



**Animal WOFs Newsletter  
– December 2012 –**



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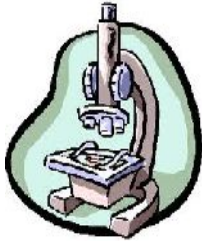
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# Animal Health Diary December

## *The 5 F's of summer animal husbandry...*



### **F**ECs

As internal parasite season continues, keep monitoring stock, especially young stock, for diarrhoea, weight loss, anaemia and illthrift that could indicate high worm burdens. Consider Faecal Egg Counts to check if animals need to be wormed.

### **F**acial Eczema

With summer here, it will only be a matter of time for spore counts to be on the rise again. If you haven't signed up for our spore count emails yet, flick me an email and I can easily add you to our database for these.

It might be worth starting zinc treatments at low doses soon for cattle if you are using trough treatment.

We are doing facial eczema runs again this year, with Time Capsule and Faceguard boluses. These are available for cattle and sheep, one rumen bolus will last for 5-6 weeks and provides good protection for facial eczema.



**If you would like us to come out and time capsule/faceguard your animals before spore counts reach dangerous levels, please email or phone Stef or Yvonne at the clinic.**

Having several properties in the same area for our runs will greatly reduce mileage costs to you, and our vets can quickly and safely treat your animals (as long as they are confined in small pens or races already).



### **F**lystrike

With plenty of rain yet really warm days, flies are multiplying and the danger of getting flystruck animals is high. Protect your sheep and cattle by using flystrike preventatives. We have a range of flystrike treatments and preventatives in the clinic. For more information on flystrike, see our newsletter from November 2011.

### **F**eeding goats garden waste

We have recently seen a few cases of Rhododendron toxicities in goats, which can cause vomiting and severe gut upsets, and would like to remind goat owners to be careful when feeding garden waste and to ensure no toxic plants are accessible to goats. As they are browsers, goats prefer weeds, bushes and trees over regular pasture and are thus more prone to eating toxic plants.

### **F**eed shortages

Ensure plenty of supplementary feed is on hand for summer as we often see feed shortages especially with a drought. This could be hay, silage, baleage, sheep nuts (in limited quantities so animals won't get rumen acidosis) and similar feeds.



# To worm or not to worm...?

## - An update on horse wormers -

### Why worm horses?

The days are getting warmer and the nights are getting shorter again. It is the time of year to start thinking about worming our horses.

The Ascarids (the large roundworm), Bots, Large Strongyles (blood worm) and the tapeworm are the most common worms in New Zealand causing problems in our horses. Colic, weight loss, poor performance, chronic diarrhoea and even death can occur. What is less well-known is that worms can play a role in lameness, bone marrow disorders, dental disease and skin infections (eg tail rubbing).



*Worms found in the intestine of a horse during colic surgery.*

### The traditional approach:

Traditionally people worm their horses every 6 to 8 weeks while rotating drench groups every treatment. Unfortunately most people swap brand names, not active ingredients. Who has not swapped between Genesis, Promectin or Equitak? Unfortunately all these brands contain the same active ingredients, and therefore work the same way.



The traditional recommendation of worming your horse every 6 to 8 weeks is based on studies done in the 1960s, when bendazole (white drench) was the most common drench used and *Strongylus Vulgarus* was the main problem. Since this time a lot has changed; bendazole is hardly used as an active ingredient nowadays and *Strongylus Vulgarus* is not the main problem any more.

*Strongylus vulgaris larvae in a petridish.*

### Resistance and Refugia:

Recent studies have shown that resistance is still the biggest issue in New Zealand, but with new techniques and worm drenches, resistance is relatively easy to manage.

Resistance develops by overusing wormers in horses that do not need to be wormed. When worming your horse, you kill susceptible worms and leave the resistant worms alive. Because there are no other worms in the paddock, the resistant worms have free rein and start multiplying rapidly, leaving you with a paddock crawling with resistant worms.

The main way of preventing this is to keep a level of non-resistant worms in your horses' environment. This is called a "Refugia".

One of the latest studies done by Massey University, which is backed up by research done by other leading organisations in New Zealand, is focusing on natural resistance of horses against worms.

This research shows that 45% of horses shed 98% of all larvae or worms when run together in one paddock. This means that 55% of horses are very low shedders; they shed the remaining 2% and therefore do not need to be wormed as often.



*Counting eggs, larvae and adult worms under the microscope.*



## Faecal Egg Counts:

Faecal Egg Counts (FECs) are used to determine whether a horse has worms and can give an estimate of how heavy the worm burden is. This is an ideal tool to determine, for each individual horse, whether drenching is needed or not.

We can assist you with protecting your horses and property from resistant worms. The tailored program we can create for you is based on this latest research and is tailored to your individual horse and property with the help of FECs.

As an extra bonus we can save you up to 50% of your worming treatments.

## What is LHVCs new worming programme?

This tailored programme consists of:

4 FECs spread over one year, used to place your horse in one of 3 groups:

- “High shedding” = these are horses that have a low immunity against worms. (27% of population)
- “Moderate shedding”= these are horses that have a medium immunity against worms. (38% of population)
- “Low shedding”= these are horses that have a high immunity against worms. (55% of population).

Once these FECs have been examined and your horse is placed into one of these groups, we will send you the right wormer for each horse on your property when worming is needed.

**A FEC from every horse on your property is required for this program. A sign-up form should be filled in and handed in together with the samples. From this time onwards, we will send you reminders every 3 months to hand in faecal samples for your next test. Once these samples have been tested, the appropriate wormer (if required) per horse will be sent out to you.**

Take into account also that in late summer, bots are the main issue, while in late autumn and early winter tapeworms are the main problem.



The products that we will be using are Ultramox ® with Moxidectin, Oxfendazole and Praziquantel as active ingredient and Genesis ® which has Abamectin and Praziquantel as active ingredients.



## When can I start my horses on this programme?

The best time to start on this tailor-made programme is 6 to 12 weeks after the last worming treatment. The exact timing depends on the last wormer you used. Also your horse needs to be at least 6 months old. If you want to know what the best timing is for you, please give us a ring and we are more than happy to assist you.

## What are the costs of the new worming programme?

The cost for the first year will be **\$25,- per month per horse**.

If your horse is placed in the moderate or low shedding group, you may receive a discount of up to \$60 after the first year. Once placed in the low shedding group, the cost can drop to \$10,- per month for this horse for the following years.

***Pay up front on an annual basis and get 5% off the total bill.***

Talk to us about payment options for you.

We can also assist you by determining if your current worming programme is functioning well. To do this, hand in a faecal sample for a FEC 2-10 days after your last treatment. We will ring you back with results and advice.

## Facts or Fables?



Did you know that worm larvae can move away from droppings onto pasture almost immediately after being passed? They also can migrate to up to 2 m away from a manure pile. Considering this, picking up faeces is not as safe as most people think.

Another widely spread misconception is that harrowing the faeces will prevent re-infection with worms. This is not true, since the weather conditions in NZ do not kill larvae. In fact you are spreading the larvae over the total grazing area.

Using adult sheep and cattle to clean up a paddock is in fact very useful. They 'vacuum' up the larvae shed by horses and kill them during the digestive processes. They have only one parasite in common: *Trichostrongylus axei*, which is of very little significance as far as disease in horses in New Zealand is concerned.

If you want to use cattle and sheep to clean up your pasture, allow your pasture to rest for at least 3 weeks before cross grazing them. This allows maximum larval hatch out. In spring time this is ideal, since it will take about 3 weeks for the grass to grow back and provide enough food for the next species.



# “Weed of the month”...

## This month featuring: - Yew tree -

### Description:

This tree grows up to 20m tall and has reddish and flaky bark that is deeply fissured in old trees.

The dark green leaves are 2-3 cm long and linear with a strong curve and a prominent midrib. Male and female flower cones are arranged on separate trees. Brown and ellipsoid seeds are present on fleshy scarlet coloured globoid discs.

English yew (*Taxus haccata*) is remarkably toxic, doses of 100-200 g of yew leaves will kill a horse.

### Distribution:

Yew trees grow throughout New Zealand. They are planted mainly as single trees in gardens, cemeteries and farms but may also occur in hedges.

### Species affected:

All grazing animals, especially young stock and goats. All parts of the yew tree are poisonous. Most animals will not graze from a growing tree but wilted cuttings of most plants become more attractive and palatable to grazing livestock.



### Clinical signs:

The main toxic principle is the alkaloid taxine. Its chief effect is to depress the conducting tissue of the heart causing heart failure.

The most common feature of yew poisoning is sudden death often while the leaves are still being eaten. Symptoms which may be seen are trembling, staggering, breathing difficulties and collapse followed by death in 5 minutes, though death in cattle has been known to be delayed for up to 2 days, during which time the animals appear normal.

When death follows rapidly after ingestion of the plant there is little inflammation of the stomach, but if death has been delayed for a few hours there is intense inflammation due to an irritant volatile oil (oil of yew) in the sap.

### Diagnosis of poisoning:

Diagnosis depends on the demonstration of leaves and twigs in the ingesta. Yew poisoning is not uncommon in calves, as these animals will nibble any vegetation within reach.

### Treatment:

This is symptomatic at best as animals often don't show clinical signs apart from sudden death.

Prevention by blocking access and not feeding clippings that could contain yew tree is best.





## WOF programme update...

Our WOF programme has almost completed its second year running, with more newsletters and special offers, another great tradesite at the Manawatu Country Living Expo and many more exciting years to come.



*Our tradesite at the Manawatu Country Living Expo 2012, a fun event for the whole family.*

*We did some seminars on footrot, scours and other topics and had a great time meeting people.*

*Along with Spot the dog we had 4 well behaved pet sheep at our site, loving the cuddles from kids and grown-ups alike.*

### LHVC website:

We have recently added a WOF section to our website, [www.lhvc.co.nz](http://www.lhvc.co.nz), where you can find all newsletters from the previous year in case you would like to read up about diseases that we have already covered and have misplaced your emailed copy.

### WOF membership:

We would like to continue to offer you our WOF membership. For \$60 per year you can receive a 5% discount on all farm visits, in clinic consultations and surgeries as well as our products and merchandise.

You can find the WOF membership form on our website, or visit the clinic to pick one up.

### Newsletters:

Two-monthly newsletters will continue to be emailed out at no additional charge. As it is quite a lot of work creating and assembling these newsletters, please bear with us if one should be running a little bit late.

For the coming year we would like to see some of our WOFers feature with their lifestyle block, so if you are particularly proud of your property and livestock and would like to share a short (or longer) story and some pictures with the other readers, please contact Stef at the clinic, via [animalwof@lhvc.co.nz](mailto:animalwof@lhvc.co.nz) or 368 2891.

### Facial Eczema runs:

As mentioned above, we are again offering facial eczema runs this year, where we go from farm to farm and insert Time capsules or Faceguard boluses for you.

All you need to do is sign up (by calling the clinic and speaking to Stef or Yvonne, or flicking us an email), then we will organise a day to suit once spore counts have started rising.

Animals will need to be ready at the yards or in races as this will reduce vet time. A shared mileage cost with many farmlets in the same area being visited in one day, our FE-runs are a safe, efficient and cost-effective way of protecting sheep and cattle from the painful and often deadly effects of facial eczema.



At the same time as FE runs, we can also drench, vaccinate and check animals for you.

### Vaccine update:

In the past we have been using the clostridial vaccine Ultravac 5in1 for most sheep and cattle, as well as goats and alpacas.

We would like to encourage people to use Ultravac 7in1 next year, especially for cattle but also for sheep and other species, as this includes protection for Leptospirosis also.

Leptospirosis can occur in sheep, cattle, pigs and other species (see newsletter from May 2011 for more info on Lepto), but the biggest issue with this disease is the potential human health issues it can cause.

Lepto is transmitted mainly via urine, so mainly pet cattle, sheep or pigs that are often handled should have protection from Lepto.

Similar to the Ultravac 5in1 vaccination, animals require 2 injections 4-6 weeks apart then annual boosters (pigs will be boosted every 6 months).

So, Merry Christmas to all our WOFers and may the year 2013 be a successful and prosperous one.



Looking forward to see you at the clinic or at your place,

Stef of the team  
@ LHVC.

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