



Facial Eczema

It is now the start of May and the weather is still warm and the rains light and regular. This is still ideal conditions for Facial Eczema, and we are still seeing cases.

Be careful not to undo all the good work protecting your stock over the Summer by stopping zinc treatment too soon. Check pasture spore counts on your farm before assuming the risk is over. The monitoring counts that Brian and I do are still in the danger range (150,000 up to 600,000 last week around Helensville).

One of the problems is the zinc treatment used to protect against eczema is close to the toxic range for zinc poisoning. For this reason it is recommended to only treat for 100 days maximum. So what to do? It is about relative risk and information. Know if you need to keep treating (spore count) and then decide if you are going to keep giving zinc for more than 100 days. We can help with advice for your situation.

Zinc poisoning can present as "red water", abortion, "milk fever" in lactating cows, loss of condition and death.

Mark Anderson

Animal Health Plans

All farmers have an animal health plan, however often it is only inside their head. Writing it down has lots of advantages especially in today's world.

Life is getting busier, more complicated and more people are involved. As a result we loose track of what to do or we end up working against each other or doubling up. An Animal Health Plan is a way of keeping track of what needs to be done and when. Everybody knows what is happening and reminders can be generated to help ensure tasks actually happen.

To work, a Plan needs to be personalised for your farm (one size does not fit all), it needs to be current and relevant, and it needs to be easy, so that it is an asset not just another job to do. Animal Health Plans will increase in importance as quality assurance requirements increase.

We believe we have such a plan method and Brian will be rolling it out later this year.

Calf Scours Prevention

Spring is not a great time on a dairy farm. It is cold, wet, muddy and very full on. There are not enough hours in the day. Rearing calves is bad enough without scours happening as well. Scours take up time, money and it's depressing (when life is bad enough as it is). Action now in the form of rotavirus vaccination of the dairy cows pre calving can dramatically reduce the incidence of scours in the Spring. The cows need two shots initially with a booster pre calving each year to keep it working. The protection is passed to the calves via the colostrum.

Good pre planning will also help reduce the problem. Clean, warm and dry calf sheds. Consistent feeding and management, early detection and treatment of sick calves, use of bentonite, will all help.

0800 VTS NTH

AFTER HOURS: 0274 957 986

68 Access Road, Kumeu - P: 09 412 9016 - Kumeu@vetsnorth.co.nz
45 Commercial Road, Helensville - P: 09 420 8325 - Helensville@vetsnorth.co.nz

www.vetsnorth.co.nz





Parasitism

The incidence of drench resistance in stock in the area is increasing with worms that are resistant to all three common drenches now being found regularly. This is a serious issue for all stock owners, including dairy farmers. How are you going to get on if you can not drench your stock? When did you last see stock dying of worms and not be able to do something about it?

Unfortunately a common scenario when we first get involved is young stock either dying or not responding to drenching. By this time the drench is only killing less than 70% of the worms. (An effective drench kills >95%).

There are usually still some options, other than growing pine trees, but they will involve the use of more expensive drenches and changes in the farm's management, which will impact on profitability. However, the worms will have been silently undermining the farm's profit for several years already as stock will not have been growing as fast as they could have.

- Worm control is important.
- You must protect the drenches that you still have.
- You need to know what the situation on your farm is.
- You need to get professional parasite advice (rather than rely on drench sales staff).

As an example of stock farmers setting themselves up to fail, I regularly see is farmers drenching young cattle with "mectin" drenches when we know that 97% of all Cooperia worms are mectin resistant.

To help you to get more understanding we will be holding a farmer farm focus evening in June where Dr Abi Chase will speak on her PHD subject of strategic drenching. This is the targeted non drenching of stock in order to slow the development of drench resistance (and it might even save you money at the same time!).

Copper Deficiency

Pasture copper intake drops over the Winter. This often results in copper deficiency which will affect growth rates, reproduction and animal health. Copper deficiency is seen most often in cattle and deer but can also occur in sheep and alpaca. One extra confounding factor this year is the reduction in the amount of Palm Kernel being fed to dairy cattle. PKE has very high copper levels.

The important thing to know about copper in your stock is the amount of reserves in the liver at the start of Winter. These need to be high enough to get through the Winter drop in intake. Liver levels can be checked by biopsy (easy to do on farm) or by collecting liver samples from stock sent to the works (get the form to go on the truck with them).

- ⇒ **Low copper - reduced performance**
- ⇒ **Excess copper - kills cows**

You need to know where you are before you supplement or at best you may be wasting your money, at worst you may kill stock and loose income.

Win! Win! Win! Win! Win!



Purchase a 20kg bag of Eukanuba Premium Performance before the 31st May and go in the draw to win a food storage wheelie bin and another bag of Premium Performance for FREE!!

A prize available at both VN Helensville and VN Kumeu Clinic.





