

**Special points of interest:**

- For abortion samples, please don't bring aborted fetuses inside the clinic, there will be a box at the front door to drop them in. Please bring the freshest (no more than 24 hours old) least scavenged fetuses possible. Please bring placenta if available, and only one fetus of twins or triplets, as the cause of death will be the same.
- Silage eye is a common problem we see in ewes every year. This looks much like pink eye but is usually picked up from poor quality silage. If you are feeding silage to your ewes (or cattle) keep an eye out for this as early treatment is optimal.

**Inside this issue:**

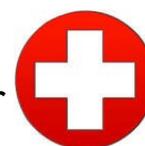
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## Extended Opening Hours

From Saturday 9th August until Saturday 4th October 2014 our clinics will be open 7 days 8.00am-5.00pm

## After Hours Veterinary Service

Please phone the listed clinic telephone number when you require veterinary services after hours. Your call will be automatically transferred to the cellphone of the on call veterinarian. If you are required to leave a message please leave your name and phone number. As many calls to our after hours service are made from cellphones, reception at times can be distorted. If the veterinarian has not responded to your message please do not hesitate to call again.

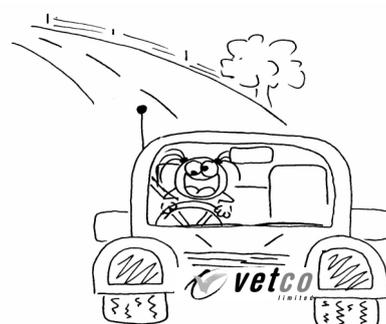


## Merchandise and Product Requirements

All products will be available from the clinics during our weekend hours

## Delivery Service

If you require product delivered (this includes the above weekends) please phone before 10.00am and the delivery will be made the same day.



## The Closet Clostridial – Sordellii

Clostridial diseases are the lovely group of bacteria that kill nice fat lambs. Pulpy kidney is the classic but there is also botulism, tetanus, black leg, malignant oedema and the disease concerned here— Sudden Death Syndrome.

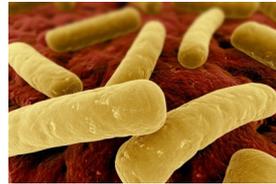
With more farms using high sugar 'Rocket fuel' grasses we are starting to see this disease more commonly. The change onto this grass can cause an overgrowth of the bacteria in the intestines. They then produce toxins which rapidly kill the lamb.

The issue is that this bacteria is not covered by the 5in1 vaccine which is usually so good for clostridials.

The good news is that new vaccines are available to cover for Sordellii. These are the Ultravac 6in1 vaccine and Covexin 10 which also covers for a series of other rare clostridials. Both can be used in cattle and sheep and provide very good protection.

If you are experiencing lamb deaths despite a good 5in1 vaccination protocol it may be worth investigating further.

Sordellii may be causing the issue. We usually diagnose it on lab confirmation and ruling out other diseases. If this is the issue then a simple change in vaccine should fix the problem.



## Nothing to clap about - Venereal diseases

With mating approaching in a few months time it may pay to put some consideration into diseases that can be passed between bulls and cows. There are four major diseases to consider here.

**Vibriosis-** Caused by a *Campylobacter* bacteria. This disease typically causes loss of embryos early in pregnancy which shows up as a cycle length of more than 24 days i.e. return to the bull. Occasionally cows will have some pus coming from their vagina but often this isn't seen. There is also the chance of the odd abortion at 5-6months. The bacteria cannot survive in the environment but rather lives in the penile sheath of bulls and the vagina of cows and spreads during mating. Most cows and bulls under 3 years old clear the infection within 4-6 weeks but 1-2% of cows and most bulls over 3 year olds will become permanently infected once exposed. These animals are the reason this disease can pop up year after year.

**Tritrichomonas-** This is a disease caused by a tiny protozoan (similar to a bacteria). This disease is almost the same as vibriosis however

there is often copious pus from the vagina of affected cows. There will also be a high number of cows with pyometras (uterus permanently filled with pus) which are infertile. This disease is unlikely to occur in Southland but is still possible.

**Herpes-** Bovine herpes virus causes three disease syndromes. IBR (Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis)- which is a nose and eye infection in cattle where their nose and eyes have a snotty discharge. IPV (Infectious Pustular Vulvovaginitis)- This is the female genital form where the vagina becomes inflamed and pus covered. IPB (Infectious Pustular Balanoposthitis)- This is the male genital version where the penis and sheath become inflamed and pus covered. The respiratory form is most common but can spread from the nose of one animal to the genitals of another. This can then cause returns to oestrus as described above. Animals become permanently infected but usually aren't affected by the disease in future.

**BVD-** This disease is

important in any cattle. It can cause abortions throughout pregnancy and birth of calves with birth defects, much like Hairy Shaker Disease in sheep. This disease is mainly spread by persistently infected animals which became infected as a fetus. These animals never clear the infection and constantly spread it around the herd. They are often small and may have scours but other than this often no overt signs are seen, just a low incalf rate and high numbers of slips.

**How to prevent-** Vibriosis and Tritrichomonas are mainly prevented by using young bulls as they aren't likely to be infected long term. BVD can be tested for by blood test so it is a good idea to get the bulls tested. Common biosecurity is also important. Things like good perimeter fencing to stop visiting bulls, ensuring any hired bulls are tested free of these diseases and vaccinated. Not overly prolonging breeding as this gives disease time to spread. Avoid mixing mobs of cows from different farms of origin.

## The Feathery Manor

At the end of a long hard day in the depths of winter with snow drifting down outside and icicles from your nose, when you sit down in front of the fire with your bowl of chicken soup, do you ever consider what that chickens house was like? Was it as comfortable as you are? Don't worry, this isn't a greenie, chicken welfare based article. Just a simple guideline to the importance of good housing to maximise egg and meat production.

The main considerations in coop design are location, ventilation, comfort, humidity and cleanliness. The most important part of the coop is the hen house. By comparison the run is simply to confine the chickens and only needs to be large enough, usually at least 2m<sup>2</sup> per chicken.

**Location-** Obviously fairly close to the house so the eggs aren't too far away for Sunday breakfast. Ideally the land should be flat with free draining soil or on a slight slope to allow water drainage, puddles are the enemy. Also shelter from the prevailing wind is important. Sun exposure is good as it helps dry out the run.

**Ventilation-** This is important to remove expired

gasses and toxic faecal odours from the house. These can cause lung problems and make the chooks sick. Making ½ to ⅓ of one side of the house open is usually adequate. This can be chicken mesh or a large door way. It should be facing away from the prevailing wind. Remember we are trying to create ventilation, not drafts. Also the house should be at least 1.5m high to allow a greater volume of air in the house.

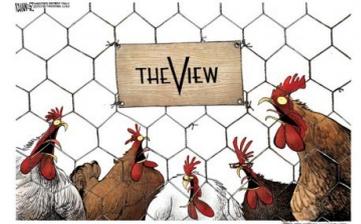
**Comfort-** Space is important here. There should be at least 1/3m<sup>2</sup> per hen. Also they need perches with the correct diameter, 5x5cm seems to work well or a 2x4" on its side. 60cm above the floor works well or lower if you have a large breed. They must be higher than the nesting box or hens will prefer to sleep and toilet in their nest box and no one likes poo on their eggs. Nesting boxes should be 30cm<sup>2</sup> and have a deep bed (30cm deep) of straw. Avoid dusty or mouldy straw as this can cause breathing problems. Having a door way to provide privacy is also a good idea, using a shredded feed sack as a curtain is also a good idea.

**Humidity-** This is controlled

by waterproofing the house. Obviously a good roof is essential but also treating the timber with a non toxic oil treatment such as linseed or mineral oil. A concrete or free draining soil floor is a good choice or an elevated wooden one. Mould and mildew is a bad sign.

**Cleanliness-** Constructing an easy to clean structure will save you time and frustration in future. Simple interior will allow easy cleaning, this is where a concrete floor is great, just hose it down and allow it to dry. The floor and walls should be scrubbed with Virkon twice per year. Nesting boxes should be easily accessible so straw can be replaced every 4-6 weeks or more regularly if it becomes dirty. Food and water containers should be easily cleaned weekly with a very weak bleach solution. Check nest boxes and perches regularly for tiny pinhead sized red mites, especially in winter. The house can be dusted with Pestene powder to treat for these but the hens should be dusted simultaneously. This will incur a 24hr egg withhold.

Good housing leads to good hen health and subsequent good egg numbers and quality.



## Keep Those Dogs Fit

Working dogs are currently on their holiday with little work to do and they are often left to lounge around in their runs.

This is a great time to get condition on those animals who are consistently skinny. Similarly it is important to not let the others get too fat. Please remember that you do

still need to feed them every day, just restrict the amount given each day.

Keep them on their working diet. This should be 30% fat and 30% protein to meet the high demands of work. Insufficient fat is typically where most diets fall down.

Please also remember to

keep the dogs exercised with daily runs. This means that when their services are required they are fit enough to work. Every year we see an epidemic of cruciate ligament ruptures in unfit dogs being put back into work.

Fit dogs will also be less frustrating!



## Parvo

As many of you will know Parvo virus is a highly contagious virus which affects dogs. It essentially strips the lining from the intestines and causes them to bleed. If untreated death will follow, even with treatment the odds aren't great and animals often never fully recover. Diarrhoea and vomiting are most commonly seen and usually

occurs in pups. Black and tan breeds are particularly sensitive.

The virus can survive for years in the environment so once it is present on a property it is essentially there forever.

The good news is the vaccine provides very good protection. We recommend vaccinating at 6, 10 and 14 weeks of age,

followed by an annual booster and 2 yearly after that.

Try to vaccinate bitches prior to mating however they can also be vaccinated in early pregnancy if it comes as a surprise. This boosts protection provided by colostrum.

The cost of vaccination is tiny when compared to the cost of treating an affected dog.

## Iodine

Iodine is a mineral present in soil. Most of New Zealand is deficient in iodine with patches of Southland being particularly bad.

All mammals including cattle and sheep use iodine in their thyroid gland to produce a hormone. This hormone determines the metabolic rate of the animal.

There are two times of year iodine is particularly important. During tupping low iodine levels will depress ovulation rate resulting in lower scanning percentage and subsequent lambing. It is also very important in the last trimester of pregnancy. If there is insufficient iodine intake then the fetus within the ewe becomes deficient.

This shows up when they are born. They are unable to increase their metabolic rate. As a result the new born cannot produce sufficient heat and will most likely die of exposure. This is often seen as many lambs dying of exposure unexpectedly when the weather is not too bad.

Knowing the iodine levels of your animals is quite difficult. We have two tests available. Urine iodine will identify if the ewe has excess iodine however low urine iodine doesn't necessarily mean the ewe is deficient. Blood iodine is useful however only reflects the iodine intake of the previous 3 days.

Another way for us to check is to post mortem

dead new born lambs and weight their thyroid gland. If it is enlarged then this confirms they were iodine deficient and a supplement program will need to be designed.

The mineral can be given in several ways. Flexidine is a long acting injection which can be given pretup and covers the ewe for the year. Alternatively potassium iodide can be given orally. It can either be mixed with water to form a drench, or spread on pasture. This needs to be done both pretup and pre-lamb but is the cheapest option.

There is also iodine in kelp which can be fed out as an organic alternative.

## Vetco Ltd

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We're on the web!

[www.vetco.co.nz](http://www.vetco.co.nz)



## Bearings

With lambing approaching bearings will become a problem all too soon.

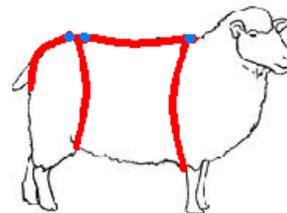
They are usually caused by the large, late pregnancy uterus pushing outwards and causing the vagina to 'pop' out.

The earlier these are treated the better the outcome. Treatment involves cleaning the vagina with warm water and soap. The ewe cannot urinate with a prolapse so will be busting to pee. Holding the prolapse up allows her to pee, this reduces the risk of the bladder bursting when the bearing is replaced, a burst bladder will kill the ewe.

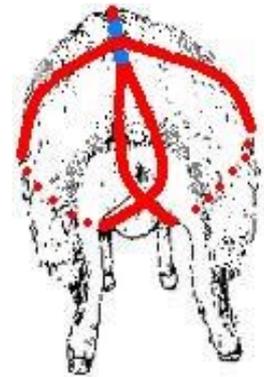


retainer as shown above which is tied to the wool.

Alternatively a harness can be made from 2 lengths of baling twine as shown in the diagram.



Once pushed back it can be held in place with a plastic bearing



Treatment with 8mL of Norocillin is also a good idea.

Dusting with magnesium pre-lambing will reduce the occurrence of bearings as well as milk fever.

## Dehorning

Animals over 6 months are required by law to be given local anaesthetic during dehorning. This requires a vet. We strongly recommend any animals being dehorned are given local anaesthetic as this procedure is very painful.