

Goatveto Summer Newsletter

Goat Veterinary Consultancies - goatveto

Summer 2024/25

Vaccinations

Some goat diseases are very difficult to treat e.g. tetanus and some act so quickly that goats are generally just found dead

(enterotoxaemia).

Vaccinations are therefore essential.

If the does were not vaccinated 4 weeks before their kidding date, then I recommend kids get done at 3 weeks (earliest time according to the label) and 7 weeks. If mothers were vaccinated then 4 and 8 weeks their colostrum will be full of antibodies that the kids absorb in the first 24 hours and circulate in their blood stream. These maternal antibodies in the colostrum however are often gone by about 6 weeks of age. Kids don't get protected until after the 2nd vaccination. This website on lambs explains but ignore the bit about annual revaccinations <https://www2.zoetis.com.au/livestock-solutions/sheep/maximize-lamb-productivity/best-practice-vaccination-for-lambs>

Kids are more prone to enterotoxaemia especially at around weaning but goats of any age can die from it. Revaccinate goats at least every 6 months, more often if being fed a lot of grain or if pastures are lush.

Re 5 in 1 - this gives no protection against cheesy gland (CL) but protects against tetanus, enterotoxaemia and other less common clostridial diseases.

Re Glanvac 3 vs Glanvac 6 - my reason for recommending Glanvac 3 is from the reference below that shows you get better protection in goats if use the minimum number of antigens and not the multi-vaccines with 8 or more disease antigens. I only recommend Glanvac 6 if in a liver fluke area (hence may get black disease) or have confirmed cases of the other clostridial diseases such as black leg or big head on the property. If using Glanvac 6 then vaccinate 3 to 4 times a year.

Liver Fluke

How do I know if I am in a liver fluke area? Vets generally know if in their area e.g. in Qld I would be concerned if the goats were in the Mary Valley or Springsure. There are certain snails needed for the liver fluke life cycle & you can tell by looking for these specific snails. Unfortunately some irresponsible people release aquarium snails into creeks & so these can possibly cause liver fluke in new areas. Unfortunately liver fluke only shed their eggs intermittently & also the eggs are big & heavy so need a different solution to count the eggs & not the saturated salt solution generally used. This means that liver fluke eggs can easily be missed in a single faecal test. A blood test (ELISA) is also available & this can pick up the early stage of liver fluke disease when immature liver fluke migrate through the liver and cause a lot of damage if numbers are high. The damaged liver can also allow *Clostridium novyi* spores to develop & cause black disease.

See Injection site reactions and antibody responses in sheep and goats after the use of multivalent clostridial vaccines by D. S. Green, M. J. Green, M. H. Hillyer and K. L. Morgan Vet Rec 1987 Vol. 120 Issue 18 Pages 435-9

Johne's disease vaccine

Australia has Gudair® vaccine registered by Zoetis for sheep and goats, although in goats it is only registered as 'an aid in the control of Johne's disease in goats'. In sheep it is registered to reduce clinical cases, deaths and shedding. If goats are vaccinated they can no longer be blood tested for Johne's disease and only faecal tests can be used. It is expensive (well over \$1000 for 250 doses) but only 1 dose is needed. Kids are done between 4 to 16 weeks. A special safety vaccination gun must be used as if accidentally injected into a person's finger then there are serious consequences and the finger may need to be amputated. If injected too deep into the kid, there may also be complications and the recommended vaccination gun has only a 6mm (¼ inch) needle.

Gudair® vaccinations are recommended in any goat herd that has had a case of

Johne's disease confirmed by post-mortem or faecal culture. This should be combined with snatch birthing and other control measures. It is also recommended if at high risk e.g. if downstream from a dairy cow farm in Victoria and the goats graze on pastures that have been flooded.

Barbervax® vaccine

Barbervax® is the first vaccine against a parasite, in this case Barbers pole (*Haemonchus contortus*) worms. In South Africa, these worms are called wire worms so the vaccine is called Wirevax. Like clostridial vaccines, two injections 3-4 weeks apart are needed to get immunity but this immunity is only short lived and lasts only 6 weeks so multiple injections are needed. It is only registered for sheep but can be prescribed for goats. Unfortunately it makes goats slightly unwell for a day or two after each vaccination.

Do you use X, Threads or Tumbler?

See all my tweets at <https://x.com/goatvet> If you have decided to leave Twitter/X you can follow me on Bluesky, Tumblr or Threads as goatvetoz.

Tapeworms

Tapeworms reproduce by dropping off their last body segment and these look like grains of cooked rice in the faeces. These tapeworm segments are full of eggs. Eggs can be seen in a normal worm egg count but only if a segment has broken open in the faecal sample sent to the lab.

Many authorities think that tapeworms have no effect on the health of goats and sheep. The normal drenches don't kill tapeworms so you need a drench with praziquantel in it - but these drenches eg Firstmectin only come in large sizes. However the good news is that you don't need to treat as long as the kids are in good condition and get their enterotoxaemia vaccinations. Valbazen (Albendazole) has some effect but doesn't kill the head of the tapeworm so it regrows. Bioworma only acts on roundworm larvae, not flatworms like tapeworms.

In Victorian times women used to buy mail order tapeworm eggs to keep themselves thin and attractive. This is now illegal.