

CLUTHA VETS SHEEP & BEEF FARMER NEWSLETTER



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Clinic News

Annie Jackson

March has marched on, and by the time you receive this the rams will be about to go out, if not already out. Hopefully, you get a chance to take a well-earned breather before the preparations for winter begin.

As we travel around the region, it is great to see that many farms are in a much better state than this time last year, thanks to the autumn rains and the resulting pasture growth.

Our Clutha Vets team has been busy with annual ram checks, beef pregnancy testing, and FECRT testing. Additionally, this year we have been offering free blood selenium testing for ewe flocks. Andrew Roe and Emma Shaw are collating the results, and some preliminary information is covered on page 3. With most attention placed on growing your lambs and hoggets as best you can, ewes and rams can often become the “forgotten mob,” over the summer, and so selenium levels can easily slip into deficiency. Keep an eye out for updates on this important issue.

On the Clutha Vets front, we are pleased to welcome our new Massey University graduate vets, Rebecca and Mikey, who are settling in well both in the clinic and the wider community. The transition from university to rural veterinary work is a big one, and we truly appreciate the support and kindness shown by our clients and farmers. A strong start can shape a vet's career for many years, and we hope to see our young vets follow in the footsteps of John Smart and Sid Taylor, who each dedicated over 40 years to the profession!

A big thank you to everyone who attended our pre-tup seminars. We always welcome feedback on how we can improve these sessions - whether it's the timing, topics, locations, or speakers. We are already planning our winter and spring seminars, and we'd love to hear what topics you would find most valuable.

As always, if you have any questions or need veterinary support, don't hesitate to get in touch.

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Autumn Worm Watch

Monitoring worms in ewes and two-tooths

We have been heartened by the popularity of our faecal egg counting service again this season, with many clients checking the need for a pre-tup drench, in their two toothed and mixed age ewes. To encourage such monitoring Clutha Vets have been providing free egg counts when you purchase drums of drench. This promotion has proven to be very popular, with the free tests being put to good use.

As far as the MA ewes are concerned, not many mobs have been found to have needed a drench this season. But quite a few two-tooth mobs have had worm burdens high enough to warrant a pre-tup clean out.

Based on our experiences over the last two or three years, we encourage you to take another check of your ewes' worm level some time between mating and the start of winter. In recent years, thanks to the dry summers, many two tooth flocks had low worm burdens before mating, but some then went on to suffer the effects of heavy worm levels during the winter. Autumn rain, coupled with the continuing warm temperatures often leads to a spike in infective worm larvae on your pasture, which can sometimes be high enough to affect adult stock.

Lungworm in cattle and deer

Of all the various worm-related scenarios we encounter on our farms, lungworm is probably the most devastating. Calves and weaner deer can go from being healthy to dead in a very short time as their airways get choked up by masses of worms.

Autumn is the time of year that lungworm typically rears its head so it is important to be diligent, especially in the more intensive beef finishing and dairy grazing systems. If using an oral drench it can be dangerous stretching the interval out beyond four weeks in the autumn. Properties with a history of lungworm should consider switching to a combination pour-on or injectable product at this time year for better lungworm control.

Knock-out drenching of lambs & hoggets

Check out the article on Page 5, to learn about the strategy of "knock out" drenching and how spending a bit extra money on lamb drenches once a year can help protect the useful life of your regular drenches, thus averting the need to use the more expensive products routinely.

Salvexin+B in Short Supply

The devastating salmonellosis outbreak that has recently struck a large number of southern dairy herds has been well publicised. Thought to be triggered by the very wet conditions over spring, the epidemic has mainly affected farms in Southland, with large numbers of cows getting sick and some dying. However a number of properties in South Otago have also been affected.

Not surprisingly the outbreak has seen a huge increase in demand for the Salmonella vaccine, Salvexin+B, the same vaccine that is used in ewes to reduce the impact of Salmonella Brandenburg. And, to put further pressure on supply, the manufacturer recently reported a failure of the latest batch of the vaccine!

Thankfully the retail team at Clutha Vets predicted the increased demand early and we believe that we have secured enough Salvexin+B to meet our clients' needs. However, to enable us to allocate the vaccine to all those who require it, we encourage anyone planning to vaccinate their ewes this winter, to give us a call and let us know how many doses you would like.

If you have any question or concerns, or would just like to discuss salmonellosis and its prevention, please give your Clutha Vets clinic a call.

Pre-winter Hogget Protection

Every winter we encounter several cases of sudden death in ewe hoggets, usually when grazing winter crops. And commonly the cause is pulpy kidney (or a similar clostridial disease), even in cases where the hoggets were vaccinated as young lambs.

While it is often assumed that, after lambs get their two shots of "5 in 1", they will be protected for a whole year, this is not always the case. In situations of high clostridial disease risk, particularly the grazing of high quality diets such as kale and fodder beet, hoggets may need another booster before the twelve months is up.

And nowadays, with most farmers starting their lamb vaccination programme at tailing, it may be seven or eight months between the completion of their initial vaccination course and those animals going onto their winter crop.

If this scenario fits your situation we encourage you to consider giving your ewe hoggets a third dose of 5 in 1, some time in the next month or two.

Knock Out Drenching; Eliminating Those Resistant Worms

By Andrew Roe

As we reported in our December 2024 issue, we have detected quite a high level of drench resistance on South Otago sheep farms in recent years. The biggest concern is the fact that triple combination drenches (Boss Triple, Matrix etc) were found to not be fully effective on nearly 25% of those properties we have tested in the last four years.

There is a range of worm management strategies that you can put in place to delay the onset of drench resistance on your property. One technique, relevant to this time of year, is termed “Knock Out” drenching.

Even on farms where the commonly used drenches have been shown to be working well (achieving better than 95% worm egg count reduction) there is likely to be a small number of worms that manage to survive the drench. This is not necessarily a problem as long as we keep these drench survivors at very low levels, minimising the likelihood of resistant worms breeding with other resistant worms and increasing the proportion of resistant worms on the farm.

This is where knock out drenching comes in. By substituting your regular drench for one of the “novel” drenches, namely Startect or Zolvix Plus, for one drenching episode per season, you can clean out that small number of worms that have survived the earlier drenches. To get the full benefit it is important to treat all lambs still on the farm (both finishing lambs and ewe replacements).

As far as the timing is concerned, you are likely to gain the biggest impact by carrying out this knock out drench in early to mid autumn, as this is typically the time of year when worm numbers in our lambs are at their highest. We are aware that some farmers have been employing the strategy later in the season, aiming to give their ewe lambs a good clean out before going onto their winter rotation. This timing also makes the job a little cheaper as, with all your works lambs hopefully gone by then, there are less animals to use these more expensive drenches on.

There is nothing wrong with this approach; it certainly gives your hoggets the best chance of going onto their winter crop completely worm free.

However, from the perspective of delaying drench resistance as long as possible, early winter is a bit late to be carrying out the knock out drench. Bringing it forward to earlier in the autumn will nip any problems in the bud a lot sooner, eliminating any drench resistant worms before they’ve contributed too many new generations of resistant worm eggs to your pastures.

We appreciate that Startect and Zolvix Plus are quite a bit more costly than the drenches you are routinely using. But it is a lot cheaper to use these products once a year, than to develop triple drench resistance and have to use them as your regular lamb drench all season.

We would love to have a chat with you if you would like to discuss knock out drenching or any other aspects of worm control and drench resistance prevention.



Bionic Making a Come Back!

There is a very good chance that the Bionic Plus drench capsules will be available this season! A very good chance; not 100%, but if we were at the race course it would be worth a flutter!

They will probably be in limited supply, be a little more expensive and the label will read a little differently.

Bionic Capsules are a great tool to help those stock in the greatest of need – pregnant hoggets, thinner ewes and triplets, for example.

Their return will hopefully mean that Clutha Vets will again have ALL the pre-lamb tools for you this season.

Feel free to discuss your options with Roly or Lisa, or your vet.

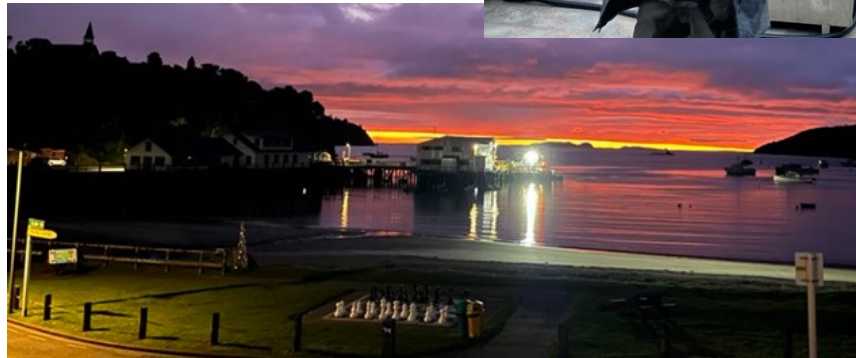
Stewart Island Delivers for South Otago Farmers

While most of us were occupying ourselves close to home on Otago Anniversary weekend, eight lucky Clutha Vets clients, and their mates, had a memorable couple of days in and around Stewart Island, after winning their spot on the trip via our hugely popular "Take a Mate Fishing" promotion.



Thank you very much to all those who purchased Alleva sheep or cattle drenches during the spring/summer, earning yourselves a place in the draw for the trip.

Maybe your name will be drawn out next time!



Retail Ramblings: Autumn Promos

Cattle Injectables and Pour-Ons:

- Get a **BI Anorak** with selected packs of **Eclipse Injection**
- Take home an **8lt Air Fryer** when you purchase a **5lt Boss** or **Turbo Pour On**.

Sheep Drenches

- Grab a **Farm Strong BI Shirt** with every drum of **Matrix**
- We are also running a **new shirt promo** on purchases of **Boss Triple 20lt**
- Buy **2 x 5lt Zolvix Plus** and receive a free **backpack/drench gun combo pack**
- Great price on some short dated **Troika Triple** drench - **\$483.26** excl gst, per 20L drum
- Purchase a drum of **Triplemax Low Dose** and go into the draw to win a DeWalt petrol water blaster!



Your Vets

Balclutha Clinic

Jason Darwen	BVSc
Hamish Moore	BVSc
Catherine Copland	BVM&S
Peter Heslip	BVSc, MVM
Steven Butler	BVSc, PGDipVSc
Andrew Roe	BVSc, MANZCVS
David Exton	BVSc
Darius Tan	BVSc
Anneke Muller	BVSc
Wing Szeto	BVSc
Hayden Linton	BVSc
Chase Jordan	BVSc
Rebecca Everingham	BVSc
Michael Sole	BVSc, BSc

Milton and Lawrence Clinics

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