

# Eastland Vets Newsletter

Welcome to our Spring newsletter,

The older you get the smarter you are supposed to get. Sadly, I just seem to get more confused in an ever more complicated world. The one thing I do know is that it is becoming increasingly more difficult not to offend someone in a world embracing diversity. Everyone has an opinion, and in a communication rich society they are not scared to air it!

There are some challenges ahead of farming at the moment with a Government determined to introduce unbalanced and extreme policy without due process. It is true the social licence to farm is under increasing threat. NZ trades on its clean green image and we do need to walk the walk and not just talk the talk. Reasonable time frames and realistic targets to reach are necessary if we are to move forward.

Despite this we must not lose sight of the fact that there are many positives for farming currently with a great spell of weather, plenty of grass and lots of lambs about. Prices continue to remain strong and with positive forecasts look likely to remain so for a while yet. Interest rates are at an all-time low, the All Blacks are getting closer to the threepeat and day light saving brings longer evenings. Take some time out to enjoy the opportunity it brings to do some recreational activities with family and friends. Accentuate the positives!

John

## Working Dog Training Day, Wairoa

At the start of September we held a working dog training day with Guy Peacock, a successful dog trialer and New Zealand representative. It was a great day out at Hereheretau Station with attendees learning tricks for training both Huntaways and Heading Dogs. We also had a presentation on hip dysplasia, product giveaways, lunch and a good catch up!



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## Veterinarians Gisborne

### Large Animal

John Meban BVSc  
Jamie Foxley BVSc  
Cleo Rothschild BVSc  
Kate Keating BSc BVMS  
Jess Tait-Jamieson BVSc  
Ann Sutherland BVSc

### Small Animal

Tina Orsler BVSc  
Fiona Irwin BVSc  
Karina Wilde BVSc

## Wairoa

Bridgette van der Merwe  
BVSc Hons

## Contact Details:

### Gisborne Clinic

743 Gladstone Road  
P O Box 829, 4040  
Ph (06) 867 9405  
Email: [gisborne@evs.co.nz](mailto:gisborne@evs.co.nz)

### Wairoa Clinic

46 Freyberg Street  
P O Box 134, 4160  
Ph (06) 838 6099  
Email: [wairoa@evs.co.nz](mailto:wairoa@evs.co.nz)

[www.evs.co.nz](http://www.evs.co.nz)

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# Worms Again

## Sorting the wheat from the chaff.

I can't stop harping on about worms it seems. I will make no bones about it. After undernutrition, worms have the single most impact on animal health and welfare on farm. Sadly, current practices have selected for, and will continue to select for, drench resistance. We need to think differently and change the way we do things to combat these pesky beasts. Over time knowledge improves and recommendations change. Some of the previous ideas no longer hold true but many are still important. Where to start? Some basic principles.

## Feed animals well.

Well fed animals have robust immune systems and can live happily with worms most of the time unless stressed.

## Use effective drenches.

You need to do a FECRT to know which drenches are still working on the worms on your property. Early drench resistance is not visible to the naked eye. By the time you suspect DR there has been significant change in worm genetics to make it trickier to deal with. At the very least do a drench check 10 days after using your chosen product to see that it has worked. A FECRT test is best done on new season's lambs that have not had a drench yet. Draft 100 or so off and run them on a representative paddock until FEC trigger levels are reached (no zeros and >500 avg).

## No single actives.

Use of combination drenches significantly reduces the likelihood of worms being resistant to two or more actives and slows the development of drench resistance.

## Minimise or completely avoid the use of long acting products.

It is well accepted that long acting products have **high** selection pressure for resistance. During the period of their activity only resistant worms can establish and multiply. Susceptibles are unable to establish and dilute resistant genes.

## Use an exit drench after any long-acting product.

Long acting products usually have a long tail effect. This is when in-coming susceptible larvae are killed and resistant larvae can establish and outbreed good worms (susceptible to drench). You are essentially selecting for a resistant population. These need to be taken out with an exit drench, usually Startect or Zolvix plus. Best practice is to check 10 days later to make sure it has worked.

## Create or maintain some worms in refugia.

This can be a difficult concept to grasp. The old idea of moving lambs onto clean pasture is now recognised as being **HIGH** risk for developing drench resistance and should be avoided. Refugia can be created in many ways. You could move animals onto low challenge pasture for a week before drenching them or move them back to where they came from for a week after drenching.

Some animals (5%-10%) could be identified and left undrenched in each mob. Following lambs with untreated animals (ewes) will allow susceptible worms to breed with any surviving the drench process.

## Have a robust quarantine procedure.

Drench all incoming animals with effective drenches before moving onto the grazing platform. It is now recommended to use **four actives** (yes that is not a typo), with the spectre of triple drench resistant parasites on the rise. This means either Startect or Zolvix Plus and a White/Levamisole double combination such as Arrest. The ideal situation is to hold these animals to clean out for at least 24 hours after drenching (with food and water). This is not an easy ask especially if animals have travelled a long distance. An ideal place would be somewhere that animals do not usually graze that can be spelled for a long time (orchard, driveway, mums garden!!). Second best would be a very contaminated paddock to dilute out any surviving worms. Lastly it is wise to do a drench check 10 days down the line to confirm the Q drench has worked. This applies when moving animals from one area of the farm such as the breeding unit to a specialised finishing area that has been spelled for a long time or only had cattle on it (low refugia).



### Keep lamb drenching intervals strictly to 28-30 days (No shorter).

Avoid the temptation to stretch this interval out. Egg out-put from lambs increases exponentially from 30 days onwards. Stretching the drench interval out with routine lamb drenching is likely to lead to a high challenge in late summer/autumn. Very strict lamb drenching at 28 to 30 day intervals will provide some refugia but can also reduce the likelihood of barbers pole issues and the need to use long acting products.

### Incorporate a novel KNOCKOUT drench into your routine lamb drenching in late summer/autumn.

The principle behind this is to knock out any resistant worms that may be hanging in there after routine treatments.

### Avoid drenching older classes of stock unnecessarily.

Well fed ewes can handle worms. Parasites are not the only cause of skinny sheep. Often, tail end ewes are drenched and turned out onto better pasture. Some improve and others don't. Recent work has shown that it is more likely to be something else such as teeth issues, trace element deficiencies, Johne's disease, pleurisy, sub-clinical facial eczema or even mob social pressures that are the cause. Identify these animals somehow and apply a two strikes you're out policy. Get a FEC done to confirm worms are the real problem!

This is not a complete outline. **DON'T** forget to do the **BASICS**. Read labels on drench containers. If it says shake well, make sure you shake well. Store them correctly. This can be especially important with some of the combinations. Use correct drenching technique (full dose over the back of the tongue). Calibrate your drench gun, check it every second race. Clean the gun after every use. Drench to the heaviest sheep. Draft them up into ranges if there is a lot of variability. Lastly seek advice, we are here to help, that is our guarantee!

Happy farming,

John



## Foreign Bodies in Working Dogs

One of the more common and potentially life-threatening conditions seen in our practice is a foreign body obstruction in the intestines. The most commonly seen blockages in working dogs are due to bones or hair/wool, often as a result of scavenging. Signs of an obstruction include: vomiting, abdominal pain, not eating, lethargy, diarrhoea, straining to toilet and changes in behaviour – such as reluctance to work or jump on the truck.

After an examination, a radiograph is generally performed to assess what and where the obstruction is. It is important to note that not all foreign bodies show up on radiographs but there are a number of tools we have to help make a diagnosis.

Although lots of foreign bodies can pass uneventfully through the intestinal tract, if an obstruction occurs, surgical removal is the only treatment. This can have its own complications such as infection or wound breakdown however generally the sooner we can get them to surgery, the more successful the outcome.



## The Dangers of Dog Roll

If you feed dog roll then cut it up into **SMALL** pieces before feeding. Dogs can eat large chunks too fast and it can get stuck in their throat and cause them to choke. The end result is an otherwise healthy dog found dead in its kennel the next morning. Not a nice way to go!

Dog roll cut WAY too big! Aim for 2cm x 2cm sized pieces

## Sudden Death in Lambs

Every year we see cases of sudden death in lambs caused by bacteria from the Clostridium family. The most common of these are pulpy kidney, tetanus, blackleg and malignant oedema. Fast growing lambs are very vulnerable to this group of diseases, especially when undergoing a sudden change in diet. Unfortunately, it is often the best conditioned lambs that are found dead suddenly.

### Prevention is the key!

It is frustrating to see outbreaks of this group of diseases because they are preventable. Clostridial vaccines are cheap and give excellent immunity. Outbreaks can occur when busy farmers either miss preventative vaccinations entirely OR they have not given the vaccinations correctly.

Pregnant ewes which are 5-in-1 vaccinated pre-lamb provide antibodies to their lambs through colostrum (passive immunity), this lasts about 12 weeks. By weaning this immunity has usually disappeared. Weaning or pre-weaning yardings are an important time to start a vaccination programme. For lambs from ewes where no pre-lamb vaccination was given, then docking is the first opportunity to vaccinate. It is crucial to give both the primer shot AND a booster shot 4-6

weeks later to have full cover from this vaccine i.e. if only one 5-in-1 injection is given the lambs are NOT covered and you can expect some sudden deaths.

The 5-in-1 vaccine is a very convenient vaccine to give with monthly worm drenches. As I write this the prime lamb schedule is at \$8.70/kg, so with an average lamb carcass weight of 18kg, one lamb is worth \$156.60. The cost of losing this one lamb pays for 200 lambs to have both a primer and booster vaccination.

There are additional Clostridial vaccines available such as 8-in-1 and 10-in-1 which give protection against further Clostridial pathogens. These may be an option for you if you have unexplained losses later in the season, breed stud stock or are grazing crops or other high energy forages. We encourage discussion with us to find the best vaccination options for your farming system.

Cleo.



**Permit Post  
New Zealand  
Permit No. 131118**



📍 743 Gladstone Rd, PO Box 829, 4040 | **Gisborne**  
☎ 06 867 9405 (all hours)  
✉ [gisborne@evs.co.nz](mailto:gisborne@evs.co.nz)  
📍 46 Freyberg St, PO Box 134, 4160 | **Wairoa**  
☎ 06 838 6099 (all hours)  
✉ [wairoa@evs.co.nz](mailto:wairoa@evs.co.nz)