ingested as these are at higher levels lower down the sward where they remain uneaten.
- Rotating paddocks used for young stock grazing from year to year as larval contamination can build up on paddocks over time.

Monitoring the success of worm management strategies

- Regular weighing is the best indicator of the success of your calf rearing—it assesses feeding, parasite control and everything else.
- Faecal samples taken 10-14 days after drenching can be checked for worm eggs to ensure your drench is effective.



Trace Elements

The two main trace elements of importance in South Otago cattle are copper and selenium. Supplementation is essential to maximise growth potential of young stock as we start preparing for winter.

Copper can be supplemented with an oral bolus or injection. A good option leading up to winter would be a 20g copper bolus (live weight of 200 kg).

Selenium can be supplemented with long-acting (up to 12 months) or short-acting (1 month) injections. Short-acting forms can also be combined with Vitamin B12 (cobalt)

Combination supplementation. High-mineral drenches may not provide enough trace elements to set up rapidly growing animals for winter. All-trace oral boluses contain long acting copper and selenium along with several more trace elements and vitamins for animals of minimum liveweight 150 kg. Multimin injection also combines a number of trace elements for convenience.

There are more options than we can cover here so be sure to get in touch with your vet to figure out the best trace element plan for your young stock.

Vaccinations

As well as getting your own COVID jab, now is the time to make sure the calves have completed a two shot programme of immunisation against clostridial disease (pulpy kidney, tetanus etc) with 5-in-1; and Leptospirosis to protect yourself, family and staff.

