



TOPVETS

Moosletter

February 2013

Facial Eczema Season Spore Counting

It's that time of year again...Weekly spore counting has already begun so keep an eye out for the counts published in The Age. These give an indication of risk but counts can vary between farms and even between paddocks. We can perform spore counts for your farm. All we need is a grass sample.

Grass Sampling method:

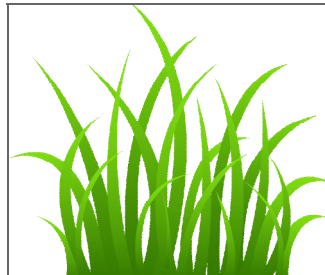
Pick a warm slope as an indicator site. Paddocks that are north or west facing usually have higher counts because they get the afternoon sun. Don't sample under hedges or shelter.

Cut pasture samples about 1 cm from the ground, keeping soil out of the sample.

Sample 5 places in the paddock at even spaces apart.

Pick about 60g of grass. (A loosely filled 2L ice cream container is about right.)

We need to count the spores on the same day or the next morning after the sample was taken.



Tb update

The recent diagnosis of Tuberculosis on a property in Awanui, the third case in the area in three years, is a serious blow to the Far North and it yet again puts our region back into infected status.

The Animal Health Board (AHB) has declared that annual testing is to be performed on all farms within a 10 km radius from the infected farm.

Wild animal surveillance (possums and pigs) will be a high priority in the Awanui area.

Possums are the main source of infection in cattle in NZ, but Possums have never been identified as a cause in Northland.

Happy New Year and welcome to the first newsletter of 2013.

This month we take the opportunity to welcome Rikki Ciolek to the team.

Rikki is a graduate vet who has joined us from the other side of the ditch having graduated from Melbourne University. She has a particular interest in Dairy and Beef Practice. Welcome Rikki.

Our Vet team now comprises of Lloyd, Michelle, Natalie and Rikki.

On a sadder note, Sam will be leaving us at the end of February for greener pastures in Aussie. We all wish her the best.

I N S I D E

- Facial Eczema Season Spore Counting
- TB Update
- Pregnancy Testing Considerations
- Barbers Pole In Sheep
- Quad Bike Safety
- Macrocytic Lactone Toxicity in Dogs
- Buying Replacements
- Quad Bike Safety
- Brief News



Pregnancy Testing Considerations

We are busy at the moment with pregnancy testing. To make the day of testing go smoother there are several things to consider in advance.

- Staff—an extra pair (or more) of hands goes a long way to help things run smoother.
- Platform -If you are providing a platform make sure it has good grip, is wide enough and is stable.
- Herringbone sheds—Consider bringing in smaller mobs at a time to reduce the amount of time the cows are standing in the yard.
- Marker spray—ensure you got enough to clearly mark empties and re-checks
- Recording system—we can input herd results straight into MINDA on our hand held device.
- Ear tags—are they readable, are there double-ups or missing tags? Easily read ear tags are crucial when using Minda mobile as every cow needs to be clearly identified promptly.
- Information required.- If you require detailed mating information i.e. exact weeks in calf, then it is important that we test the herd 5– 6 weeks after AI / bull mating. We can accurately age pregnancies from 5 to 13 weeks, but after 13 weeks fetuses cannot be accurately aged.
If you are only interested in your empties then timing is not critical.



Barber's Pole Worm In Sheep

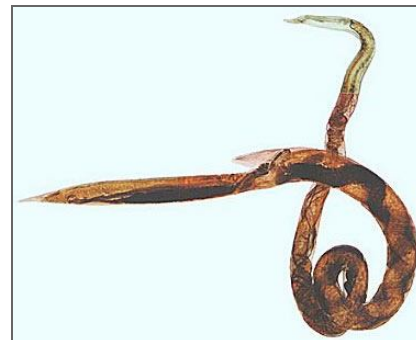
The blood sucking Barber's Pole worm can be potentially devastating to sheep flocks. High larval levels can cause significant outbreaks which can result in loss of production or even death. Sometimes the disease can be chronic, causing ill thrift.

The risk is particularly high with warm, dry weather followed by rain. The main risk period tends to be between January and May.

Barber's pole worm, more formally known as *Haemonchus contortus* sucks blood from the animal's abomasum. This blood loss can lead to anaemia.

Signs of Barber's Pole infection can include :

- Pale gums
- Ill thrift
- Lagging behind the group
- Shallow, fast breathing
- Bottle-jaw (fluid swelling under jaw)
- Death



Most drenches are effective against Barber's Pole worm however many only treat the current infection. Because new parasites are constantly being picked up it is a good idea to choose a drench with persistent action against new infection. Genesis Ultra Hi-Min or Exodus are good choices when targeting Barber's Pole.

Macrocytic Lactone Toxicity in Dogs

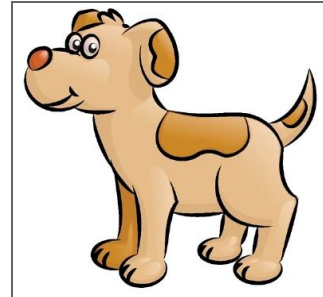
Ivermectin and abamectin are used extensively in cattle drenches in NZ and are members of the Macrocytic Lactone family of drenches. They can cause toxicity in dogs either due to dogs consuming/being administered excessive amounts or due to increased sensitivity of some breeds.

Collie and collie cross breeds, rough coated collies, Australian/English shepherds can be especially sensitive due to a gene mutation that allows these substances to cross the blood brain barrier resulting in toxicity even at therapeutic drug doses.

High doses above the therapeutic dose have also been found to cause toxicity in other breeds of dogs without the gene mutation.

Clinical signs of toxicity may include:

- Blindness Excessive salivation
- Depression Wobbliness
- Dilated pupils Coma
- Tremors Death



There is no specific antidote and treatment is supportive. The moral to the story is take care with your dogs around cattle drenches, avoid letting them lick at leftovers etc.

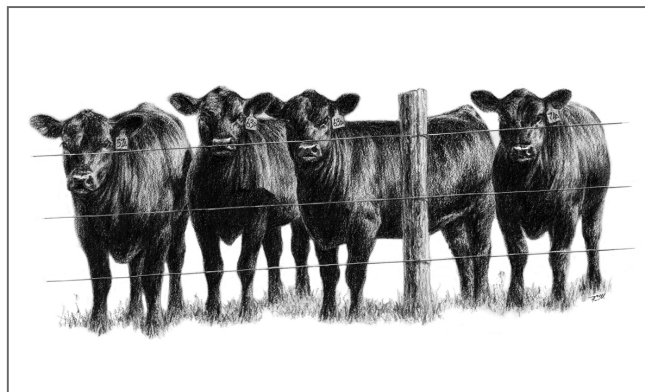
Massey University is currently starting a research project looking into whether Huntaways or heading dogs in NZ carry the mutated gene. There are reports of farm/working dogs dying from exposure but it is unclear whether the deaths were due to an accidental overdose or increased sensitivity.

Buying Replacements

A closed herd is the best policy to prevent introduction of diseases that once established in a herd are difficult if not impossible to remove.

When purchasing replacement capital stock we recommend that apart from the obvious Tb criteria, you request proof of clearance of a number of other diseases.

- BVD - Most Dairy herds and an increasing number of Beef herds test for BVD on an annual basis and can provide a current disease status of their herd.
The purchased stock should be blood tested by the vendors Vet and cleared for BVD virus before arrival on your property.
- Johnes disease.—Our recommendation is to not buy stock from a Johnes positive farm. Ask the vendor for a certificate from his Vet. We can contact the Vet if required.
- Leptospirosis. - Ensure that the stock are up to date with their vaccinations.



Quad Bike Safety

Recently the media have reported a number of serious quad bike accidents resulting in serious injury and death.

Every year around 850 people are injured on farms riding quad bikes. 5 die.

Quad bike injuries are largely preventable—they aren't part of the job.

Guidelines for Safe Riding

- Riders must be trained well enough to do the job.
- Choose the right vehicle for the job
- Wear a helmet
- Don't let kids ride adult quad bikes—they don't have sufficient strength, bodyweight or mental ability to ride safely.
- Keep quad bikes maintained in good condition
- Take care on slopes and rough terrain.
- Don't do tasks that interfere with safe riding
- Recognise dangerous areas by establishing 'no go' zones
- Don't carry passengers
- Stick within carrying and towing load capacities.



Brief News

Lepto Vaccinations

Soon we will be starting to organise our leptospirosis vaccinations again. Vaccination not only protects our cattle but also protects you, your staff and your family. Leptospirosis is a zoonosis, this means humans can be infected after contact with infected animals.

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Cull Cow Liver Profiles

Don't forget if you are sending cull cows to the works there is an opportunity for liver samples to be collected for trace element testing. Let us know if you want this done as we have a request form that needs to go with the animals to the works.



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