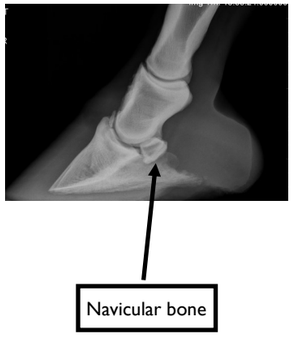
vetco limited

For all your animal health needs



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We're on the web!

www.vetco.co.nz

Navicular Syndrome

The first little horsie said to the other how painful she was in her hoof.
The second little horsie who was her big brother asked her to show him the proof.

She walked round the pen, from this side to that, without much a limp at all.
Her brother agreed she was no acrobat but her tale of pain did seem tall.

She insisted he continue to watch her as her rider had noticed her lame.
Finally brother saw poor weight transfer and agreed her left front foot was to blame.

This lameness had been starting and stopping, for at least a year, maybe more.
Most painful when the fetlock is dropping, the tension on her tendons making her sore.

Her hoof trimming left much to be desired, too much rasp had been used on her heel.
If only a professional had been hired, to save her from this painful ordeal.

The trouble with the heel being too short is it points her toe to the sky.
The pull on her tendons makes them too taught, putting strain on her heel bone too high.

The heel bone is better known as the navicular, it struggles to handle the strain.
It bulks up and changes its structure, the pressure within it causes the pain.

Its sore when her fetlock extends, just before her hoof lifts off the ground.
How she'll walk on it usually depends, whether the damage is mild, moderate or profound.

She points her sore foot forward while standing, and shuffles it whenever she trots.
She'll handle most exercise if not too demanding, but may stumble if she's exercised lots.

This little horsie requires a full exam, vets can detect the disease on x-rays.
Its most important they do all they can, to avoid many treatment delays.

Navicular syndrome is frustrating to treat, pain relief, sometimes surgery is needed.
If picked up early, prognosis is neat, when worse, a need for retirement is pleaded.

Miss horsie's case was mild, what to do? Special shoeing is all that is needed.
The farrier rolled the toe off her shoe, the improvement in lameness was splendid.

Now little miss horsie and her big gelding playmate ran round the paddock careless.
Making their owner's husband grow irate, as he sees his sheep's grass turn to mess.

High Calorie Demands

With many dogs being very busy over lambing some can lose a significant amount of weight. Keeping dogs too skinny not only negatively impacts their quality of life but also negatively impacts their ability to work. We have diets available that are very high in fat. These can help those skinnier type dogs maintain a more acceptable weight.

Frankly, the only way to ease your back pain would be for your rider to go on a diet!

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Special Points of Interest

- Remember dairy calves should get a Lepto vaccination at 8-10 weeks old and a booster 4 weeks later. 7 in 1 is best as it protects from clostridial diseases too.
- Any dislocated hips in cows during mating can probably be fixed but the vet needs to see the cow within 12 hours to have a fighting chance of success.
- Lambs with diarrhoea almost always have worms. If they get skitter less than 4 weeks from their last drench it probably means worms are reproducing faster than normal.

Inside this issue:

Develveting

Button drop will be well underway and new velvet replacing it. The better the planning around a vet visit, the smoother things will run.

Just a reminder to have the boys in the shed ready to go well before the vet arrives. This allows the stags to calm down. Not only does this make the job safer but it allows the sedative we use to work much more effectively. It also significantly reduces the risk of post sedative stag death.

Many thanks to deer farmers who do a fantastic job making develveting run smoothly and safely. We look forward to seeing you this year.

Non-cycler treatments.

Non-cycler cows can be a difficult and frustrating class of animal on a dairy farm. They are defined as cows that are more than 30 days calved and haven't cycled by the planned start of mating date.

In order for these animals to be detected at least 3 weeks worth of pre-mating cycles need to be recorded. The later the animal calved, the more likely she is to be a non-cycler.

You have two options with non-cyclers. Identify animals you believe to be at risk of becoming non-cyclers at calving. Usually skinny cows, or those that have been sick at some stage. They can then be given preferential treatment. Once a day milking seems to work best, formation of a skinny mob may also help so they are not competing with big fat girls. Feeding extra supplement is probably beneficial but there is conflicting scientific evidence about it.

The above measures need to be undertaken early, well before mating. Any significant change to feed or social groupings prior to calving is likely to have a negative reproductive effect.

Hormonal treatments is the best way to put a 'band aid' on the problem. Full Ovsynch programs, often called CIDR programs, are the only way to jump start a cows cycle reliably. On average it will move calving date forward 12-16 days in cows that haven't cycled.

If treated early the programme will increase lactation length in the next season. If put in later on (after planned start of mating), the net benefit is markedly reduced.

These programs don't fix the underlying problem with the cow. For this reason a cow that is given an ovsynch program this year is still likely to be a non-cycler next year unless other management practices are changed.

Take home message: Treat non-cyclers prior to calving to get maximum benefit. Though remember cows given a CIDR will not necessarily cycle earlier next year.

Cross suckling of calves.

Every calf rearer will have noticed calves sucking each others teats. This problem can progress from the calf shed and become an issue in milking cows with strong bonds forming between the sucker and the suckee.

A recent study has found that 74% of suckling will occur on one calf in the pen, i.e., the most accommodating calf, she is also the most likely to want to suck other calves.

By the time calves are 4-5 months of age they have mostly given up this behaviour. There are exceptions though. Calves that do suckle at this age will usually form pairs and be quite monogamous in their suckling habits.

Interestingly this study found no evidence that cross suckling increases future cell count, increases incidence of mastitis or reduces production.

The study only included a very small group of calves however so these results need to be taken with a grain of salt.

What it does show however is that even if it does have an impact on future milking performance, the impact will be small. This can be put down to the fact that only a small fraction of the calves are exposed to a significant level of suckling.

Side note

This study makes no mention of the effect of cross suckling on blind quarter formation so the jury is still out on that.

Equine Cushing's Disease

Hairy, fat, dumpy little ponies. Usually a pet or companion for a farmers child, or horse enthusiast, a good way to introduce them to horse ownership.

The first two words however, 'hairy' and 'fat' is a problem that affects many ponies, Animals that seem to be capable of glancing at a blade of grass and gaining weight. Hairy and fat can be signs of something more sinister occurring within the pony's body. A disease that can cause the dreaded FOUNDER! Commonly known as laminitis.

This sinister disease is a beast best known as equine Cushing's disease, or, pituitary pars intermedia dysfunction for any Latin aficionados. This is when the pituitary gland in the brain gets all screwy and can't do its job properly. The bodies annual cycle is lost meaning the horse keeps its winter coat all year. It gets high blood sugar like a diabetic causing it to urinate a lot. Worst of all it constricts the blood vessels in the feet which limits blood flow and causes founder. Founder is an emergency and usually requires the horse to be euthanised if not treated quickly.

The best way to avoid this problem is not letting the pony get fat. If however this happens and Cushing's is suspected then a blood test can be used to diagnose it.

Treatment is a daily medicine pill for the horse costing $1.50 - $3.00 per day. Results are usually very good!

Vetco's Delivery Service

If you require product delivered please phone before 10.00am and the delivery will be made the same day. You can also email us your delivery requirements on the following address: **deliveries@vetco.co.nz**

Johne's Disease. Playing the long game.

Protein is one of life's essential building blocks. It's the protruding, long molecule that forms your hair. It's the mysterious substance that makes your spit gloopy. It's the powerful filament that makes your muscles contract. It's the essential component that keeps water in your blood. It's the enzymes that break down your food and build your bones. It's even what holds your DNA together and protects it from damage. Truly if there is a jack of all trades in the body, it is the champ, the one and only, PROTEIN.

If protein were superman then Johne's disease is Lex Luther. Its nemesis a sworn enemy.

Protein gets into the body through the mouth. NZ's pasture has a massive amount of it. From there the bacteria of the rumen fiddle with it and digest it and then it is absorbed way down in the small intestine.

When it is absorbed it enters the blood stream where the bodies drafting gate sends it to where it is needed.

So Johne's is a bacteria, going by the name of Mycobacterium avium paratuberculosis (note it is not tuberculosis). It invades the small intestine and thickens its lining. It becomes so thick that the protein cannot be transferred from the gut to the blood. If this can't happen then many of the functions mentioned above can't happen.

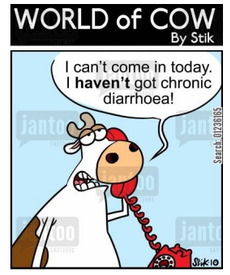
Initially this is seen as weight loss and reduced milk production in dairy cattle and wasting in ewes or yearling deer. Generally these animals are still eating and otherwise well. It progresses to a very watery scour as all the protein left in the gut draws the water out of the body. As the protein in the blood drops, water begins to leave the blood and pool where gravity pulls it, usually under the chin and brisket.

The bacteria is picked up from pasture when the animals are calves, fawns, or lambs. It is put there by adult animals affected by the disease. Once it is picked up from grass it spreads through the body and hides away in the muscle. In deer it causes disease quickly in yearling animals. In sheep and cattle it bides its time. It waits for years until the animal is 4-6 years old, then strikes. Most animals will pick up the bacteria from grass but only a few get the disease.

Control relies on early detection and culling of affected animals. Also minimising contact between calves and cows, especially infected cows is very important. No cross grazing or sharing yards and laneways. Pasteurising colostrum would help but is never usually practical.

Any attempts at control take 4-5 years to make a difference because it is so good at hiding in the body. Control is difficult and eradication is impossible and there is no cure for affected animals. The disease will be terminal.

More information can be found on the DairyNZ website.



Blood Testing:

A blood test is available to test for Johne's disease however it will only detect affected cows reliably when they are in the end stages of disease

Sheepdog

Once there was a blonde who was tired of hearing blonde jokes, so she died her hair brown.
A few days later she was driving in the countryside and stopped to let a flock of sheep pass. Admiring the cute wooly creatures, she said to the shepherd "if I can guess how many sheep you have, can I take one?" The shepherd, always being a gentleman, said "Sure!"
The blonde thought for a minute and for no discernable reason said "352." This being the correct answer, the shepherd was amazed, and exclaimed, "You're right! OK I'll keep my end of the bargain. Take your pick of my flock."
The blonde considered the flock and finally picked one that was by far cuter and more playful than any of the others.
When she was done, the shepherd turned to her and said, "OK, I have a proposition for you. If I can guess your true hair colour, can I have my dog back?"