VETS ON ALABAMA

SEASONAL HOOF PRINT

SHEEP, BEEF, DEER & HORSES

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Fitness For Transport

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Roger Marchant and Wayne Ricketts – NZVA

The New Zealand Veterinary Association (NZVA) is working with the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) and other industry organisations to develop a communications programme for farmers, road transport operators, livestock agents, buyers and processors about the transport and veterinary certification of compromised animals. It has been proposed that this coordinated programme will be introduced during the remainder of 2013.

Photo: www.broadbridgetransport.co.nz

The veterinary profession has started to implement more stringent criteria to meet the Transport Code minimum standards which were published last year.

Key issues from the revised guidelines are summarised here:

- **The transport conditions must be clearly specified, and to the nearest slaughter premises.** If this cannot be done, the animal must not be transported.
- **Transport to slaughter must be done as soon as possible, and no later than seven days after examination.** Extenuating circumstances (such as location) may extend this to 10 days, but only if the animals condition will not deteriorate.
- **Priority Slaughter of certified animals must occur.** Contacting the processing premises and the MPI Verification Services veterinarian will ensure that this will happen.
- **Options will be given on what is to be done for an animal that cannot be certified.** These options include (veterinary) treatment, humane destruction, killed for home consumption or by an approved pet food operator. These will be documented by the veterinarian.
- **Bearing weight evenly on all limbs.** Needs to be evaluated both at standing and walking.

The owner of the animal is to advise the transport company and the slaughter premises that a certified animal is being transported and it must go to the slaughter premises specified in the certificate.

EVERY FARMER KNOWS THEY SHOULD VACCINATE AGAINST TOXOPLASMOSIS – BUT DO YOU KNOW WHY?

Vaccinating for Toxoplasmosis is one of those 'must-do's' on the farm – and there is a very good reason why.

Toxoplasma gondii occurs everywhere in New Zealand and because of its hidden nature, farmers may not be aware it exists on their farm. Ewe hoggets and two-tooths are at most risk, and if they contract Toxoplasmosis during pregnancy, they are at risk of aborting or giving birth to weak non-viable lambs. Toxovax® helps protect breeding ewes against the ill effects of Toxoplasmosis. **Toxovax® must be given to maiden ewes at least 4 weeks before mating**, and because it's a live vaccine that must be used within 10 days of manufacture - it's made to order for your farm.

IF YOU HAD UNEXPLAINED LAMB LOSSES THIS YEAR – CAMPYLOBACTER MAY BE PLAYING A PART.

Most farmers see toxoplasmosis as the biggest threat to their lamb numbers, and they're right. But it pays not to overlook the risk of Campylobacter. Vaccinating for Campylobacter as well as Toxoplasmosis is important for managing potential lamb loss on the farm – and with good reason. Campylobacter is present on 88% of New Zealand farms, and causes foetal loss, the birth of weak lambs with low survivability and abortions. In severe cases, some farms may experience abortion storms with losses of up to 70%. It is the most common infectious agent causing abortion in our sheep flocks, with 60% of sheep abortions diagnosed attributed to Campylobacter. Vaccination is the only way to help prevent reproductive losses due to Campylobacter. Vaccination should be completed prior to mating, so you can time it with giving Toxovax® to maiden ewes. Just ensure you administer the vaccines in opposite sides of the neck.

Please contact the clinic to place your forward orders now.
Toxovax® is available from the week commencing October 28th 2013 until the week commencing April 28th 2014.

Sheep Measles - Not just from Farm dogs!

We are starting to hear of an increased incidence of sheep measles being reported from sheep going through the works. This has primarily been associated with sheep that have previously been grazed through vineyards, though the incidence has been slowly rising since compulsory treatment for hydatids was removed.

Sheep Measles is the common name of a lesion seen in the muscle of sheep (also goats), caused by *Cysticercus ovis*, the cystic or intermediate stage of the tapeworm *Taenia ovis*. It is seen as small, hard, white regions in the muscles. Dogs are the primary host and carry the tapeworms in their intestines.

The tapeworm segments passed out of dogs can contain up to 70,000 eggs and up to three segments are produced each day. The eggs are able to survive on pasture for up to six months. A sheep then ingests the eggs which take 35 days to become a mature cyst. The cysts are very infective, only one cyst consumed by a dog is likely to result in infection. It then develops into an egg producing tapeworm in about 35 days, completing the lifecycle.

Control is centred around the dog - The most effective ways of making the meat safe from infection by destroying the cysts are: cooking the meat thoroughly to a core temperature over 72 degrees or by freezing it to -10 degrees for at least 10 days, offal must be boiled for at least 30 minutes. Raw meat scraps should not be feed to dogs and home kill areas should be fenced, plus dogs should be prevented from scavenging dead carcasses.

Even meat purchased from a butcher or abattoir can be a risk and should be treated accordingly. For control of infection in dogs, regular treatment with a product containing Praziquantel is the most reliable, simple and cost effective solution. All dogs entering onto farm land or land where stock may graze should be regularly treated. The most commonly used products are Droncit (which purely does tapeworms), Drontal, Endo-Guard, Dolpac or Milbemax (these four will all also cover for roundworms, hookworms and whipworms). We would recommend dogs that frequently cross onto grazing land to be treated every 6 weeks even the pet dogs, as they are often found to be the source of infection.

Remember that dogs do not respect fences, so a stray dog carrying tapeworms has the capacity to infect many surrounding properties.

Laminitis – A Potential Spring Issue For Your Horse.

Laminitis or founder is a problem every spring, soon after that flush of fresh grass. While fat little ponies with a cresty neck are considered to be the most susceptible candidates, all horses can suffer from laminitis.

That succulent spring grass is special as it is full of readily fermentable carbohydrates making it a high energy food. The sudden change in dietary intake causes the problem. The result is inflammation to the laminae, that sensitive and intricate structure that binds the hoof wall to the

bone of the foot in such a way it allows the hoof to take the weight of the horse, while all the time making it possible for the hoof wall to grow.

If this structure is severely damaged the result can be catastrophic with a “dropped sole” and permanent damage. It is a matter of being diligent and vigilant in managing your horse at this time. Management is the best tool and products such as Founderguard® can be fed to prevent the onset. These products work by minimising the toxins produced.

HOW DO YOU KNOW YOUR HORSE HAS LAMINITIS?

Generally there will be a reluctance to move and a stilted gait. It generally affects the front feet more than the back and the horse or pony stands in a characteristic pose with the front feet forward and the back ones under the body taking more of the weight. There is also a marked digital pulse which can be seen in some cases or felt just above the fetlock in the front legs.

Treatment depends on the severity of the condition. Mild cases respond to immediate cessation of the intake of any more grass. yarding the horse in a yard preferably with a soft surface, feeding poorer quality, high roughage meadow hay , treating the pain with anti inflammatories along with the introduction of founderguard to the diet. Remember green grass is not the only cause of laminitis. Any toxic challenge a horse suffers can cause laminitis. This includes broodmares that retain their foetal membranes after foaling, horses that guzzle large amounts of cold water when very hot following strenuous exercise or a competition horse that is given an extra large feed of grain.

The best way to deal with laminitis is by controlling the causes. Keep all grain stored securely out of reach of your horses to avoid accidental grain overload. Be very careful when that new growth comes away. When introducing your horse to lush pasture, do it gradually and avoid access between late morning and late afternoon, as plant sugars are at their highest then.

Fast Growing Lambs & Clostridial Diseases

Clostridial disease is a real issue on every NZ pastoral farm. If not controlled it will almost definitely result in lamb losses. Usually it affects the best lambs that were fine the night before but are found dead in the morning.

The five most common clostridial diseases are:

Pulpy kidney (PK) – also referred to as enterotoxaemia: The classic sign is sudden death in young lambs that are well fed and growing quickly. If grazing lucerne – this must be a consideration. However it can affects animals at any age, especially when they are grazing high quality pastures.

Tetanus: This occurs when the tetanus spores enter a deep wound where there is minimal aeration in the presence of dead & damaged tissue. Tailing with rubber rings brings with it, one of the greatest risk. However having a searing iron that is not hot enough can cause tissue damage that allows the tetanus spores to proliferate

The next 3 diseases are similar in appearance and all fall into the blood poisoning category which is typified by sudden death followed by rapid post death deterioration, bloody discharge from nose & bloating.

Blackleg: This is usually associated with dirty wounds, grazing muddy winter feed crops, after lambing & using dirty vaccination needles.

Malignant oedema: Lesions very similar to blackleg.

Black disease: Usually associated with liver fluke infection.

Signs and symptoms

- *Lambs with Pulpy Kidney are* usually found dead with no obvious signs, but may be found lying on the ground with their head extended back.
- *Lambs with blood poisoning* usually found dead. They generally go off very quickly and may have gas under the skin.

Tetanus appears 7-21 days after the injury that causes a deep penetrating wound that seals over r one that creates a lot of dead tissue (e.g. from tailing or shearing wounds). Animals are stiff and go into a rigid spasm if stimulated.

The Cost

Common clostridial bacteria are endemic throughout NZ farms, however diseases are not commonly seen due to the widespread use of vaccination. Because vaccination is so effective and has been around for a long time many new generation farmers may never have seen the diseases.

Farmers need to be confident that the disease risk will always be present and that a sound vaccination programme will be stopping the disease from happening. Most of the disease outbreaks are now associated with farmers forgetting to vaccinate.

The cost of a 5-in-1 vaccine is approx 24 cents per dose, or 48 cents to fully protect a lamb. Over 1000 lambs the cost is $480 so the programme only needs to save 5 lambs at $90. Therefore it has more than paid for itself.

Protection Through Vaccination

Vaccination is the best method to avoid unnecessary losses. Ultravac™ 5 in 1 vaccine uses a unique ultra-filtration process during manufacture to create a pure and concentrated vaccine that stimulates rapid and effective protection against dangerous clostridial disease.

Ultravac™ 5in1 is only available from your veterinary clinic –

- Low dose – 1ml for sheep of all ages including lambs
- Lambs require 2 doses 4 weeks apart.
- Immunity will develop approx 7 – 10 days following the second vaccination.
- Available in 100ml, 250ml & 500ml
- Effective in young lambs – This vaccine is effective in the presence of antibodies from colostrums and can therefore be used at any age.

NB. Do not administer selenised vaccine to your lambs – the level of Se will be toxic. Please have a chat with one of our vets if you have concerns about the Se levels in you lambs.

Ultravac™ 5 in 1

Have A Look At Our Website

www.vetsonalabama.co.nz

VETS on ALABAMA

165 Alabama Road, Blenheim

Phone: 578 6965 Fax: 578 6960

Email: vets@alabamaroadvet.co.nz