

**Triple Combo Sheep Drench:  
Moxidectin, Levamisole  
and Albendazole**  
**The ultimate quarantine  
drench & good routine  
drenching choice**

Trimox Hi Mineral is registered pursuant to the ACVM Act 1997 N# 10734



**Importance of body condition at dry-off**

Nena Nepia BVSc

The late lactation period is filled with managing what remains of the once-nutritious pasture, balancing declining milk production with increasing BSCC's, and safeguarding youngstock performance. It can be difficult to look ahead and make decisions around drying off cows that cut the profit made from milk now, in order to achieve condition targets at calving.

We all know we should target a condition score of 5 for mature cows and 5.5 for first and second calvers. But what difference does it actually make? Well, research has shown that a cow that calves at BCS 4, on average will produce 15 kgs of milk solids less and cycle around 8-10 days later than one that calves at BCS 5. The lost days in milk from cycling later results in a further loss of 15-20 kgs of milk production the following season. Although less profound, we also know that lower BCS results in poorer cow health and resilience at calving, as well as influencing the sex of the foetus and the future productive performance of any heifers in utero.

We are all good at drying off the handful of skinny low producers and allowing them plenty of time to fatten before calving. Shifting our focus to a whole herd level, and using tools such as

those provided by Dairy NZ's "Dry off date to reach target BCS at calving Calculator" to make more effective (and cut-throat) dry-off and supplementation decisions has worthwhile pay-offs next season.

Make a point of condition scoring each cow in your herd today. Don't get caught up in the herd's average condition score, at this point in the season it's all about the individual score and setting a strategy for each cow. The ability to gain condition in the dry period is frequently overestimated. Cows can gain ½ a condition score per month in the dry period, but only if fed quality pasture and supplement. Allowing for no gain in the first 10 days post dry-off, nor in the month pre-calving, then with our average planned start of calving of early July, anything under condition score 4.0 needs drying of today!

There has been plenty of research into strategies to manage feed resource while gaining maximum cow condition, and a variety of options exist, depending on your particular farm system. Splitting your dry cows into a couple of mobs and feeding thinner and younger cows better can work well in our region. Again, the Dairy NZ website has a good resource on options.

If you need some help with condition scoring (an unbiased eye) contact Wellsford Vet Clinic. We can give advice on feeding management in the dry period also.

**RMT or paddle  
test high SCC  
cows after  
herd test.**

**Want good flea and tick  
control on your dogs?  
Treat your mates with  
NexGard oral tablets**

NexGard is registered pursuant to the ACVM Act 1997 N#A011040



**Vet Clinic Staff**

**Vets**

- David Haugh
- Olaf Klein
- Celine Lye
- Steve McAulay *CEO*

**Nurses**

- Nikki Humfrey
- Susan Paddy

**Accounts**

- Steph Treadwell

**Receptionist**

- Karen Partridge

**Opening stanza**

Stephen McAulay BVSc

The weather conditions have again been trying with several farms reporting being in a similar position to last year. There is definitely an autumn feel to the air and more rain will be coming.

Thanks to those clients completing the compliance requirements around dry cow authorisations. We have our requirements which we need to meet for our governing bodies. Several farmers have commented that when they stopped fighting them then they became easier. I personally will not add more compliance requirements than what we require.

Pregnancy testing rates are poorer than last year and there is still the usual marked variation. With young stock replacement having to deal with feed restrictions associated with drought then getting them back in calf is challenging.

Replacement growth rates is on most farmers' minds and weighing stock is truly the best method to assess performance. Many farms are supplementing with PKE to ensure growth weight targets are met. Spring can be a tough time for an undersized 2 year old.

**Hello**

Celine Lye BVSc

I was born and raised in the tropical country of Singapore, but spent the last 5 years in good old Palmerston North for my veterinary studies. New Zealand's beauty and kiwi hospitality had convinced me to ditch the city and to stay for the long run. Moving up North was a huge change but the heat and humidity feels just like home! The splendid beaches and coastal nature have called out to me. My veterinary interests involve true mixed practice work; from the littlest pocket pets to dairy cattle. I enjoy the varied nature from being outdoors and solving farm animal cases, to the more personal nature of working in with companion animal individual pets and owners.

In my spare time, I like keeping fit whether it be the gym, crossfit, or beach to bush walks. I like trying my hand at various different outdoor activities but surfing is a work in progress at the moment. A fervent social being, I also enjoy spending my time with close friends and family with music, a good board game or a couple of beers over the weekend.

**Expect peak performance  
from your working dogs  
every day?  
Feed Blackhawk and  
experience the difference.  
\$125 incl per 20kg bag.**



I have been warmly welcomed by the team at Wellsford Vets and the locals as well, and I look forward to learning more and meeting everyone in the area!

*Helping grow: people, animal health, profit*

### **Boss - Triple Combination Mineralised drench for Sheep**

For sheep greater than 20kg and older than 4 weeks age. Contains Abamectin, Levamisole, Oxfendazole & Selenium & Cobalt

Boss Triple Combination Mineralised drench for Sheep is registered pursuant to the ACVM Act 1997 №011614.



### **Ryegrass staggers**

*Olaf Klein DrMedVet*

Ryegrass staggers is a disease that affects the nervous system of cattle, sheep, horses, deer, and alpacas. This disease is caused by the consumption of a neurotoxin called Lolitrem B.

This should not be confused with grass staggers which is caused by the lack of magnesium and falls into a group of metabolic conditions more prevalent around calving time.

The neurotoxin Lolitrem B is produced by a fungus that lives in the leaf sheath of ryegrasses. These fungi are also called endophytes. Endophytes produce toxins to protect the plant against parasites like the Argentine stem weevil for example. While this is good for the survival of the plant, the toxins, and Lolitrem B, in particular, are bad news for livestock that have grazed affected pastures. Symptoms show a couple of weeks after grazing and can vary from slight tremors of the head and neck that look like nodding, to a stiff uncoordinated gait. When spooked the animals

sometimes fall over and their attempts to get up again can look like twitching.

There is no antidote for this toxin and symptoms will disappear two to three weeks after being removed from those pastures and given supplement feeds or crops like chicory or kikuyu pasture which does not produce the toxin. New novel endophyte ryegrasses carry less risk but after a few years they revert back, and this advantage is lost.

Death occurs mainly by misadventure like drowning or tumbling down a steep paddock while intoxicated. So, keep the stock in a safe paddock while they are recovering.

Risk factors are sustained dry spells followed by rain, this promotes fungal growth and toxin production. Young stock are more frequently affected than the dairy herd and horses can have prolonged recovery periods during which they can be quite dangerous to handle.

### **Fertiliser**

*Stephen McAulay BVSc*

When finances are tight pruning expenditure is important. Care is required when reducing your farms fertiliser applications.



The main reason for applying lime to farms is to ensure the soil pH (acidity) reduces the amount

**Need a good combination worming product for your young stock, ask for the BOSS-**

Boss Injection is registered pursuant to the ACVM Act 1997 №10830

of aluminium in soil solution (soil water around plant roots). Aluminium is toxic to plant roots and the amount of aluminium in soil solution increases with decreasing soil pH.

A single soil test for pH has an accuracy of +/- 0.2 pH units. Aluminium solubility decrease dramatically above 5.4 pH hence most soil tests target a pH of 5.6.

Phosphate (P) has a very low water solubility and hence does not "leech" with ground water movement, unlike sulphur (S)

### **What could possibly go wrong with turnips?**

*David Haugh BVSc*

When I started work in rural practice in Whangarei in the mid 80s the number one health problem in dairy cows, I figured out, was underfeeding. The push for more cows, more cows from the dairy company, paying out less, less in a world where grass-only feeding or grass and some hay in the winter was the normal was the cause I figured. Needless to say, the industry is much more sophisticated now and supplement feeding is an essential component of that. But, as we move away from "Dr Green" the balancing of mixed diets becomes more sophisticated.

Turnips are a popular summer supplement. Mostly feeding it out seems to go well, but occasionally there is some photosensitivity seen, and on rare occasions there are cases of choke, even nitrate poisoning and recently I saw a suspected case of laminitis.

Laminitis is something fat-pony owners know all about but laminitis in stock is pretty rare. In this disease the "lamellae" that lie immediately beneath the hard wall of hooves becomes inflamed. This is very painful...a bit like us not being able to take off shoes that are way too tight...only worse. The cause is complicated, when you

delve into it, but for most of us all we need to know is that too much too quickly of an easily digested carbohydrate food can set this off. ....that is the exact cause of "grain overload syndrome" or "sub acute rumen acidosis". These diseases are all linked. "Grain overload" is the severe end of the spectrum and survivors of that may have a hoof fall off weeks later. In a herd where production has taken a dip from "sub acute rumen acidosis" the farmer might notice a ring on the hooves of some cows growing down over the next few weeks.

When you are seeing an animal with "laminitis" or "founder" usually multiple feet are involved at the same time. So you don't see a classic limp. Sometimes they look like a cat on a hot tin roof and sometimes they stand in an odd stretched-out posture or maybe continually lift up and put down different feet.

The treatment is take the animal(s) off the crop, give anti-inflammatory/painkillers, even a creek to stand in if one is available (animal welfare overrides environmental considerations here) and rest them, i.e. as little walking as possible. There can be permanent damage in severe cases but if you catch it early recovery should be good.

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**>90% herd  
6 week incalf rate**

**Top farmers  
achieve  
InCalf Benchmark**



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### **Fertiliser cont from pg 2**

*Stephen McAulay BVSc*

and potassium (K).

I have heard some fertiliser representatives giving poor advice, suggesting not to apply K and S in the autumn because they will leech with ground water movement during winter. Whilst this is true, they do move with soil moisture, plant roots need access to K and S to grow well. Not applying K and S in the autumn will mean that

your pasture plants will not grow as well as they could during the winter/early spring.

If finances demand reduced expenditure on fertilisers. Apply lower rates of fertiliser.

To develop a healthy pasture sward, time is required, frequently 3-4 years.