



Animal WOFs Newsletter – January/February 2014 –



Welcome to another *Animal WOFs for Lifestyle Blocks* newsletter.

Each issue we are covering important animal health issues relevant for that time of year. Please feel free to give us feedback or ideas for the next issue, with any topics you would like to see covered.

In this issue:

Animal Health Diary – things to watch out for at this time of year

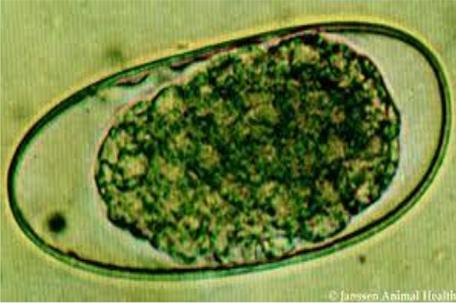
Pigs need wallows... why?

“Weed of the month”... an introduction to poisonous plants - Tutu



Animal Health Diary January/February

Summer basics for keeping your Moo's and Baa's healthy...



Barber's Pole worm:

With the wet yet warm weather worm larvae are thriving and we have seen the first cases of Barber's Pole worm in the Horowhenua. Ensure young stock are drenched and consider drenching adult animals if you see evidence of a scour and/or weight loss. Talk to your vets about which drench is best for your livestock and check our September 2011 newsletter for more information.

Facial Eczema warning:

Spore counts are starting to rise in this area and we recommend taking precautions now. See our December 2013 newsletter for more information on FE, or talk to your vets at Levin & Horowhenua Vets. If you are not on our spore count email list but would receive our weekly spore counts, email Stef at animalwof@lhvc.co.nz to be added.



Flystrike:

Blowflies are thriving in warm and moist conditions, so consider flystrike prevention like using Zapp Encore or Cyrex liquid on your sheep and monitoring for scours, open wounds and other bodily fluids that can attract maggots.



Supplementary feed availability in case of drought:

Just in case this summer gets as dry as last year, have some supplementary feeds on hand for stock. Hay, baleage and silage feeding can also help to reduce excessive grazing down of pastures, which in turn can help with FE prevention (remember the fungal toxins sit at the bottom of the sward in the dead matter).

Vaccination:

Remember to vaccinate young stock with two doses of Clostridial and Lepto vaccines to protect for Tetanus, Pulpy Kidney, Black Leg and other deadly diseases. Talk to your vet if you are unsure which vaccine to use, and when.

If you would like further information on any of these, please contact your team of vets at the clinic on 368 2891 or email animalwof@lhvc.co.nz.

Pigs need wallows... why?

Pigs like KuneKunes are becoming more and more popular as lifestyle block pets and can make fantastic companions as they learn fast and can be taught tricks, but their welfare and wellbeing on farm is important for a fulfilled piggy life.



Apart from clean water and good nutrition like pasture for grazing, commercial pig pellets as a supplement and treats like vegetables and fruits, pigs also need a good shelter that protects them from the weather (wind and rain as well as sun and heat) and a wallow.

Pigs need mud baths and wallows for four reasons:

1. Temperature regulation:

Pigs are not able to sweat due to a lack of sweat glands and cannot pant effectively like dogs. The most efficient way they can cool down is by covering their skin in a layer of mud, which when evaporating will cool the skin.



2. Sun protection:

A thick layer of mud covering can also act as a sunscreen and prevent sunburn in lighter coloured pigs.

3. Parasite control:

By covering their skin with mud pigs are essentially removing external parasites like lice and mites from their skin, reducing the need for drugs to control skin diseases.



4. Pig welfare:

Research has shown that wallowing is not only needed for protection from overheating, sunburn and parasites, but is an essential component of normal pig behaviour. It is thought to be a hard-wired behaviour and thus rewarding and relaxing in itself.

So with summer coming up, if your pigs haven't got a wallow yet, get a shovel, some soil and water and start digging, then sit back and enjoy watching your pigs have a great time.

“Weed of the month”...

This month featuring: - Tutu -

Description:

The tutu plant, depending on the species, can range from a small, about 40cm tall plant to the up to 6m high tree tutu. Leaves are narrow or ovate in shape and are opposed on the long and spreading stems. The flowers are green-yellow in colour; the fruit is usually black to purple and large petals surround bunches of 5-10 fruits.



Distribution:

There are eight or more different species of tutu. Although some have local distribution only, most are distributed widely throughout the country.

Species affected:

There are reports of tutu poisoning in cattle, sheep, pigs, elephants (although these are rarely found on lifestyle blocks around Levin...) and dogs.

Tutu is the classical poisonous plant of New Zealand and in our earlier history significant numbers of cattle and sheep were lost from Tutu poisoning.



Clinical signs:

Caused by the toxin tutin, contained in all parts of the plant, clinical signs are sudden in onset and occur within 24-48 hours following ingestion of the plant.

As tutin mainly affects the nervous system, signs include muscle twitching, extreme excitement causing blind charging (especially in cattle) and convulsions (seizures). Cattle and sheep often become very bloated and are at risk of inhaling regurgitated stomach contents. Death is thought to occur in most animals poisoned

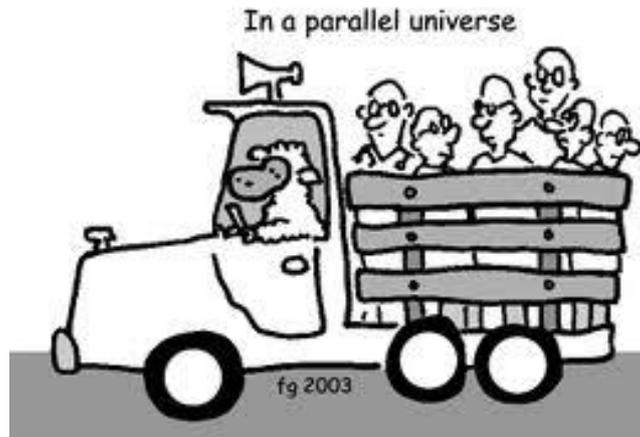
with tutu.

Diagnosis of poisoning:

Diagnosis is based on history of exposure and clinical signs. In cases of death, an autopsy can show undigested tutu leaves in the stomach.

Treatment:

As no antidote is available, treatment is mainly symptomatic and includes administration of anti-seizure medication, but as it is often unsuccessful, preventing access to this plant is preferred.



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

Step of the team
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