Dry cow
Let’s talk beef calves
Hogget mating needs to be a flexible policy on farm
Animal remedies: your responsibilities as a farmer - and how we can help you!

In our last Vetlife newsletter I wrote a complex article about our legal responsibilities and obligations as veterinarians when Restricted Veterinary Medicines are prescribed and used on farm animals.

But were you aware that farmers too have responsibilities and obligations around RVMs - and that there can be legal consequences for farmers who fail to comply (just as there can be for veterinarians)?

So, we are in this together! Our Vetlife clients know this, but just for the record let us talk through a few specifics……

Firstly, make sure you obtain your RVMs from a legal source.

Secondly, enable your prescribing veterinarian to comply with his/her legal obligations. For example, before a veterinarian prescribes any RVM, there are requirements (amongst other things) that:

• the veterinarian must be satisfied that he/she has sufficient information to support the prescription.
• the veterinarian must establish that the purchase/holding for use is appropriate and justified in the circumstances.
• the veterinarian must provide direction (or make arrangements) to address any possible adverse events that can arise from the use of the RVM.

In addition, the veterinarian must ensure that you, the farmer, are given all necessary information to use the RVM in compliance with its conditions of registration. This includes providing guidance on minimising the risk of residues (including advising withholding periods) in animal products intended for human consumption.

And finally do not stockpile RVMs. A prescription can only prescribe the quantity of RVMs necessary and sufficient to achieve its purpose.

What this means, in practice, is that no RVM should be prescribed or used without an accurate, comprehensive and professional diagnosis and treatment programme (including accurate management of WHPs and follow-up advice if the animal is not responding) from a veterinarian who follows the required legal processes. Non-compliance could lead to trouble.

Working together

Our, often large-scale, outdoor farming systems (numbers of animals, numbers of staff, the geographic farm area) can be a challenge. Vetlife is constantly impressed by how well many of our NZ farming enterprises effectively manage all of these challenges. Good practices lead to excellent outcomes - it is very achievable.

The prompt and effective use of the antibiotic group of RVMs in our farmed livestock is an important tool (a huge privilege) in managing good animal outcomes.

The availability and use of antibiotics on NZ farms is only possible by virtue of this regulatory package and the special relationship between farmers and veterinary practices. To maintain this privileged use of antibiotics, farmers and veterinarians together must ensure that our practices are excellent, legally compliant and changing with the times.

At Vetlife, we take pride in doing the job correctly and being a responsible and supportive partner to our clients.

I would finish this editorial by emphasising a couple of points:
1. Stick close to your veterinarian – we are genuinely a partner in the process of RVM use. We can make the whole process very efficient and effective. Make sure that you talk to us regularly and make us a close partner in your system. We are trained to do this well.
2. If farming operations are offered what might be referred to as “black market animal remedies” with no veterinary supervision and no year-round input, or possibly even without a script, walk away. This may be illegal. Take note of the points at the start of this editorial. Fundamentally, it is an offence to use RVMs otherwise than in compliance with the law.
3. Continue to support all aspects of our peculiar and unique NZ farming system for the access and use of RVMs – we are in a privileged position. Read about other developed countries and their systems if you have doubts.

As usual, I am very happy to talk in person or on the phone if there are any concerns, questions or worries about anything that I have mentioned here.

Wishing our Vetlife clients a very good autumn!

Adrian Campbell
Practice Principal
The dry period provides us with the perfect chance to address mastitis problems in our herd and to get our cows’ udder health at its best for the next season. Selective dry cow therapy is key to curing cows with either persistent or subclinical mastitis while also preventing new infections in the dry period and ensuring responsible use of antibiotics. Key areas to consider when planning your dry cow are the length of dry period, which cows to dry off when, and the information required for deciding which cows need antibiotic dry cow therapy. These are all things that your vet can discuss with you during your milk quality review/dry cow consult.

A minimum dry period of 6 – 8 weeks is recommended to allow the cow’s udder to recover in between seasons. Working backwards from your planned start of calving allows you to calculate your dry-off dates. Care must be taken to ensure that your dry period is longer than the withholding period of your selected dry cow therapy. It also pays to remember that, as milk production drops, not all cows need to be dried off on the same day; if your high cell count cows are dried off earlier, they will help to reduce your bulk tank somatic cell count towards the end of the season. There may also be other groups that would benefit from early dry off, such as lame cows or lower body condition cows, especially those that are also early calvers. Talk to your vet about how this could be incorporated into your dry-off plan.

In order to plan your selective dry cow therapy, somatic cell counts (SCC) from each cow are required from, ideally, three or more herd tests throughout the season, with a final herd test as close to dry off as is practical. This, alongside your clinical mastitis records, will allow you, in conjunction with your vet, to determine a specific cut-off on your farm for which cows require antibiotic dry cow therapy - normally this is somewhere between 25,000 and 200,000. If there are insufficient records to make a cow-level decision on dry cow therapy, or the risk of dry-period mastitis is considered to be too high, then a blanket approach to dry cow therapy may be required, and this is something that should be discussed further with your vet.

Your vet will be able to help you pick the most appropriate antibiotic dry cow therapy for your farm. This will be decided based on previous mastitis cultures from farm and antibiotic response, combined with the claimed length of protection of the product and the length of the dry period on the farm.

For all cows, teat sealant is a useful tool when it comes to dry off. Regardless of whether the cow is receiving an antibiotic or not, teat sealant plays an important role in preventing new infections in the dry period and is something to discuss further with your local Vetlife clinic.

Caroline Reid
Vetlife Wanaka
Prior planning prevents poor performance

This old adage never rings more true than when we consider the managed change in diet of cattle through the autumn/winter period. Transition feeding of cattle onto feed crops is an important consideration during the late autumn and dry-off period. Typically, of course, various feed crops are used in order for finishing stock to grow and for maternal stock to put on condition over the winter period. These crops, when managed well, will ensure cattle are well fed and will perform. However, transition from a predominantly pasture diet to feed crop requires careful management to prevent potentially harmful issues occurring. With poor conditions at sowing and failed fodder beet crops in some areas, a number of operators have had to sow kale/rape or oats and grass mixes as winter feed. Many farms will utilise primarily kale or rape crops this late summer/autumn for feeding of cows. Alternatively of course, many will be using fodder beet as a supplement feed crop going into dry off.

Traditionally, poor transition onto kale/rape or oats/annual ryegrass crops has resulted in cows suffering from nitrate poisoning, with small numbers of cows suffering from sudden death: there is also the potential for some abortions if the nitrate toxicity is sufficiently severe. Typically though, with gradual transition, the cows become accustomed to the diet and all is forgotten as far as animal health issues are concerned. We have known about the issue of nitrate toxicity in feed crops for a long time, and indeed there are historical references to humans suffering from nitrate poisoning. Even though we have known about the issue for such a long time, I have no doubt that we will receive calls from concerned clients about a nitrate toxicity issue occurring in herds come the winter.

Fodder beet is one of the few crop species with which we can see clinical acidosis occurring in cows which have not had a sufficiently slow feeding transition onto the crop. What is seen in severe cases is a small number of cows dying very suddenly within 48 hours of going onto the crop; these cows die from metabolic acidosis and it is a dreadful thing to have happen purely as a result of consuming too much fodder beet bulb in too short a time. However, this may indeed be the tip of the iceberg, with a large proportion of other cows in the herd suffering from sub-acute ruminal acidosis (SARA). SARA occurs when the acidic state in the rumen is not high enough to cause death but does cause severe injury to the wall of the rumen. What we typically see is the affected cows going off their feed for a couple of days, and generally looking poor, but eventually seeming to come right and mix back into the herd. If you see this in some cows, take a note of their IDs and pin them to the office wall, as unfortunately you may well see them again. The wall of the rumen of these cows has been chemically burned, therefore they have difficulty absorbing the products of bacterial fermentation that are occurring in the rumen. Depending on the severity of acidosis experienced, the animals may or may not fully recover over time. Some will die in 1’s and 2’s throughout the winter, and others will not put on condition as well as their less-affected herd mates; and you will end up seeing these cows again, most likely picking them up in the bucket of the tractor or as numbers on the cull list after calving.
All this can be prevented through ensuring the cows transition slowly onto the crop. Start by offering them 1 or 2 kilograms (kg) of dry matter (DM) per head per day and slowly increase this by 1 kg every second day - this means that by the time 2 weeks is up, they will be consuming their full allocation. Of course, during this transition period and throughout the winter, ensure they are offered their daily requirements of supplement, in the form of silage and straw, at least 1 - 2 hours before they are offered their daily break of fodder beet. It is important to ensure DM allocations are accurate, and this requires DM yield testing and accurate measurements of break length and width.

Milking on fodder beet is becoming very popular and is an excellent cheap feed available to cows to boost MS production and to reduce feed pressure from the platform pasture late into the autumn and/or spring. Transitioning milking cows is simpler than post dry-off transition because there is generally more time available to get the cows onto the fodder beet. Some farms of course have grown winter crop on the platform and will get the cows started in late April/early May; again a slow and gradual transition is paramount to ensure the cows adapt easily to the change in diet.

Similar to what is described above, start out offering 1 - 2 kg DM per cow and gradually increase this by 1 kg DM every few days until the herd is consuming 4 - 5 kg DM per cow. Timing of offering this fodder beet is important; ideally cows should be offered a break with 40% of their total grass requirement and then allocated their beet alongside another break with the remaining 60% of their grass requirements. This is so that the cows have grass in the rumen to dilute out the fodder beet while also slowing down their rate of intake, and hence the potential for acidosis is reduced. It is advisable not to feed more than 5 kg DM of fodder beet to lactating cows, as there appears to be a protein deficiency which can result in MS production crashes and spikes in SCC late into lactation.

Feel free to give the office a ring (03 693 1045) before transition to talk through feeding options that are applicable to your farm. Getting the feeding of winter crops right really should not involve animal health issues. The only time we ever see health issues arise is when the management of the feeding is at fault, resulting in either acidosis or nitrate toxicity with fodder beet or kale/rape feeding respectively. Neither are a pleasant sight to see - and the offal pit often becomes a bit more full when things go wrong.

Craig Trotter
Centre for Dairy Excellence
Hogget mating needs to be a flexible policy on farm

Mating is just around the corner, and now is the time to check how your hoggets have performed this season and to decide whether you are going to put them to the ram or not. There are a few pros and cons that need to be considered when choosing to mate your hoggets, and not every farm system or year will be suitable. These considerations are beyond the scope of this article but are well published and easily available through Beef + Lamb NZ. It is likely too late now to bring hoggets up to weight if they are not there already, but maybe the information will provide some food for thought for next year. Historically only 5% of the annual lamb kill has been from hogget mating, and it will only be successful for those who are already doing a good job of growing out their hoggets. This needs to be the first priority before deciding to put a ram out.

For those of you who have considered these issues and are keen to mate your hoggets, given the good feed covers around this year, there are a few best practice guidelines that should be followed. Managed correctly, hogget mating has the potential to enhance the productivity and profitability of the future ewe flock – but the inverse is also true if it is not done well.

These hoggets need to be selected now (if not already) and then priority fed through the autumn. They need to be a minimum of 40kg or 65% of their mature liveweight at the beginning of mating. In order to achieve this, target weights need to be set and regular weighing carried out to check that these goals are being achieved. This ensures that they have attained puberty and will be cycling at the time of mating, as well as grown out enough to lamb and rebreed successfully. If there is concern about the ability to feed the whole mob, then draft off the heavier individuals and mate only those. The feed requirement for pregnant and lambing hoggets is 22% higher than for dry hoggets over the July to December period (or 100kg of extra dry matter over a one-year period).

Vaccinations should be given at the appropriate timing. Toxovax® is a live vaccine and needs to be given >4 weeks before the introduction of teasers rams. Orders must be placed NOW if they have not been already – only one lifetime vaccination is required. In order to give best value, and if possible, campylobacter vaccines should both be given pre-mating, with a gap of 4 weeks between sensitiser and booster. Clostridial vaccines should already have been given, with just a booster required pre-lamb. Please ensure the correct technique of administration and storage of these vaccines, and ask if you have any questions.

The mineral status of the hoggets should be established through testing with your vets and corrected if needed. Iodine and selenium particularly will have an effect on fertility and lamb survival if not adequate. Faecal egg counts should be carried out both pre-mating and pre-lamb with a known effective anthelmintic given if required.

It is recommended to use teaser rams (vasectomised rams) to induce oestrus and to allow more hoggets to be mated early in their breeding season, thus enabling a tighter lambing period. Teasers should be introduced 17 days prior to the entire rams. A teaser ram to hogget ratio of 1:100 should be used. Fewer teasers are less effective.

Hoggets are ‘shy’ breeders, so experienced (two-tooth or older) entire rams should be used at a ratio of 1:55 for mating – and run them in a small, easy contour paddock. Genetics rather than feeding are the biggest determinant of lamb size, so sires from larger breeds are best avoided to reduce the chance of dystocia. Mate for a maximum of 34 days (two cycles).

Please do not restrict your hoggets after mating or throughout pregnancy. They need to be gaining at least 135g/d to help improve placental development, lamb growth rates, growth of the hogget herself and milk production. If you are planning an intensive lambing beat, ensure that the hoggets are accustomed to the presence of the farmer in their paddocks, and try not to interfere too much with the ewe-lamb bonding immediately after birth.

Mating should be timed so that hoggets and lambs will be consuming surplus feed, will be on a rising plane of nutrition to meet target BCS for re-mating but will not be competing for feed with other MA ewes. Good quality pasture covers >1200 kg DM/ha are needed to achieve this and this requires planning. Legume-based swards are more likely to be growing and are therefore a suitable forage for use post-lambing, ie. lucerne and clover/herb mixes.

The policy for hogget mating needs to be flexible on farm from season to season, and do not be afraid to skip a year if feed shortages are a concern or hogget growth has not been adequate – it is not worth compromising the future performance of your flock. Good luck for the coming mating season, and if you have any questions please contact your vet as soon as possible while we still have some time to help.

Rebecca Pirie
Vetlife Alexandra
Teatsealing heifers: the ins and outs

With the late arrival of soaring summer temperatures this year, it is difficult to think that we are already well on our way to autumn. For many of you, teatsealing heifers is a practice you have used for a few years now, reaping the numerous rewards of this extra expense. For those of you who have not taken the plunge yet, here is a quick rundown on the process and how it can help your heifers to hit the ground running when entering the milking herd.

The average rate of intramammary infections in NZ heifers 30 days out from calving has previously been found to be 15.5%, but on many farms this can increase to 25% (especially in wet years!). Heifers most often become infected either at calving or early lactation, often with Strep uberis (a major culprit of environmental mastitis).

Internal teat sealants are composed of a non-antibiotic, inactive substance that assists in the formation of a barrier when inserted into the teat canal. This barrier prevents bacteria entering the udder during the dry period and when calving (the two major risk periods for heifers when it comes to contracting mastitis).

Studies have shown that administering teat sealant to heifers 4 - 6 weeks out from the PSC markedly reduces the rate of clinical mastitis at calving and in early lactation:

- Strep uberis infections at calving were reduced by 84%
- Clinical mastitis cases in the first two weeks of lactation were reduced by 68%  

These figures make clear the benefits of teatsealing – fewer cases of mastitis mean less money spent on antibiotic/anti-inflammatory treatments, less money lost through discarded milk and depressed milk production, and less chance of losing a heifer to severe infection or ending up with a three-titter. On top of that, teatsealing prevents a truckload of stress and frustration when seeing your potential future top producers damaged before they have even started their milking careers.

So that is the ‘why’ covered – what about the ‘how’?

As there is no antibiotic in internal teat sealants, an excellent standard of hygiene is essential. Vetlife will provide a team of highly trained veterinary professionals to carry out the insertion of the sealant in heifers. The job can be done through herringbone sheds, or we can provide a specifically designed trailer which can be used with yards either at a run-off or on the dairy farm.

Autumn will be here before you know it, and decisions need to be made now to make sure that all the hard work that has already gone into your heifers does not come undone in spring. Teatsealing can be carried out as late as two weeks before calving, but we will have teams out and about from April onwards - and spots can book up fast. Please contact your Vetlife vet to discuss things further and to give your heifers the best start possible.

Lucy McLeod  
Vetlife Dunsandel

Vetlife clinic buildings – the new ones!

Many thanks from Vetlife to the many independent private landlords and Vet Clubs who own most of our clinic buildings.

Recently we have been fortunate to acquire some new clinic buildings around the Practice. We would like to acknowledge the many independent private landlords and Vet Clubs who have been so generous and demonstrated their trust in Vetlife!

The provision of modern rented premises has allowed us to provide excellent facilities for our cat and dog work as well as ensuring a great working environment for attracting vets to Canterbury and Otago.

We have had some compliments and criticisms about our new premises, so I hasten to point out that the majority of our buildings are leased.

Again, thank you to our many landlords.

Adrian Campbell  
Vetlife Practice Principal
Animal health plans serve as great starting points for regular conversations with your animal health team. These should be customised and fluid, and tweaked on a regular basis depending on what the environment and economy throw at us.

As on-farm audits get more labour-intensive and restrictive, having an animal health plan is one simple step that you can take to make your life a little easier. In fact, the majority of dry-stock audits now require an AHP before they can be signed off, and a personalised veterinary-based one will contain all the requirements for the different companies who will view them.

AHPs are helpful when budgeting for your annual animal health spend, and they are also an easy way for you and your vet to determine areas where the cost-production benefits can be tweaked.

It is easy to make an AHP. An hour or so spent with your vet and rep, discussing key dates, feed plans and your targets for the following twelve months, should see you right. They will make you a draft plan, and then once you are happy, they will finalise it.

You also have multiple options for styles. The traditional printed version can be completed between you, your rep, and your vet, and it should be utilised by all parties on a monthly basis to discuss what you have planned for the next month. The second option, the online AHP, is for the tech-savvy farmer, or for those who have trouble keeping that little book out of the washing machine. An online AHP, which is made with the help of your local Vetlife rep, is an excellent tool which has recently been streamlined into a very effective phone app. The benefit of the online option is that it will automatically update your plan as dates move around. For example, if your first lamb or calf drench is two weeks later than anticipated, it will automatically update the rest of the season’s schedule. It also sends reminders, customised to the level you require, and sent to your vet if you wish. There is a one-off set-up fee, then an annual subscription fee to cover the cost of the reminders and admin required. Furthermore, you can take pictures of your product and these will automatically assign expiry dates and batch numbers for those pesky audits. Check out www.animalhealthplan.com, or contact your Vetlife rep or vet if you are interested in more information regarding this option.

Last but not least, AHPs can help maintain your sanity and achieve your production goals – thinking a month in advance with ordering can easily put you ahead of the game when it comes to supply issues, which do unfortunately happen (especially with live vaccines).

Contact your local Vetlife team today to see how we can help you to get ahead.

Steph Voice B.Sc, PgD. App Sc
Vetlife Oamaru
Let’s talk beef calves

The days are getting shorter, the leaves are turning, and weaning is either coming up, a recent event or even a distant memory. No matter what stage you are at, the management of your beef calves is vital for giving them the best start possible.

Weaning is generally done at 6 months, and the target weight of the calf should be 50% of the cow’s liveweight. The reality is that the calf may be weaned at 35 – 45% of the cow’s liveweight. Therefore, the calf is required to gain extra liveweight using the pasture as its sole energy source. Nutrition is vital after weaning as the calf must consume enough energy for maintenance and for growth, ideally achieving 1kg/day. Therefore, good quality and quantity of pasture is essential.

As calves tend to be on good quality pasture, or high carbohydrate crops, there is an increased risk of clostridial diseases. The clostridial spores are commonly found in soil or water and they are the main cause of death in young, growing calves. Fortunately, there are vaccinations to help prevent these diseases, and weaning is an ideal time for calves to get their sensitiser dose if they have not already received it. Calves require a sensitiser dose, followed by a booster in 4 – 6 weeks (in order to achieve an adequate immune response to vaccination) and an annual booster to maintain immunity. The 5-in-1 vaccine covers tetanus, pulpy kidney, blackleg, malignant oedema and black disease, whereas the gold standard 10-in-1 covers the above as well as sudden death syndrome. Talk to your local Vetlife vet to determine which clostridial vaccine is best for your farm.

Weaning is the ideal time to give the calves their first drench as they have potentially been exposed to parasite larvae from their first mouthful of grass. The weaning drench should be an oral combination and the dose accurately determined by weights of calves. It is important to dose to the heaviest calf to ensure there is no underdosing. Although beef calves should all be >120kg at weaning, it is important to know that any calves under this weight should not receive abamectin. Combination drenching is critical because Cooperia species have resistance to the macrocyclic lactones (‘mectin’) drench group but are susceptible to levamisole. Whereas ‘mectins are generally effective against Ostertagia, parasites are very adaptable and, therefore, resistance is a constant concern. Performing faecal egg counts prior to drenching, to assess parasite burdens, and another one 11 – 14 days after drenching, provides an easy assessment of drench efficacy on your property. Your local Vetlife vet is able to perform this test for you. Regular drenching every 4 – 6 weeks is critical in parasite management on your property. If swapping to injections or pour-on drenches from previous oral ones, then these can be stretched out to every 6 weeks. Drenching of calves should continue until late May/June as the autumn flush causes a peak in parasite larvae due to parasites liking similar conditions to grass. Talk to your local Vetlife vet about an animal health plan that helps manage parasites on your farm.

A growth-limiting consideration for your calves is their trace element status. Selenium naturally decreases over spring and summer and copper over autumn and winter. Copper and selenium may also be depleted when calves are wintered on brassica crops such as kale. Cobalt deficiency in cattle is rare but may occur in summer resulting in low levels of vitamin B12. Deficiencies in one or more of these trace elements result in poor growth rates. In order to determine the trace element status of your calves, 10 blood samples can be collected at weaning or during their monthly drench by your local Vetlife vet. The results from these blood samples will allow educated decisions on whether the calves require supplementation and for which trace elements, and will help decide if a long-acting option using injectables or boluses would be sufficient. Your local Vetlife vet and rep will be able to make the most appropriate plan for your farming system using this information.

The most common disease complaint in weaner calves is scouring which can cause significant production losses. Common causes of scouring in weaner calves are coccidiosis and yersiniosis. Coccidiosis is a protozoa which is common in low numbers in the gastro-intestinal tract of calves, but if the calf becomes stressed the protozoa can multiply and overcome the animal’s immune system. Coccidia oocysts can also be found on pasture, and, if the calf ingests large numbers of oocysts from heavily-infested pasture, the immune system may also be overwhelmed causing disease. Coccidiosis causes mild to severe diarrhoea, dehydration and anaemia. Stressors that make a calf more susceptible to coccidiosis include weaning, inclement weather and nutritional stress. Yersiniosis can also be caused by stress and results in anaemia, diarrhoea, wasting without diarrhoea and dehydration. Another consideration in weaner calves is Bovine Viral Diarrhoea virus (BVD) which causes ill-thrift and slow growth rate. If there is any concern about an ill-thrifty calf, then a blood test is used to determine if this is a disease within your herd. Talk to your local Vetlife vet if you have any concerns about scouring or ill-thrifty calves – a diagnosis can then be sought and a plan put in place to reduce production losses in your young stock.

Sally Clarke
Vetlife Twizel
Winter weather warmers

Winter is approaching, so here are some ideas to help keep your working dogs warmer and more comfortable during the winter months. Trying to keep warm is wasted energy which consequently needs to be replaced with extra nutrition. It is pleasing to see many farmers are now doing some, or all, of the following:

• Attach a swinging flap to their kennel door to protect your dogs from cold wind and rain - use Perspex, plywood or similar.
• Defrost meat from the freezer before feeding it.
• Purchase coats for dogs to wear at night and while travelling on the back of the farm truck or trailer.
• Inspect kennels for holes and gaps which let in cold air, and make repairs as soon as possible.
• Break the ice on any frozen water supplies each day - bowls, troughs etc.
• Supply bedding of some type - you may need to try a few before finding one that your dog prefers.
• Shift kennels to a sunny, sheltered area.

It is also helpful to have any lameness or stiffness in your working dog examined by your vet. If arthritis is affecting the dog’s ability to work, or jump on or off the back of the truck, then suitable anti-inflammatory or pain-relief medication can be prescribed.

We have a good supply of energy-dense working-dog food, dog covers and bedding available - visit your local Vetlife clinic to check these out. Your working dogs do appreciate efforts to keep them warm.

Helen Williamson
Vetlife

Beware of unwanted surprises

It is that time of the year again when many farms will be entertaining visitors (both two- and four-legged) for the duck shooting season. To reduce the risk of an unpleasant surprise on kill sheets in coming months, sheep farmers who have duck shooters coming onto their farms are advised to establish some requirements before the visitors bring along their dogs.

Across the country many hundreds of dogs are taken onto farms for duck shooting. To protect stock, farmers need to make it clear to any duck shooters that the dogs need to be treated for sheep measles at least 48 hours (and no more than a month) before coming onto their properties.

It is no good dosing the dogs on arrival - they need to be treated a few days in advance, as dogs can shed sheep measles eggs up to 48 hours after treatment. They should also have some form of treatment evidence - best of all is a treatment certificate or a receipt from their vet. All vet clinics stock products to treat dogs using either allwormers or straight tapeworm tablets, both of which are effective for removing sheep-measles tapeworms.

While farmers are doing a great job at keeping sheep measles at low levels, foreign dogs present a risk to on-farm biosecurity, and each year, following duck shooting, farmers incur losses from sheep measles brought in by these visiting animals.

A phone conversation prior to duck shooting, with hunters who intend to come onto your farm, is well worth having, and it can save a lot of grief (not to mention the potential loss of thousands of dollars).

For more information contact Ovis Management or visit www.sheepmeasles.co.nz

Dan Lynch
Ovis Management Ltd Project Manager
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We value your feedback. Please feel free to comment or lodge a complaint in confidence on our services, advice and products.

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