



# VET notes

YOUR TOTALLY VETS NEWSLETTER ALL ABOUT ANIMALS ON YOUR FARM **NOVEMBER 2010**



## Totally Vets Client Christmas BBQ

Join us on:  
**Friday 17th December**

At:  
**Feilding Clinic  
Manchester Street  
Feilding**

&/or

**Awapuni Clinic  
189 Pioneer Highway  
Palmerston North**

Sometime between noon till late!

We would love to see you.



## Opening the new Feilding premises

**Paul Wiseman**

At the official opening of Totally Vets' new premises in Feilding on Friday 8th October, Simon Power commented that he could identify with a work place where people scrambled over each other in a confined space.

Simon understood this reason for Totally Vets' move into more spacious surrounds and almost seemed envious. "So much of a politician's time and media-reporting is focused on what's wrong in New Zealand. The opportunity to celebrate something positive coming from an organisation with such historic depth in the Manawatu and an emphasis on the region's future was a pleasant change".



Ian McKelvie, Manawatu District Mayor, described Feilding as the agricultural capital of New Zealand and emphasised that the area around the saleyards, including Totally Vets, was a very important part of the region. One

of our major challenges is the fragility of New Zealand hill country and it will take time to resolve this issue. He said it is important to have strong rural support businesses and a key feature of companies such as Totally Vets is that they attract more businesses to the region.

The chairman of the Feilding and Districts Vet Club, Don Thurston, congratulated Totally Vets for its confidence in investing in the new building as well as its passion for the district and its animals. Don recollected that a visit fee for a vet call when the club first started was 12 shillings and 6 pence; also that the original Vet Club building on Kimbolton Road cost £4200 and the extensions to that building in 1974 a staggering \$43,000.



As recognition of Totally Vets' forward vision, Simon Power invited Barry Askin's daughters, Jade and Charlie, to assist him with cutting the tether between two cows to officially open our new premises. What do they say again about working with children and animals?



# Totally Vets current stock health

## Sheep and Beef

A low autumn flush and hard winter have contributed as much to the woes of this spring as much as the beautiful weather. Not only have lamb losses been high, ewes are in light condition, beef cattle have fared little better and there are some poor-doing yearlings as well.

Low feed and low condition have seen a general increase in the number of 'sickies'

among beef cattle with a higher incidence than usual of diseases such as woody tongue. We've even seen more than the odd case of scours in calving cattle.

A drench between docking and weaning is generally not regarded as best practice with respect to managing the development of drench resistance. Have a chat with one of Totally Vets' sheep veterinarians to help you make the right decision.



## HA HA Why we love children

I was driving with my three young children one warm summer's evening when a woman in the convertible ahead of us stood up and waved. She was stark naked! As I was reeling from the shock, I heard my 5-year-old shout from the back seat, 'Mum, that lady isn't wearing a seat belt!'

On the first day of school, a five-year old handed his teacher a note from his mother. The note read, 'The opinions expressed by this child are not necessarily those of his parents...'

A woman was trying hard to get the ketchup out of the jar. During her struggle, the phone rang so she asked her 4-year-old daughter to answer it. 'Mummy can't come to the phone to talk to you right now. She's hitting the bottle.'

A little girl had just finished her first week of school. 'I'm just wasting my time,' she said to her mother. 'I can't read, I can't write, and they won't let me talk!'

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## Early pregnancy-testing - far more useful than inductions

Anita Renes

In 2010, new operational guidelines for routine induction of dairy cattle limited the level of inductions within an individual herd to no more than 15% of the herd's total size. In the few herds serviced by Totally Vets that use induction, this target was achieved with room to spare.

During the 2011 season, the level of induction must not exceed 8% of the herd's total size, and from June 1st 2012, it drops to 4%. After that, management inductions are likely to be banned.

At the time of the first induction injection, cows must be no more than 12 weeks and no less than 8 weeks from their expected calving date. In cows that may be candidates

for induction, pregnancy-testing must be carried out 6 to 12 weeks after mating as the age of a pregnancy can only be accurately determined between 6 and 12 weeks after conception.

There are a number of other criteria that cows must also meet in order to be eligible for induction. These include body condition, age, health and feeding level.

Totally Vets cannot induce cows that do not have a confirmed calving date. If you are planning to induce cows in 2011, arrange the best time to pregnancy-test now.

Early pregnancy-testing has many other advantages including:

- Early culling of empty cows if feed becomes short
- Early drying off of thin, young or early calving cows
- Milking later-calving cows for longer
- Knowing which cows to send away for grazing and for how long
- Allocating cows to the springer mob next season
- Calculation of the key performance indicator - the 6-week in-calf rate

Talk to your vet now to ensure your pregnancy-testing occurs at the right time, in order to make the best management decisions for your farm.



## Deer

It may be a little late to be of much assistance now as losses from foot problems in weaner deer have been more of an issue recently. This condition, known as necrobacillosis, tends to follow trucking or yarding. It may be something to keep in mind for next year.

## Dairy

Lameness is running amok where track surfaces have been washed away. Track lameness is recognised as a cause of bruising and sole-penetrating wounds.

These two conditions require quite different treatments.

Rising bulk tank somatic cell counts toward the end of calving are, in many cases, a consequence of using teat spray at low dilution rates or misdirected automatic teat spray units missing the teats.

Submission rates to AB during early October have been dismal. Perhaps one day the message that early intervention with non-cycling cows will pay dividends. Of course non-cycling problems in two years' time are

already being created by neglecting heifer replacements.



# So what's the story with these new drenches?

**Ginny and Kayla**

After years of telling you that there was nothing on the horizon, there are now two completely new drench actives in the marketplace:

1. Zolvix (Novartis) - a new single active; monepantel.
2. Startect (Pfizer) - a double combination containing abamectin and the new derquantel.

As when both Nilverm (1969) and Ivomec (1981) were first released, Zolvix and Startect are both significantly more costly than the most expensive existing products.

Product	30kg Lamb dose*	65kg ewe dose*
Zolvix	74c	\$1.61
Startect	62c	\$1.33
Matrix	20c	44c
Exodus (Cydectin equivalent)	16c	34c
Arrest hi-min	7c	14c

\*Based on the largest pack size stocked, includes GST.

Given the current lack of profitability in the sheep sector, it is no surprise that these products are not marching off the shelves.

Also there is a better appreciation that switching to a new drench family and using it 'the way we always have' won't get around a lot of the issues that are holding back our sheep performance. It is also likely to create resistance to the new drench within 10-15 years. Certainly that was the case with Nilverm and Ivomec.

### WHERE MIGHT THESE NEW DRENCHES FIT INTO YOUR SYSTEM? WELL, THIS DEPENDS, BUT YOU KNEW THAT WAS COMING, RIGHT?

The first use that springs to mind is as a highly effective quarantine drench. Important for those buying in large numbers of store lambs each year, not so much for breeding flocks. But wait - we contend that many lamb finishers don't have a quarantine protocol that actually prevents resistant worms/eggs being shed on their pastures anyway.

While a **highly effective quarantine drench** will kill the adult and immature worms in the gut within probably 12 hours of dosing, it may take much longer for the eggs already laid to pass out of the lamb. And many drench chemicals don't kill eggs. Zolvix is in this category.

Hence the recommendation to graze new arrivals on the most contaminated areas of the farm for a few days - any resistant eggs that pass out should be 'diluted' out by the mixed worm population already present.

There is a potential storm coming for lamb

finishers using an ineffective quarantine procedure. There are a number of breeding farms about with triple-combination resistant worms, and more and more are turning up with resistance to moxidectin (Cydectin/Vetdectin/Exodus) - which is still a popular choice among finishers.

Do come and have a chat to us about a quarantine procedure that does what it is supposed to.

### USING NEW ACTIVES TO PROLONG THE USEFUL LIFE OF THE OLD ONES

How necessary this is on your farm depends on where you are sitting now with regards to drench resistance. And until you test, you do not know! By the time you 'see' production losses from drench resistance, the chemicals are failing in a really big way. Then your options are hugely limited in terms of product choice to stop the situation escalating. Compare this to a farm that does a faecal egg count reduction test and has most of the current chemicals performing at 90%+ - this farm has heaps of options going forward once we know which worm species and chemicals are involved in the resistance issue. With the myriad of combinations available now, we can put together a plan for this farm that may not involve the new drenches at all. If it does, the likely frequency of their use will be a whole lot less - saving big dollars.

**Next month: more specifics on the new drenches. How they might be used to slow resistance, including exit drenching.**



## Where we're going...

Paul Wiseman

While the number of prosperous palates in the world grows, New Zealand is in a grand position to be providing them with food that meets their stringent demands.

There are huge challenges worldwide facing human beings: population growth, climate change, increasing demands on and degradation of land and water resources, and the logistics of feeding this burgeoning population sustainably without further destroying biodiversity. For New Zealand, as a country that relies more heavily than any other trading nation on the export of agricultural products, our ability to have the highest standards of food safety, biosecurity and animal welfare is vital in order to gain access to the most valuable world markets.

Alongside this, the agricultural sector and its livestock production systems are undergoing major change. There is increasing integration of farming and processing, with the development of larger farming units expected to improve efficiency and economies of scale, when done well.

The demands for veterinary services are becoming more sophisticated and veterinarians are expected to provide services that are whole-farm based rather than merely dealing with the individual animal. We are expected to have broader skills in farm consultancy and management and not just be able to provide technical skills and advice on animal health and welfare.

It is important that we move in this direction, as many veterinary procedures and associated products become commoditised. The science behind these procedures and products tends to be forgotten: they are so successful, we forget what life was like before we had them. Who remembers hectic springs rushing around running calcium borogluconate into cow after cow with milk fever, before the days of magnesium supplementation, DCADs and 'springer diets'? Also with increasing herd and flock sizes, there tends to be more of a 'one size fits all' approach. Nowadays, once the suitability of such interventions has been established for a particular herd or flock, its execution becomes a technical exercise.

Totally Vets' ambition is to provide our clients with outstanding value from improvements in animal health and management inside the farm gate. We are also working with a wider audience including other professionals to maximise the value that farmers can generate from their own operations.

Totally Vets continues to work closely with Beef+Lamb New Zealand in hosting the Manawatu Monitor farms. The encouraging uptake by clients of sponsor-subsidised discussion groups is an indication of our commitment to translating science into practicality. Dr Trevor Cook is veterinary advisor to Wormwise, a national extension plan to manage drench resistance in New Zealand. Our research team of Trevor Cook, Ginny Dodunski, Greta Baynes and Charmaine Robertson is heavily involved in industry trials.

On the dairy scene, lameness, reproductive losses and milk quality remain New Zealand's biggest animal health issues. Tools to deal with these issues have been collated by DairyNZ, and Totally Vets has skilled veterinarians capable of assisting you to implement them on your farm and add value inside the farm gate.

Australia may be called the 'lucky country' but the demand for food will outstrip the demand for iron, and New Zealand is in a prime position to be a significant supplier of the world's nutritional needs.

**Totally Vets' challenge is to maintain traditional veterinary roles plus grow our contribution to securing and enhancing rural New Zealand's profitability, sustainability and competitiveness. We are hugely excited by this!**

## What's the goss?

Our congratulations to **Simon** and **Megan Wishnowsky** who are expecting their first child in December - what a lovely way to start the New Year! **Barney** had his hands full with

two of his girls **Jade** (4) and **Charlie** (2) at the new Feilding clinic opening ceremony on Friday 8th October. Although they appeared to be all smiles, Barney says it was a different story. Invited by **Simon Power** to cut the ribbon, their angelic demeanor disguised a fierce battle to be the one to cut the ribbon, with some subtle pushing and shoving on the way. The

ribbon was successfully held and cut with a pair of surgical scissors, involving both girls.

The school holidays went very well for **Catherine's** daughter **Calla**, who had her very first winning round at the New Zealand Pony Club Show Hunter champs - well done Calla! On the subject of holidays, **Christine** is away in Nepal and India, walking the Annapurna track

# How many lame cows do you have?

**Barney Askin**

It has been a season of extremes with conversations based on comments such as 'I cannot remember the last time we had this much rain' or 'I have never lost so many lambs in one week' being commonplace. 'I have never seen so many lame cows' must also be one of the more common sayings. Unfortunately this is the aftermath of prolonged saturation to which farms have succumbed in the last few months.

Wet conditions result in a softer hoof with greater wear and more chance of sole penetration. Fines become washed away from tracks, exposing sharp stones. Concrete becomes more abrasive and there are more bacteria floating around which, following trauma, can set up conditions such as footrot.

It has not been unusual to hear of 30-40% of herds being lame which, if ignored, could have very serious consequences.

Lame cows reduce production, lose weight and are less likely to cycle on time. The financial implications are huge and there's a massive drain on manpower at a time when things are already stretched. Lame cows are depressing!

Many tracks are severely damaged, feet are soft and bruised and underpasses are flooded. There are many improvements that can be made in the long-term but... what can you do in the short-term?

Even if you have the worst races in the district and follow a few basic rules, you can make a huge difference to the incidence of lameness.

- Always use patience when assembling or moving cows. Never push them; allow them to come and go from the shed at their own walking pace. A guideline for walking speed is 45m/min or 2.7km/hr.
- Never use a dog to chase the cows or push them too hard with a quad.
- Keep the feed pad, collecting yard and any other areas of concrete free from stones. This may mean hosing or scraping twice daily but the effort is worth it. Just think how long it can take to treat one lame cow.
- Ensure there is enough room in the collecting yard. Cows should be able to move freely to establish their correct milking order which,

just to make things difficult, is not the same order in which they walk to the shed.

- Go easy on the backing gate. Ensure everyone uses it in the same way and never for periods of more than 5-10 secs. Little and often. It should never be electrified.
- If the collecting yard is too crowded, cows will be lifting their heads. If you are seeing this, consider starting to milk before all cows are on the yard to relieve some of the pressure.
- Treat lameness early to ensure a prompt recovery and return to the herd. Very few cows require antibiotics (footrot and septic arthritis being the main exceptions). Most require some knife work and possibly a cowslip.
- Use lots of cowslips. They make a huge difference to recovery. Cows will be back in the herd sooner (and they are cheaper than a course of penicillin!).
- Train your bulls to stay in the paddock and not come into the shed. This requires the commitment of all staff from day one but will reduce the chance of bulls becoming lame during mating.

**If you are struggling with lameness, we can help with advice to get you on top of the lame cow herd if it is building up. We can also troubleshoot your farm for problem areas, or provide staff training to improve awareness and treatment skills.**



and sightseeing. She keeps telling us she'll text us to let us know how she's getting on - in the middle of the Himalayas?? Maybe she's got altitude sickness already! Let's hope not!

**Glenda** has just returned from an amazing three-week trip in Vietnam with hubby **Bryan** and friends. Every day was a highlight and the holiday was made extra special by their tour

guide **Nam** and his dad **Viet** - what great names!

**Ginny** and her husband **Aaron** are getting a team together for the Around the Mountain relay on 12th and 13th November. The relay comprises of teams of 10-16 members completing the 150km. There are 21 legs between 3 and 11km; these are a mixture of walking and running legs, some during the

night, which is great fun! If you fancy joining their team, please email Ginny on [ginnyd@totallyvets.co.nz](mailto:ginnyd@totallyvets.co.nz). For more information on the relay, visit [www.mountainrelay.co.nz](http://www.mountainrelay.co.nz).

Finally, welcome back to **Craig Dickson** after his very busy and productive month in Vietnam, working with **Craig Tanner** - we've missed you Craig!



# Update on Restricted Veterinary Medicines (RVMs)

Nigel Coddington

From 1st October 2010, Prescription Animal Remedies (PARs) have been renamed Restricted Veterinary Medicines (RVMs).

RVMs are a group of veterinary medicines registered under the Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines (ACVM) Act 1997 that must be prescribed by a veterinarian for

use on animals owned or managed by bona fide clients of that veterinarian - ie they cannot be sold over-the-counter without veterinary approval.

As a veterinary practice, it is our duty to ensure that our clients' RVM authorisations are up-to-date.

These authorisations fulfill a legal requirement of only veterinarians (not their staff) being allowed to prescribe certain products to you (mainly antibiotics and some vaccines). Completing an annual authorisation with a veterinarian, covering the RVMs that our client will use over the ensuing 12 months, allows our staff to dispense those authorised products without the need to consult with a vet each time you require them.

Without RVM authorisations in place, you are not legally allowed to procure these products unless you speak with your veterinarian each time you purchase an RVM. RVM consults need to be done annually. There is a charge

to help cover the considerable time commitment that goes into the administration behind this service. If RVM authorisations are not in place, then a prescription fee will be charged every time a PAR is purchased.

Why is this a legal requirement? It is to ensure the correct use of a product that has risks associated with its use. For example -

- Is this the right product for the problem?
- What are the food safety issues (both for the NZ and overseas markets) - meat and milk withholding periods; route and frequency of administration; dose rates;
- Can the product be used at the same time as other products?
- Storage of the product issues.

If your RVM authorisations are not up-to-date, our reception staff and vets will ensure that a consultation with your vet is carried out as soon as possible.

# Growing Great Lambs

Greta Baynes

The Manawatu Monitor Farm Finishing group held a seminar in September which filled the Taonui Hall with farmers keen to learn the important facts about growing lambs.

Alastair Hogg, a former monitor farmer, reviewed his organisation. His goal to maintain stock throughput, despite poor-growing years, is achieved by having faith in the team around you, good marketing, utilising crops, limiting costs and responding swiftly to a changing environment.

Ginny Dodunski described the job of microbes in the rumen which is to convert ingested feed to nutrients. The aim of feeding lambs is to care for these microbes; then to sneak some protein past for the lamb to utilise. If energy is not limiting, high protein levels will cause growth.

Geoff Nicoll, a geneticist with Landcorp, said genetics can aid in creating lamb value at its endpoint by affecting carcass weight, carcass fat and primal cuts yield. To get the right genetics, buy rams from breeders who are making the right decisions. Select rams that fit your production system.

Trevor Cook explained that lambs will not grow faster with B12 if they are not deficient. Parasites can severely limit lamb growth, so be vigilant about regular drenching with an effective drench. Pneumonia is a common problem in lambs, so do not shear at weaning,

avoid yarding unnecessarily and buy from a good source.

Dereck Ferguson, from Agricom, discussed the benefits of feeding plantain during lactation. Lambs from ewes fed plantain, versus perennial ryegrass, from late pregnancy until weaning, had improved liveweight gains, increased weaning weights and more lambs killed at weaning.

Rob Davison, Executive Director of the Economic Service for Beef+Lamb NZ, emphasised the 43% reduction in sheep numbers since 1991 was all due to market change. Strong demand for lamb and beef is predicted to continue due to tight global supplies but the return we get is entirely dependent on international market prices.

Look out for another finishing seminar in **November** and an annual seminar, combined with the Breeding Monitor Farm in **February**.

# Pesky Porina

Greta Baynes

Porina (*Wiseana* spp.) has become a significant problem in our area, eradicating up to 90% of the grass in some paddocks.

## DESCRIPTION & LIFE CYCLE

The larvae of Porina cause significant damage by eating plants. The moth is 2.5cm long; light brown with distinctive, complex whitish markings on wings. The moths have a short lifespan with males outliving the females but surviving only 4-10 days. During their short life, female moths lay 2000-3000 1mm diameter eggs within a day.



Porina moth (*Wiseana* spp.)



Porina larvae

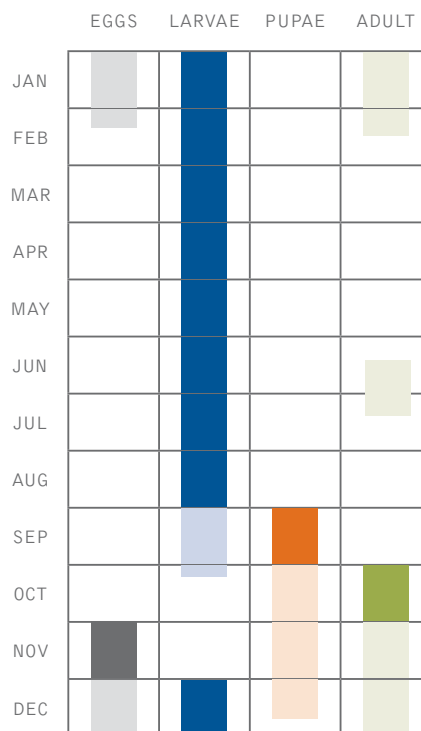
After three to five weeks, eggs hatch into 2-3mm long larvae, with a greyish-green back and yellowish belly. They initially live in the dead matter on the soil surface for around six weeks. During this time they are prone to desiccation. At 10-18mm, they begin to

tunnel into the ground and grow from their limp, flabby beginnings up to 70mm long. The tunnels are their home for their larval and pupal stages. The tunnel can be 25-30cm deep and 7-8mm wide.

From autumn to early spring, at night, the larvae wriggle out of the tunnels to the surface where they chew plants off at ground level then take the foliage down into the burrow. The roots of the plant remain intact. The damage to the pasture can cause plants to die, open patches in the sward and at worst, bare paddocks. The level of damage depends on population numbers, pasture type and growing conditions.

From late spring onwards, they transform into dark reddish brown pupae that are 20-30mm long. The adults emerge and fly in spring, early or late summer. The time of their flights depends on the species; can change from season to season; and there can be more than one period of adult emergence and flight.

## PORINA LIFE CYCLE



Coloured bars indicate periods of peak activity of each of the life cycle stages.

## MONITORING

A light trap can be set up to catch Porina moths. It is suggested to monitor moth flights from September through until April. Cut a 5cm hole in the lid of an ice-cream container. Half fill the container with water and hang the trap about 20cm below an outside light. Moths

caught in the container should be removed daily, counted and recorded. The peak of moth counts indicates the midway point of the flight.

Beginning 6-12 weeks after the adult flight (start early February if flights are unknown), take 10-15 spade-squares per paddock, digging to at least 30cm (burrows can be this deep). Use a spade 20cm wide. Measure the amount of larvae found in each spadeful and multiply by 25 to get the number of larvae per square metre. From then, monitor every 3 weeks.



A paddock moderately affected by Porina

Hawke's Bay consultant Mike Slay recommends sampling paddocks already damaged or historically damaged by Porina first. Also dig around rushes, in rank grass and near patches of Californian thistle that provide shelter for developing caterpillars. In flat paddocks several spade-squares should be taken from along three to four transect lines running across the paddock. In hill country spade-square samples should be taken on a diagonal line across the slope (Country-Wide, 2004).

## CONTROL

Dimilin (diflubenzuron), an insect growth regulator, must be applied to fresh, short (3-4cm) pasture and the spray must be allowed to dry onto the foliage. The larvae must eat the sprayed grass for the drug to be effective. Larvae must be <25mm long, ideally 10-20mm as this is when their moulting interval is shortest. It will kill larger larvae but as death does not occur until the larvae attempt to moult, they continue to feed and therefore continue to damage pasture.

**Now is the time to start monitoring moths. Remember to spray 10-12 weeks after peak flight to get maximum caterpillar kill to save your grass.**

# Manawatu/Rangitikei/Horowhenua



**LAUNCH NIGHT  
SHAREMILKER/EQUITY  
FARMER OF THE YEAR  
FARM MANAGER  
OF THE YEAR**

**7pm, Thursday 11th November  
Rongotea Tavern**

Come along for a fun evening to learn about the awards and what you stand to gain by entering

**Merial Ancare  
hams available  
with selected  
products**



Conditions apply.  
While stocks last.



## Enjoy your summer with a Preston hardwood bar leaner set

Enter the draw for this elegant outdoor furniture when you purchase selected Merial Ancare products from Totally Vets



### Three five-piece bar leaner sets to be won

Conditions apply to selected products and availability.

Promotion runs from November 2010 to the end of January 2011.

Each qualifying purchase entitles purchaser to one entry in the draw. Winners will be notified 14 February 2011.

