

# Goatvetoz Summer Newsletter

Goat Veterinary Consultancies - goatvetoz

Summer 2016/17

## FAMACHA® & Worm Control Course

I held a very successful FAMACHA® training course in Townsville in October. We had 36 goat owner students and also offered spots to all the James Cook vet school students who wanted to attend, in exchange for help on the day. The Vet School offered us a lecture theatre and their goats and yards as well.

All students passed their practical and got their certificates and were able to purchase FAMACHA® cards.



The Townsville and District Goat Club arranged the course and made a small profit, even after my airfares & fees were taken into account. They also got more members for their club and Facebook page. The collated feedback was very flattering to both the club and myself. The photo above shows Brian Venten, the club president, introducing me.

All students had to look at goats and decide, based on Bath's 5 Point Check® examination, whether the goats should be drenched or not. These 5 points were developed by Dr Bath from South Africa and are:

- 1 FAMACHA® score (eye mucous membrane colour)
- 2 Condition score
- 3 Scouring (loose faeces)
- 4 Sleekness of the coat
- 5 Bottle jaw

While faecal egg counts are the best method of determining if goats need worming, these can get expensive if done all the time. Frequent use of the 5 Point Check (c) can determine the best time to send away faecal samples.

The aim of both these tests is to identify goats for targeting treatments. This means only drenching the goats that need it.

Everyone knows about the 80:20 rule and in relation to goats and worms, around 20% of goats produce 80% of the worm eggs and have high worm counts. Drenching only those goats that need it means that the development of drench resistant worms is less likely. Learn more here [www.wormboss.com.au](http://www.wormboss.com.au)

## Heat Stress

Climate change is making summers in many Australian states have record high temperatures and severe heat for longer periods. Goats, like all animals, can suffer for heat stress, especially if fat or very young. Any goat that is confined or being transported is especially vulnerable.

All goats need well ventilated shade and access to clean water. Don't underestimate the water needs of your goats as these can climb to 4 to 5 L or more per day, depending on the type of feed and their milk levels.

Goats with heat stress will be in distress and have a high respiratory and pulse rates (normal respiratory rates are between 15-30 per minute` for adults and 20-40 for kids & 75-95 for pulse rates). Body temperatures will also be high.

Immediate first aid is needed to reduce the goat's temperature with the application of water to cool them by evaporation i.e. hose or wet them and put in front of fans until the goat's temperature drops. Don't drape in wet towels as towels can retain heat.

## Liver Fluke

If you thought barber's pole worms were bad, wait until you learn about the liver fluke worms. These are some facts about liver flukes:

- Affect a wide range of species including goats, sheep, native marsupials, calves, horses and even people, so rotational grazing won't help
- Their life cycle is complex and requires a special type of snail as an intermediate host
- An individual liver fluke can live for a long time - over 10 years
- They are hermaphrodites
- A single worm can produce 25,000 -50,000 eggs a day
- As adults live in the bile duct causing blood loss, eggs are only intermittently in the faeces (i.e. when bile is released from the gall bladder)
- Eggs are large and hence sink in normal worm egg counts so a normal faecal test won't pick them up
- It is theoretically possible to get liver fluke by buying in hay with the metacercaria that have emerged from host snails where it was grown. These metacercaria can last for months, even on dry pastures or hay.

- Once the immature liver fluke enter an animal, they migrate through the liver looking for the bile duct. The damage they cause can cause sudden death if large numbers or if only a few, scaring of the liver.
- Can cause severe anaemia and bottle jaw
- Irresponsible people who release their aquariums into local creeks are spreading the host snails
- Host snails can survive up to a year in mud.
- There is already resistance to drenches.
- Liver flukes have spines and also don't have an anus (using their mouth for eating & defaecating)

As with barber's pole worms, management of the worm lifecycle is critical. This means fencing off wet areas which have snails. Another reason to replace bore drains with poly pipe and have water sources rather than allow access to creeks and dams. Strategic drenches are also critical.

Early detection is essential so check the livers of all dead goats. The worms are easily seen in the bile ducts, as are the scars on the livers. Learn more here <http://www.wormboss.com.au/worms/flukes/liver-fluke.php>

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## Joint Ill

It is critical that the naval cords of kids are dipped a couple of times in iodine (7% or surgical scrub iodine) in the first 24 hours. In the naval cord, are the blood vessels that go straight from the placenta to inside the kid. Any bacteria that climbs up the naval cord can get into the kid's blood stream and then to all the joints. Once in the joints, they settle and grow and the joints swell and become hot. This is called joint ill. Unfortunately the bacteria are somewhat protected from the kid's white blood cells and immune system. Antibiotics also find it difficult to get access into these infected joints and this makes joint ill very difficult to treat.

One hint is to fill small glass spice jars with iodine and dip the naval cords in these jars. Don't use plastic bottles as some plastics can react with iodine. Also take care not to get the iodine on any male kid's prepuce - wipe any off with paper towel. Iodine can be severe on sensitive areas.

### Do you get my Tweets?

Do you use twitter on your mobile phone? What was your favourite Tweet last season? Was it a recipe or health advice? See all my tweets at [www.twitter.com/goatvet](http://www.twitter.com/goatvet)