



VET notes

YOUR TOTALLY VETS NEWSLETTER ALL ABOUT ANIMALS ON YOUR FARM

APRIL 2018



Manawatu DIA Winners 2018

Manawatu Dairy Industry Awards 2018

Totally Vets congratulates all the finalists of the Regional Dairy Industry Awards and in particular **Samuel White** of Crestview Farms as the winner of Dairy Trainee of the Year, **Ange Strawbridge** of Stewart Dairylands for winning the Dairy Manager of the Year Award and **Richard and Wendy Ridd** for taking out the coveted title of Dairy Share Farmer of the Year.

To all those who entered – well done for having a go! Refine your presentation and enter again next year. Our vets and consultants will be delighted to provide help with developing your presentation if you ask. See our website for more: www.totallyvets.co.nz

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Managing weaner deer

Karen Woodley

Weaning should be well underway on most farms in the area.

Weaning is a stressful time for young deer and can result in compromised immune systems, disease and lowered growth rates.

Important points:

- Try to have stressful procedures such as drenching, tagging and vaccinating done before weaning day. This has the added advantage of familiarising the weaners with the yards.
- Plan weaning around good weather in order to minimise stress.
- Familiarise weaners with any supplement or crop before weaning. Return the weaners to familiar paddocks after weaning.
- Invest in accurate scales. Put weaners in mobs of similar weight.

FEEDING

The industry average growth rate is around 150 grams per day but, with the right choice of feed, growth rates of 200-300 g/d can be achieved. Weaners perform best on pasture with a high proportion of chicory/plantain and clover. Weigh weaners regularly and set target liveweights.

All deer farmers should be familiar with the Deer New Zealand Deer Hub website (www.deernz.org). This has feeding tables and other useful information.

DISEASES

Worms - Gastrointestinal and lungworms are a major cause of disease in young deer. Drench resistance is widespread. Weaners are best given an oral triple drench.

Avoid pour-on and single-active drenches.

Note: Be careful with dose rates when drenching weaners. Ensure that weaners are accurately weighed and group them according to bodyweight to avoid overdosing.

Yersiniosis - The *Yersinia* bacterium is common in the environment and is spread by birds and animals. It can cause serious outbreaks in weaners with scouring, dehydration and death. Outbreaks are usually associated with stressors such as bad weather, weaning, worms and feed restrictions. Weaners should be vaccinated at 12 weeks of age and given a booster 3-4 weeks later. Some farms may need to give the first shot before 12 weeks of age and in this case a third shot may improve immunity.

Leptospirosis - Leptospirosis is also common on deer farms and some strains can cause disease and death in weaners. Signs range from reduced growth rate through to redwater, jaundice and death. There are vaccines available that can be given from 12 weeks of age.

Clostridial Disease - Especially blackleg and malignant oedema. This causes sudden death and can easily be vaccinated against.

For help and advice on managing your deer at any stage contact your veterinarian or your local clinic.



Looking ahead

Potential animal health issues, tasks to consider and reminders for **April** include ...

DAIRY

- **Drying off** – make holistic decisions around which cows to dry off when. In particular, keep an eye on cow body condition and milk

production, and book in your Milk Quality Consult sooner rather than later – **article P3**.

- **Herd testing** – Bulk milk cell counts will be rising in late lactation. Seriously consider investing in a herd test that will give valuable information to assist with drying off and dry cow therapy and Teatseal.
- **Trace element monitoring** – Pre-winter is the best time for liver biopsies to ensure adequate copper levels to face winter and the coming spring.

Interpreting feed analyses laboratory reports - Part 2

Steve Harvey

Following from last month here are the remaining elements that are shown on your feed analysis reports.

DIGESTIBILITY (DOMD – Digestible organic matter in dry matter)

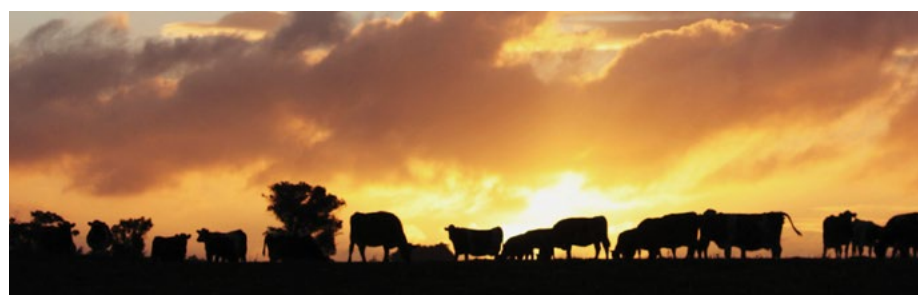
Describes the proportion of organic matter in a feed that can be digested by an animal. It is inversely related to the fibre content (ADF) in that feed. DOMD is giving the most reliable prediction of energy content.

pH (Acid-base content)

This is normally only present on reports of silages (pasture and maize silage). The pH should be 4.5 or less if the ensiling process has been successful. If the pH is 5 or higher there is a possibility that many disease-causing bacteria will survive (eg. *Listeria* spp, *Salmonella* spp, Tuberculosis and mastitis causing bacteria.)

CALCIUM (Ca)

Calcium is primarily required for milk synthesis, bones, teeth, blood clotting and muscle contraction. The diet should ideally



be between 6.0 and 8.0g/kgDM and be near the upper end of the range for peak milk production. Pastures usually range from 4.0-6.0 g/kgDM and are often near the lower end of this range in early spring.

PHOSPHORUS (P)

Phosphorus is primarily required for milk synthesis, bones, teeth and energy metabolism. The diet should ideally be between 4.0-5.0g/kgDM. Pastures usually fall within this range.

POTASSIUM (K)

Potassium is primarily required for electrolyte balance, enzymes, muscles and nerves. The diet should ideally be between 10.0-12.0 g/kgDM, though pastures usually range from 30.0-55.0 g/kgDM. Most supplements have levels well below these figures and improve this imbalance in the diet. High levels of dietary K interfere with Ca, Mg and Na uptake.

SULPHUR (S)

Sulphur is primarily required for rumen metabolism of protein and for cartilage and tendons. The diet should ideally be between 2.0-3.0 g/kgDM. Pastures usually range from 3.0-5.0 g/kgDM. Some forage such as maize silage are very low in S (<1.0 g/kgDM)

MAGNESIUM (Mg)

Magnesium is primarily required for enzymes and bones. The diet should ideally be between 2.0-3.0 g/kgDM. Pastures usually range from 1.5-3.0 g/kgDM, and are often near the lower end of this range in early spring. Some forages such as maize silage are normally low in Mg (<1.5g/kgDM).

SODIUM (NA)

Sodium is primarily required for acid-base balance (DCAD), muscles and nerves. Diet should be ideally between 1.8-2.5 g/kgDM. Pastures usually range from 1.0-3.0 g/kgDM, and are often near the lower end of this range in early spring. Some forages such as maize silage are normally low in Na (< 1.0 g/kgDM).

CHLORIDE (Cl)

Chloride is primarily required for DCAD, osmotic pressure post calving and hydrochloric acid production in the abomasum. This is of particular importance in the dry cow diets to initiate calcium mobilisation.

Checking the range of these elements will help you when viewing your pasture and supplement reports. If you have any queries please contact your local veterinarian.



- **Leptospirosis vaccination** – Autumn is a perfect time to boost your herd prior to winter (high risk period). Ensure young stock are included and that the interval between annual vaccinations don't exceed 13 months.

SHEEP and BEEF

- **Planning for winter** – Prepare an autumn/winter feed budget and relate it to body condition scores, consider time of winter shearing, iodine supplementation and book your scanning in.

- **Mating** – is now in full swing. Monitor plane of nutrition and ensure adequate ram ratios.

DEER

- **Mating** – monitor stag health and condition through mating.
- **Drenching** – see article P1.
- **Vaccinations** – if fawns are yet to have their first shot of Leptospirosis vaccine along with Yersiniovac®, plan this now.

EQUINE

- Planning for winter **hoof care** will help to decrease the risk of foot abscesses and a timely **dental check** will help ensure good maintenance of condition throughout winter.
- **Air out and check** straps on heavy rugs.
- Now is a great time to ensure elimination of tapeworms, roundworms and cyathostomes with a **good broad-spectrum drench**.

Teatseal and some trial results

Emma Scott

As we head towards drying off, now is the time to consider your options for treatment and prevention of mastitis using dry cow antibiotic and/or teatseal.

With the increasing awareness of antimicrobial resistance, recommendations to phase out blanket antibiotic treatment of your dry cows by 2020 are in place. The use of teatseal can provide long term protection for heifers and those cows with low somatic cell counts (SCC) as it protects against new infections during the dry period.

Teatseal in heifers has shown to have a huge reduction in the incidence of mastitis. Heifer mastitis can be a frustration to treat and leaves them at increased risk of being culled. A New Zealand (NZ) study (Newton, 2011) showed that in heifers calved at least seven days after teatsealing, the sealed quarters had only 35 percent of the risk of clinical mastitis compared to unsealed quarters. Other studies have shown a decrease in clinical mastitis by 70 percent.

Using teatseal alongside dry cow antibiotic therapy (DCT) has also shown to reduce the incidence of mastitis.

A NZ study (Bates and Chambers, 2015) showed adding teatseal to a DCT reduced subclinical mastitis at the first herd test particularly in cows that had high SCC and also reduced clinical mastitis in the first 100 days.

Many cows have a longer dry period than the protection of DCTs. Teatseal can provide protection for the entire dry period and in another NZ study (Estendart, 2014) showed 96.7% retained teatseal for 20 weeks, well beyond the average dry period in NZ of 13 weeks. The high retention of teatseal over the important pre-calving period when the teat canal may open is of huge benefit. The label use is to administer four to six weeks prior to calving but it can be used up to 12 weeks before (this is off label use). It can also be administered closer to calving if necessary, one to four weeks prior to planned start of calving.

Part of the decision to use teatseal will be considering how your herd is managed over the dry period. Spring calving herds and herds spending a lot of time on crops, standoff areas and feed pads are highly likely to be challenged over winter with wet muddy conditions. Last year farms using teatseal fared better at calving time with lower rates of mastitis.

We now have use of a teatseal trailer throughout Manawatu and Taranaki to make the job easier. This can be taken to run offs or used on farm if preferable to running them through the shed and provides a safe and efficient set up for teatseal insertion. We are taking bookings now and if you have any questions about using teatseal or DCT please talk to your veterinarian.





New rules for tail docking and dew claw removal in dogs

Moira Fergus

Last year the Government announced a plan to ban non-therapeutic tail docking and restrict the removal of dew claws in dogs in New Zealand. New rules will come into effect by October 2018.

TAIL DOCKING

Under the new regulations "A person commits an offence if they dock a tail of a dog. The owner of the dog is also liable". This brings us in line with many other countries around the world. Docking is defined as the shortening or removal of the tail by any method, whether it is direct (cut) or delayed (banding). The only acceptable docking of dogs is by a veterinarian, or a veterinary student under the direct supervision of a veterinarian, and it is done to treat an existing disease or injury and suitable pain relief/anaesthetic is used.

Dogs' tails are docked for aesthetic reasons, convenience, and in the belief that it will prevent injury. Evidence, and my personal experience, suggests that tail injuries are relatively rare. There is no close relationship between whether breeds are docked and whether they are used for activities likely to cause tail injury, such as hunting.

Dogs' tails serve a function in terms of balance and as a means of communication with other dogs and humans. The removal of a tail is painful at any age. Given there is little or no benefit for the dog, the routine docking of dogs can't be justified.

DEW CLAW REMOVAL

Rules are also set to change for dew claw removal. It will become illegal for non-veterinarians to remove front dew claws and articulated hind dew claws at any age. Non-veterinarians may remove non-articulated hind dewclaws but only in pups under four days of age. Anyone who removes dew claws against the regulations, and the owner of the dog, will be committing an offence. Articulated dew claws are attached to the leg by bone and tendons. Non-articulated dew claws are attached by only a flap of skin and tissue.

Front dew claws are used by dogs in holding and manipulating large objects such as bones. They may also play a role in aiding some breeds to change direction rapidly when running.

Unlike tail docking, no country has fully banned dew claw removal. Dew claw injuries are more common than tail injuries, especially rear dew claws. To remove dew claws, veterinarians must use appropriate pain relief/anaesthetic.

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