



Levin and Horowhenua Vets  
in association with  
Horowhenua Boys and Girls Ag Club  
present:

## TOP TIPS

Vet notes on lamb, kid and  
calf health



- Basic care
- Feeding guidelines
- How to prevent bloat
- Vaccinations - when and why
- Drenching - when and why

## Basic care:

What does my new lamb, calf or kid need?

- Shelter and warmth.
- Feeding - colostrum, milk, pellets, grass, hay or straw.
- Fresh water.
- Human interaction - cuddles, lead walking, grooming etc.
- Check your pet daily for signs of illness:
  - are they drinking well?
  - are they running around and playing?
  - is the navel nice and dry?



## Feeding guidelines:

What should I feed my pet calf, kid or lamb?

- Milk powder like Ancalf, Anlamb or Miligans, or fresh cows milk from a dairy farm (but see our recommended feeding rates below).
- Also offer fresh water, straw and hay.
- From 1 week old also offer pellets to start developing the stomach so grass can be processed.

How much should I feed my pet calf, kid or lamb?

- Start with smaller feeds several times daily as newborn calves and lambs only have small stomachs, then gradually



increase amount of milk fed per feed and reduce number of feeds.

- For calves:
  - 3-7 days: about 1L 4 times daily;
  - 8 days - 2 weeks: about 1.5L 3 times a day; and
  - 2 weeks to weaning: about 2L twice daily.
  - Warm milk is best.
- For lambs and kids:
  - 3-7 days: 150-200 ml 4-5 times daily;
  - 8 days - 3 weeks: 250-300ml 4 times daily;
  - 3 weeks - 2 months: 300-350ml 3 or 4 times daily; and
  - 2 months until weaning: 400-500ml twice daily.
- Feed milk at body temperature (about 37-38 degrees).  
Avoid feeding milk too cold or too hot.

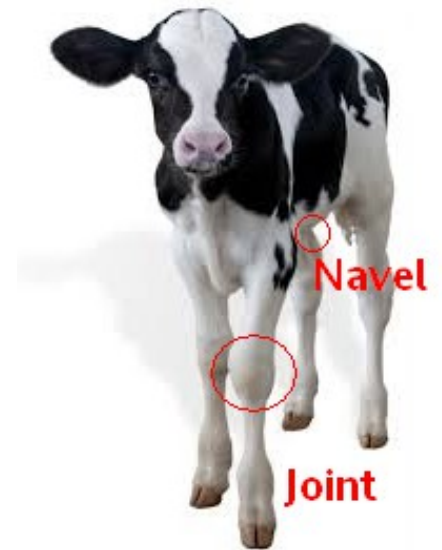
When do I wean my pet lamb, calf or kid?

- You can wean your pet from 8-12 weeks of age, ideally continue milk feeds until after Ag Day, as this will help with bonding.
- To wean your pet, reduce number of feeds and amount of milk fed over about a week, then stop completely.
- Make sure your pet is eating plenty of grass and pellets so he/she can continue to grow.

## Health care:

### Navel ill (infected belly button):

- If newborn lambs or calves don't get enough colostrum to drink within 6 hours of birth, and/or don't have their navels sprayed with iodine, they are more prone to get infections in their navel.
- Bugs can travel through the bellybutton into the bloodstream and cause infections in other body parts like joints.
- Check navels daily for swelling, oozing, pain and feeling hot, and check for lameness and swollen joints.



### Scour (runny poos):

- Runny poos in your lambs and calves can be caused by:
- Sudden changes in the milk or milk powder.
- Not enough colostrum as a newborn making pets more susceptible to diseases.
- Bugs like Rotavirus, Salmonella and E.coli.
- For pets that are still drinking well and have a mild scour, add in a feed or two of electrolytes per day, so animals won't get dehydrated.



- For very sick pets with a severe scour, contact your vet straight away, as he/she may need bug-specific medication like antibiotics, extra fluids or pain relief.

### Bloat (gas build up in the stomach):

- It is often caused by overfeeding, feeding milk too cold or too hot and changing the source of milk.
- If pets especially lambs get too round in the stomach, look uncomfortable and hunched and don't want to feed, call your vet promptly as they can get very sick very quickly.
- We do not recommend the levels of feeding on some brands of milk powder; the amounts recommended can be too much for most lambs and bloat occurs often if lambs are overfed.

### Vaccination:

- There are dangerous bugs in the ground, called Clostridia, that can cause diseases like Tetanus, Black leg and Pulpy kidney. These can cause lambs, calves and kids to get very sick and even die.
- A vaccination is an injection given to give the animal immunity for certain diseases, so the animal can fight the bugs off and not get sick.
- If their mothers were vaccinated before birth, some protection can pass through the colostrum into the newborn.
- Lambs, calves and kids can be vaccinated from 2-4



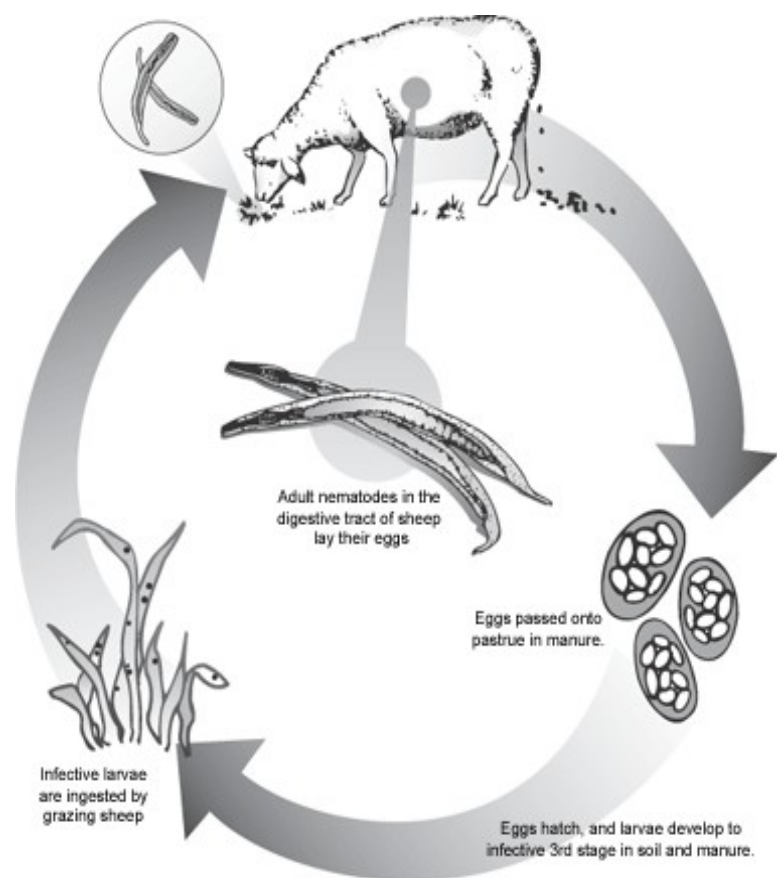


weeks onwards depending on the type of vaccine, and should receive a booster 4 weeks later to provide full protection.

- If you have an unvaccinated pet from an unvaccinated mother, another injection called Antitoxin can be given at docking, castration or disbudding, to provide protection straight away.

### Worming (drenching):

- Once calves, kids and lambs start eating a good amount of grass, usually between 6-8 weeks of life, they can pick up little worms and worm larvae that live in the grass. These worms can cause runny poos, weight loss and blood loss in your pet.



- For calves, a strong combination drench like Matrix Minidose (made up of several different drench drugs) given by mouth is best. Pour on drenches that get put onto the skin are also available but can cause hairloss and skin problems in some cases. Calves should be wormed every 4-6 weeks depending on where they are kept. Calves will need to

- be heavier than 120kg to be drenched safely.
- For lambs and kids, a drench called "First Drench" is best, given by mouth also, every 4-6 weeks.
  - Drench animals with the correct dose depending on your pet's weight as overdose can be toxic.
  - The need for drenching may vary depending on where your pet is kept. If you need advice on when to drench, please call your vet.
  - At LHVC we do dispense drench and vaccine to suit your needs.



Good luck for Ag Day, and enjoy spending time with your little lambs, calves and kids.

For any questions, please call us at the clinic on 368 2891 and ask our friendly farm vets for advice.