

CLUTHA VETS SHEEP & BEEF FARMER NEWSLETTER



CLUTHA
VETS

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Clinic News

Annie Jackson

Christmas has become a distant memory and, hopefully, you have managed to have a break / refresh with friends and family and it is now back to the grindstone!

We have had a change in weather where we are now very grateful for the showers of rain that are still coming through to keep everything fresh.

On the staffing front, we have welcomed Hayden Linton (Massey Uni new graduate vet) to the Balclutha team. Hayden spent quite a bit of time "seeing practice" with us last year, and realised what a great place South Otago is! Chase Jordan, our second Massey new grad is also beginning on the 5th February. Our new grads are trained to do everything and they begin their journey in our small animal clinic first, getting that part sorted.

With our new grads, I would like to acknowledge our awesome farmers who are so encouraging and supportive of our younger team. It is your support in this area that helps get them started on their journey. It is a big journey for them, especially the first 6 months.

We also recently welcomed Sophie Harding, who has joined us from the UK to give us a hand in the dairy and sheep and beef worlds Sophie has previously worked in Southland. She also has a special talent in the social media field and we are looking forward to her helping us to upskill in this area... follow us on Instagram to see what we are up to!

As always, we are here for all of your animal health needs, enquiries etc. So please don't hesitate to call!

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Flystrike Problems Widespread this Summer

By Andrew Roe

While flystrike levels seemed to have been quite low prior to Christmas, things have really escalated during the last month. We have received numerous reports of cases from our clients, both in lambs and ewes.

What Leads to a Bad Flystrike Season?

There are two main climatic factors that determine how widespread and severe flystrike is likely to be for any given summer/autumn;

Spring temperatures

The first wave of blowflies that appear in late spring/early summer consists of flies that overwintered in the ground as dormant third stage maggots and pupa. How early these emerge as young flies very much depends on the soil temperature. For the Australian green blowfly (one of the main culprits), for example, it was found that a soil temperature of 15°C was the trigger in Australian conditions. It is likely, however, that since adapting to New Zealand conditions, the threshold is now lower for this species in our country.

Blowflies can complete a whole life cycle in three to four weeks. The sooner the soil temperature threshold is reached, the sooner the flies become active and the more life cycles they can fit into a summer. Considering that one female fly can lay around 600 eggs in her brief lifetime, every life cycle that is completed hugely amplifies the total fly population, increasing the severity of flystrike that season.

Summer weather conditions

Adult flies can easily survive dry conditions. However some moisture is needed for their eggs to survive and, also, wetter fleeces are more attractive to flies. Blowflies don't like windy conditions and pretty much become completely inactive once wind speeds exceed 30km/hour. They are also less active on colder days, when the air temperature drops below 17 °C approximately. So, in summary, the worst outbreaks of flystrike can be expected in warm, humid summers with not many windy days.

What are the Other Risk Factors?

Animal factors

Other factors contributing to the likelihood of flystrike are those that we do have some control over. Most of the important strike species are attracted to sheep by

the smell of things like dags, footrot, infected tailing wounds, fighting wounds in rams, and fleece rot. So preventing or treating these problems will reduce the risk of flystrike.

Unfortunately, however, it will not eliminate the problem altogether, thanks to the presence of Aussie green blowfly. This species, which first arrived in the south about 20 years ago is attracted to all sheep, regardless of how clean and "unsmelly" they are! It therefore strikes sheep in a wider range of places than the other flies, especially the back and shoulder regions.

Breeding sites

Most of the important fly species do not confine themselves to live sheep. They will lay their eggs on any animal carcass (dead possums, birds, rabbits, as well as livestock) and also garbage, dog faeces and, in some cases, even rotting vegetation.

Minimising these alternative breeding sites can greatly reduce the potential fly population, but, unfortunately the Aussie green fly is the odd one out again! The only place they choose to lay their eggs is on our sheep. So being diligent about picking up dead stock etc, while a very good idea, will only go so far, as it will not have any impact on the numbers of this particular pest.

Impact of Flystrike

The obvious impacts of flystrike are the loss of weight and body condition of the affected animals and, of course, deaths in some cases. However, don't underestimate the effect flystrike can have on the reproductive performance of your ewes, especially two toothers.

We have come across a number of cases in recent years where outbreaks of flystrike later in the summer were associated with quite poor two tooth scanning results. A vet practice in Hawkes Bay, which offers its own sheep scanning service, reported that only 20% of ewes that were observed to have flystrike wounds (including very small ones) were found to be pregnant at scanning.

Flystrike Control

Along with minimising some of the flystrike risk factors, as described above, control of flystrike may involve the use of chemicals, both for prevention and treatment. Please refer to page 4 for an outline of the options available.

Flystrike Problems Widespread this Summer

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There is a wide range of flystrike control options available, with products varying based on the chemical class, application method, length of protection and whether they are useful for treating existing infestations or for prevention only. Some products are solely aimed at fly control, others cover lice as well. The following table contains some of the more popular brands and are all available through your Clutha Vets branch.

PRODUCT	Application Method	Chemical Class	Length of Protection	Mixing Rate	Meat WHP
Cyroshield	Jetting	Insect growth regulator	6 weeks	1L to 1000L water	7 days
			12 weeks	2L to 1000L water	
Cyrex	Jetting	Insect growth regulator and Spinosyn	Up to 12 weeks	2L to 1000 L water	7 days
Zapp Encore	Pour-on	Insect growth regulator and Neonicotinoid	8 weeks	N/A	56 days
Magnum	Pour-on	Insect growth regulator	8 weeks	N/A	Nil
Extinosad	Jetting	Spinosyn	2-4 weeks	1L to 1000L water	Nil
Seraphos	Jetting	Organo-phosphate	Not stated on label	1L to 1250L water	14 days

Comments and Recommendations

- Insect growth regulators (IGRs) are very safe for humans and animals and are now the most commonly used compounds for fly control. Cyromazine (as found in Cyrex and Cyroshield) is one of the newer generation of IGRs and there is minimal resistance to this active ingredient in New Zealand flies. While great for flystrike prevention, IGRs are not designed to quickly kill existing maggot infestations. However, Cyrex and Zapp Encore both contain additional ingredients for this purpose, making them useful for treating sheep that have already been struck, as well as for preventing new infections.
- Shearing lambs and ewes is a great way to minimise flystrike as fly eggs are a lot less likely to survive due to exposure to sunlight and desiccation. So, if you are planning on shearing soon, but require protection until you do so, choose a product with a shorter period of protection. Shearing will remove any remaining chemical so there is no advantage spending more on a long acting product and then shearing it off a month later!
- Similarly the shorter acting products are the obvious choice if looking to protect your works lambs at this time of the year. You are only likely to require a short period of protection and shorter acting products tend to come with shorter (or nil) meat withholding periods (although there is some variation here based on the chemical class involved).
- If applying flystrike products through a jetting race ensure that you allow for a minimum of 2 litres of solution per animal
- Many flystrike products (including the bottom four on the chart above) also offer lice protection. Unfortunately however, the ideal time to prevent flystrike is not usually the optimal time to control lice. Farmers who try to cover both in one application often do a poor job of at least one! Our advice is to treat for fly at the appropriate time of year (from late spring through to late summer) and look to deal with the lice separately; the ideal time will depend on your shearing dates as well as the time of year.

Animal Health Reminders

Urgent Reminder: Have you ordered your Toxovax?

All sheep in New Zealand are at risk of suffering pregnancy loss due to toxoplasmosis. Despite plenty of testing there is yet to be found a sheep farm in this country that does not have the toxo parasite present! Vaccinating your maiden ewes (either hoggets or two toothers) with Toxovax is the best way to prevent this devastating disease.

We would like to remind you that, being a live vaccine with a short shelf life, Toxovax is made to order only. It must be given at least four weeks before the rams go out. If you have not yet placed your order please give your Clutha Vets clinic a call ASAP to ensure that you do not miss out.

Salmonella alert!

During the last week we have been involved with several cases of salmonellosis in ewe flocks. The typical finding is the sudden appearance of ten to twenty dead or dying ewes. Some usually have a small amount of the characteristic pale yellow/green scour. If left unchecked an outbreak usually continues for two weeks or more, so the death toll can mount quite quickly. Weaning time is a common time for salmonella outbreaks; the sudden change in diet, when ewes are weaned and put on "clean up duty" around the farm, can trigger a rapid multiplication of the bacteria in their intestines.

Use of the Salvexin+B vaccine can be very effective in nipping the outbreak in the bud, so if you are experiencing unexplained deaths in your ewes contact the clinic ASAP; the sooner you get a diagnosis and begin vaccinating, the fewer ewes you will lose

Time to get your rams checked

The Clutha Vets sheep team has just started our annual "ram runs". Originally set up to identify and eliminate brucellosis in the region's ram flocks, the ram runs involve palpation of the testicles and associated structures of your rams. Thankfully brucellosis is a lot less common these days, but is not yet completely eliminated; we found a couple of infected flocks in the last three or four years. We need to keep the pressure on to prevent it flaring up again, so if you have not already done so, please give your nearest clinic a call to book in a visit.

As well as brucellosis these examinations are a good way to identify a range of other abnormalities that can affect your rams' ability to get ewes in lamb.

Checking the effectiveness of your worm drench

As drench resistance becomes more common we urge all sheep farmers to carry out a post drench check to see how the drench you are using this season is performing. The recommended time to take a look is 10 to 14 days after drenching. All we need are ten faecal samples (about a heaped tablespoon each) from the lambs in question, which you can drop into your nearest clinic.

Teaser rams

If your teasers are getting a bit past it, or if you are contemplating hogget mating for the first time, act now and arrange for a few rams to be vasectomised. To ensure that the teasers are completely infertile we recommend getting the procedure done at least six weeks before you are planning on introducing them to your ewes/hoggets. Any age rams are OK, but vasectomising ram lambs is the most cost effective approach as you will have them for plenty of years to come.

Accredited velvet drug and record book returns

For those farmers who are accredited to velvet your own stags, remember that one of the requirements of the programme is that your drug record book, along with any unused drugs, needs to be dropped off at the clinic by the end of March. And please also note that this requirement applies to those of you accredited to velvet your spikers only, as well as those velveting adult stags. There is a specific section of the drug record book to record spiker velveting episodes where NaturO rings are used.

B12 supplementation

Pasture cobalt availability is typically at its lowest level over the December to February period, so this is also the time when your lambs' liver reserves of vitamin B12 are likely to be running low, especially if they have not had any supplementation for six weeks or more. Similarly, for those people using a half dose (0.5ml) of Smartshot (long acting B12) at tailing, the benefit gained will be wearing off about now. If keen to check the B12 status of your lambs, please give your nearest Clutha Vets clinic a call and we can arrange to have some testing done when your next draft of lambs heads off to the works.

Dog Breeding: Common Queries

By Catherine Copland

Does my pregnant bitch need a vaccination?

Bitches do not need a booster vaccination during pregnancy. They are not the same as cows and sheep and do not need an extra vaccination to boost antibody levels in the offspring.

There is a risk when giving a vaccination during pregnancy, whether the vaccine is licensed for use during pregnancy or not. Occasionally animals may develop a fever and become unwell after vaccination and this can affect the pregnancy.

Adult dogs require a booster vaccination against Parvovirus, Distemper and Infectious Hepatitis one year after their puppy vaccinations, and every three years thereafter.

If your bitch is due a booster it should be done before you put her in pup. If she has had a vaccination in the previous three years she does not need another during pregnancy.

If your bitch is in pup and overdue a vaccination, it is best to weigh up the risks and benefits of vaccination during pregnancy with your vet.

What should I feed my bitch during pregnancy and lactation?

Clutha Vets recommend the following foods for late pregnancy (from 6-7 weeks after mating) and throughout lactation:

- Royal Canin Maxi Starter or Maxi Puppy Active for Huntaways
- Royal Canin Medium Starter or Medium Puppy for Heading Dogs
- Eukanuba Premium Performance Sport
- Blackhawk Large Breed Puppy for Huntaways
- Blackhawk Medium Breed Puppy for Heading Dogs
- Hills Medium Breed Puppy for Huntaways and Heading Dogs

Please note it is not recommended to feed Royal Canin Energy 4800 during pregnancy. It can lead to oversized pups due to the high energy content.

When should I worm the bitch and her pups?

Pregnant bitches should be wormed about 10 days before their expected whelping date and again two weeks after the pups are born

The pups themselves should be wormed every two weeks, from two to 12 weeks of age and then every month until they're six months of age. After that it's three monthly, as for adult dogs.

Beef Cow Pregnancy Testing

One of our main autumn jobs at Clutha Vets is pregnancy testing beef cows. Yarding mobs of adult beef cattle is not usually a simple job, especially on those more extensive properties. So it is understandable that many of our farmer clients choose to arrange their pregnancy testing for when the cows are going to be in the yards for some other reason e.g. TB testing or weaning.

Fair enough. That works for us too, and, if the only information you are after is which cows are pregnant and which are dry, it doesn't really matter when we do the job over the March to May period. We even tend to do the last few herds in June!

However there may be benefits to you to glean a bit more info from the pregnancy testing exercise. Following are some examples.

It may be helpful to be able to winter your earlier calving cows separately from the later ones, especially if feed is anticipated to be a bit tight in the spring and you can stretch it out a bit by keeping part of the herd on their winter block a bit longer. If we carry out your scanning early enough we can age the pregnancies to help with this.

If you tend to get quite a few sets of twins it can be helpful to identify those at scanning. The extra energy and protein requirements of carrying twins usually leads to these cows losing a lot of condition in late pregnancy, increasing the risk of metabolic disease and/or pregnancy loss. You can reduce this impact if you know who your twin bearing cows are, and winter them on better feed. You can also keep a closer eye on them at calving, as twin bearers are more likely to need some assistance. As with pregnancy aging, finding twins requires that the cows are scanned within the first three months of pregnancy.

To avoid the demand for killing space that we usually see in late autumn, it may be worthwhile being able to get at least some of your dries (and maybe your latest calving cows) off to the works early—another reason to scan a bit earlier.

If you are interested in getting some more information at scanning time, as in the examples above, give the clinic a call and we can help work out the optimum time to do the job, based on your mating dates and the information you hope to gain.

Depending on the length of your mating period it may be that the pregnancies of those cows conceiving the latest will not be advanced enough for us to pick them up if scanning early. In such cases we can pop back out at a later date and re-scan the "dries" to differentiate the latest calvers from the true dries. Alternatively you might be comfortable culling the latest calving cows anyway.

Winners! Winners! Winners!

Congratulations to the following lucky clients for winning in recent Clutha Vets product promotions;

- Mark Shore (Clydevale) who won a **Multi Drawer 297pc Tool Kit** in our Alleva drench (Boss and Turbo) promotion
- Rodger Tweed (Waitahuna) and Peter Craig (Clydevale) who each won a **Nespresso Coffee Machine** after purchasing Smartshot
- Our **“Take A Mate Fishing—Stewart Island”** winners (after buying Alleva drenches)
 - ⇒ Todd Rowland (Puerua)
 - ⇒ Mark Ritchie (Greenfield)
 - ⇒ Errol Clark (Milton)
 - ⇒ Simon McAtamney (Greenfield)
 - ⇒ Tom Willocks (Benhar)
 - ⇒ Hamish McDougall (Owaka)

Thank you very much to all who participated and supported Clutha Vets.

Promoting Resistance Status

As concerns about drench resistance are growing we are finding additional benefits to learning the drench resistance status of your property, over and above knowing what drench groups you should use yourself.

When farms go on the market some potential buyers are keen to learn the resistance status of properties they are interested in. And, for farmers who already have a high degree of drench resistance, it can be advantageous to source animals from farms with much lower levels of resistance. .

In response to these areas of interest Clutha Vets have developed a certificate that we can issue once a client has completed a Faecal Egg Count Reduction Test (FECRT). A bit like a report card, the certificate is a quick way to illustrate your current drench resistance status to potential buyers of your farm or livestock.

Please get in touch if you would like to learn more, or if you are keen to carry out a FECRT this season.

Retail Ramblings: Summer Promos

Zoetis Vaccines and Drenches

Buy local and support local: collect a **\$50 local butchery voucher** whenever your purchase any of:

- 2 x Troika 20L triple oral sheep drench
- 4 x Ultravac 500ml,
- 1x Dectomax or Dectomax-V 500ml injectable cattle drench

Alleva Drenches

- Get a **summer shirt** with every drum of Boss Triple oral sheep drench

Boehringer Ingelheim Drenches

- Grab a **DeWalt cordless power tool** on selected cattle products.
- Matrix sheep oral drench is back! Along with a **free shirt** on every drum!

Your Vets

Balclutha Clinic

Jason Darwen	BVSc
Rob Mills	BVSc
Hamish Moore	BVSc
Catherine Copland	BVM&S
Peter Heslip	BVSc, MVM
Steven Butler	BVSc, PGDipVSc
Andrew Roe	BVSc, MANZCVS
David Exton	BVSc
Eckard Abrie	BVSc
Darius Tan	BVSc
Anneke Muller	BVSc
Wing Szeto	BVSc
Dana Marais	BVSc
Sophie Harding	BVM BVSc
Hayden Linton	BVSc
Chase Jordan	BVSc

Milton and Lawrence Clinics

Sid Taylor	BVSc, MANZCVS
Annie Jackson	BVSc
Martha O'Connor	MVB
Bevan Topham	BVSc
Anna Burrell	BVSc
Sam Howarth	BVSc
Alisa McDonald	BVSc
Sam Lewis	BVSc, MSc MANZCVS
Sam Looney	BVSc
Emma Shaw	BVSc