

FRANKLINvets update

Franklin Vets Te Kauwhata turns 5!

Mark Hosking BVSc MACVSc

This June, we celebrate 5 years of operation from our Te Kauwhata clinic. Franklin Vets TK started life in 2006 from a 3 x 5m Portacom building and a shipping container at the back of Carley's truckyard.

Staffed by myself and office manager Karen Elliott, operations began with just one commercial farm client.

Visitors were always welcome; however only two could fit in at a time around the store contents and seating was provided by a folded camp chair and a Rumensin® drum. My lasting memory of the Portacom will be the temperature - it was always incredibly cold or incredibly hot with little in between.

In June 2007, we moved into a new building where we are currently located and opened the Taupiri clinic to service a rapidly growing clientele in the North Waikato. Today we have a strong team of 6 vets across the two branches along with Jess, our technician; our trading manager Ross McDonald and 3 office managers, including Karen, who remains the mainstay of the Te Kauwhata clinic.



**Te Kauwhata and Taupiri will be opening on Saturday mornings from 16 July.
Te Kauwhata 9am – 12pm Taupiri 8am – 12pm**

Franklin Vets Inaugural Ladies Night

Paula O'Reilly BVSc BSc(Agric)



Franklin Vets recently hosted our first ever ladies night for our female dairy clients. Despite the best efforts of the weather gods to thwart us, the evening went ahead as planned on the 26th May, at Hillside Hotel in Huntly. After sitting on the bus for over an hour, braving the flooded farm track and mounting the seemingly endless flight of stairs to the function room, the ladies definitely deserved a glass (or six) of wine on arrival!

In preparation for the coming season, our guests received an update on calf rearing from two of our vets, Kris Brownlee and Jenny McCall, as well as a brief talk on Rotavec® Corona by Linda Harris of Intervet Schering-Plough Animal Health, who generously co-sponsored the evening.

After a delicious meal and time to mingle, the ladies

were treated to a stand-up routine by our mystery guest speaker, Michelle A'Court. Michelle has been awarded the title of NZ's best female comedian six times and there were more than a few sore cheeks and stomachs around the room by the time she sat down!

One of Franklin Vets' staff members celebrated a milestone birthday on the night – she does not want to be named but we can just say that she works at the Pukekohe branch and that she hitched a ride on the stairlift later that night – she insists that it wasn't because she had too many birthday drinks though!

Thank you to again to our sponsors: Intervet Schering-Plough Animal Health, the Caci Clinic and Diosa Hair (both in Pukekohe), for helping to make this great night out so successful.

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FRANKLINvets

Minimising milk fever - springer mob transition management

Ross Beal BVSc / Mark Hosking BVSc MACVS

Magnesium supplementation is by far our most important tool to reduce milk fever in our herds.

DCAD, MgS & MgCl

There is still debate whether the DCAD principle of milk fever control works in New Zealand. The great thing we have learnt from using DCAD is just how effective magnesium sulphate (MgS) and magnesium chloride (MgCl) can be in preventing milk fever when used in support of the traditional control programs that use magnesium oxide (MgO).

Unfortunately, both of these salts have their down sides; one of which is that both contain far less elemental magnesium than MgO (10%, 12% and 55% respectively), so we need to use them at higher levels.

MgCl is also very bitter and will put cows off water, while MgS can cause scouring when used in high amounts, so it is important that you work with your vet to develop a program that will maximise the benefits and minimise the side effects of these products.

Recommended magnesium dosages for springing and lactating cows

Method	Dose MgO (gm/cow/day)
Drenching	20-30
Pasture dusting	70 -100
In maize silage, silage or PKE	50

	MgS or MgCl (gm/cow/day)
Water trough (Do not drench)	100 Insufficient on their own. Good support for MgO & DCAD
Added to feed	50-100 Mixed with reduced MgO. Seek advice.

Remember that springers, colostrum mob cows and the milking herd need the correct amount of magnesium everyday, rain or shine.

Avoid potassium

The other key gain in our understanding is the role that potassium (K) plays in milk fever. The level of pasture potassium on a farm has a huge influence on both magnesium uptake by the plant from the soil, and magnesium absorption in the cow. High nitrogen and high rainfall can also play a part in reducing magnesium absorption, but high K is the real driver.

- Knowing the K levels on paddocks to be grazed by the springer mobs gives a good indication of the risk of milk fever
- Farms with high K levels should supplement magnesium right through winter to maximise weight gain in dry cows and minimise metabolic disease
- Don't calve down on effluent pastures as effluent contains very high levels of K
- Spring calving farms should avoid putting potash on calving paddocks between March and October
- High rainfall releases K from soils, increasing the level in plants, making this year a prime one for increased milk fever

A few other pointers to good transition management:

- Ensure that cows spend at least three weeks in the springer mob by drafting springing cows early
- Look closely at dry matter intake (not allowances) and transition feeding to allow the rumen to get used to the milking cow diet
- Ensure that cows in the colostrum mob have adequate magnesium everyday and are well fed to avoid ketosis - a risk factor for milk fever and a disease in its own right. Aim for energy intakes of 90-110 MJME /day depending on cow size
- Consider supplementing the colostrum mob with lime flour to increase calcium intake. **Do not supplement the springer mob with lime flour**, unless you have precise advice, as this will trigger milk fever
- We can blood test the first batch of springers to check their mineral status and take pasture samples to establish the degree of risk of milk fever
- If more than 5% of the herd had milk fever last year, take the time to develop a plan with your vet to reduce it this year, and do it now!

Nowadays, with careful prevention it is possible to calve an entire herd with less than 3% needing treatment for milk fever. *Contact us for testing and customised advice.*



Preparing for lambing

With many of you scanning your ewes now or in the near future, it's time to think about what you can do to get their lambs off to a good start and onto the truck sooner.

A pre-lamb 5-in-1 booster vaccination is essential for all ewes and hoggets to provide protection against unnecessary clostridial lamb losses in the early lambing to docking period.

You should also consider a pre-lamb drench for some or all of your flock. In-lamb hoggets and ewes with multiples, in particular, will benefit from parasite treatment. Remember that hoggets have to not only feed a lamb but are still growing and developing themselves. Supporting them through lambing means better-grown and more fertile two-tooths next season.

All ewes experience a rise in parasite egg output around the time of lambing, so pre-lamb anthelmintic treatment will help to reduce

Ostertagia

Mark Hosking BVSc MACVSc

Left unchecked, this little parasite worm, less than 9 mm in length, would be responsible for the greatest productivity loss in grazing cattle in New Zealand. While predominantly affecting young stock during their first winter, Ostertagia is also an issue of older stock.

The vast majority of these worms are present not in the animal, but on the pasture. They develop from eggs passed in cattle dung, from where immature larvae migrate up into the pasture. They are then eaten and migrate to the abomasum (the 4th stomach) where they burrow into the stomach lining to complete their development to mature adult parasites. It is here, in the abomasums, where most of the damage is done and in large numbers, developing Ostertagia larvae can do enough damage to kill the animal.

Ostertagia larvae also have a unique ability to delay their development in the lining of the stomach, remaining in this 'inhibited' state for long periods. Severe disease can result when large numbers of these parasites suddenly develop and cause huge damage to the stomach lining. Called Type II Ostertagiosis, cattle up to 4 years of age and sometimes older are at risk; however young stock in their first winter are once again most at risk.

It is really important to note that not all drench families are effective against inhibited larvae. Levamisole, a product very effective against resistant Cooperia, is an example.

The take-home message is that treating the significant parasites that affect cattle at different times of the year is more complicated than giving them a squirt of whatever you have on the shelf. With the continuing development of resistance to many of our worm drenches, it is important to make the right decision when choosing a product, even if you are only treating a few animals. *A few minutes talking to our staff could make a huge difference to your productivity!*

Quirien Domper BVSc

the pasture larval burden that new lambs are exposed to. Pre-lamb treatment will also increase ewe milk production by reducing the energy requirement of the ewes' immune system to overcome this parasite burden. More milk means faster growing lambs!

We have a conveyor available to allow for quicker and easier handling for vaccination and capsule administration. *Talk to Ross, Matthew or your vet to formulate the best pre-lamb treatment plan for your farm.*

Milk Quality Investigation Packages

David Hawkins BVSc

Ongoing high somatic cell counts, high levels of clinical mastitis and Inhibitory Substance Grades are all issues that bring a lot of stress as well as costing the farm significant amounts of money through high treatment rates, increased culls, discarded milk and production losses, not to mention the costs of grading incurred.

Getting to the bottom of the issue can be difficult as there are a multitude of factors that interact to result in a problem. Most "easy-fix" solutions don't work and waste resources that could be better directed at resolving the underlying problems. Franklin Vets offer a referral level Milk Quality Investigation Package that teases out where the mastitis is coming from. You can direct resources appropriately to resolve the problem.

From the 2011 season forward Fonterra will be specifically targeting high BMSCC farms to reduce their BMSCC. Where demerits have been incurred these can only be used to offset investigations by accredited veterinarians. David Hawkins is a Fonterra Somatic Cell Count Support Scheme accredited veterinarian, meaning when you use our referral Milk Quality Investigation Package you can claim back the costs of the investigation against your demerits. In many cases Fonterra will pay for the whole investigation.

Our milk quality service involves referral level evaluation of BMSCC, Herd Test, Clinical Mastitis and Bacteriological data; a thorough assessment of farm practices and herd history; a milking time "wet" machine evaluation; cow teat assessment; milking management; environmental assessment; comprehensive reporting with a concise action plan to drive change on farm. We have no vested interest in selling you a particular milking plant or insulating your yard so you get independent advice you can trust.

We will give you an up-front quote for the work if required so you know what you are paying for ahead of time. And it will always be less than expected where you meet Fonterra Somatic Cell Count Support Scheme requirements.

Dairy Client Appreciation Seminars

Franklin Vets third annual Dairy Client Appreciation Seminars were held on Wednesday 8th June & Tuesday 14th June at Counties Function Centre and Te Kauwhata Rugby club rooms respectively. We were delighted with the fantastic combined turnout of 270, it was rewarding to receive positive feedback from our dairy farmers.



A 'thumbs up' to our veterinarians, Greg Lindsay who spoke on body condition scoring, David Hawkins for his dynamic master of ceremony speech, and as usual Jason Fayers was an informed speaker on prevention of ketosis. Following on from a delicious dinner, the evening was topped off with Bernice Mene, Silver Ferns netball representative for ten years, who shared her life experiences in the realm of sport.



Horse and pony WOF for winter

Holly Walton BVSc

Budgeting to feed horses through winter can be a real juggling act, especially when grazing young, geriatric or pregnant animals together. Horses spend more energy keeping warm over winter and grass growth is greatly reduced, so extra supplements may be required to meet maintenance requirements.

Here are a few tips to keep your horse at its optimum health over winter:

Teeth:

- Make sure your horse has had their teeth checked within the last 6-12 months. A horse's teeth erupt continually throughout their life and are prone to developing sharp enamel points that grow unevenly and painfully into the cheeks and tongue. These sharp points can lead to oral disease and make processing of feed very inefficient.
- Gum disease is another issue that can contribute to weight loss and difficulty processing feed. A horse's mouth cannot be adequately examined unless the horse is sedated, the mouth opened with a speculum, flushed thoroughly and then examined with a dental light and mirror.
- Several vets have undergone post-graduate training specifically in equine dentistry and are able to provide this full service for you.



Worms:

- These days it is important to know the active ingredient in the worm product you are using. Approximately 80% of horse worms are now resistant to the ingredients in Panacur® and Bomatac and there is also significant resistance to most of the other active ingredients available on the market.
- If you are concerned whether your wormer is working effectively heading into winter, a faecal egg count (FEC) test should be performed 10-14 days after treatment. There should not be an egg count present at that stage. The test is not valid if performed immediately after treatment as some worms are not killed but stop reproducing for a few days. They are normally producing eggs again by 10-14 days if your wormer hasn't worked.
- Moxidectin treats the small strongyle/cyathostome worm during its larval migration through the bowel wall. This worm causes weight-loss, diarrhoea and ill-

thrift in horses. Moxidectin is also the only product with no documented resistance in New Zealand to date.

- We recommend using a moxidectin-based product annually (Equest Plus® or Ultramax™). Generally, this is used in early spring but if you are unsure whether your horse has received a moxidectin product in the past year, now is a good time to treat.

Feeding:

- An adult horse can consume approximately 2% of its body-weight in dry matter (DM) per day (see table below for variations).
- This equals 10kg for a 500kg horse. How you "spend" the 10kg for this horse's total daily intake will determine whether they maintain, lose or gain weight.
- Reputable feed supply stores are helpful at providing information for basic feed supplementation over winter. Your veterinarian is also able to provide a more detailed feeding programme for horses suffering from illness or unexplained weight loss and difficulty maintaining weight.

Approximate feed requirements:

Type of horse	Energy (MJ/DE/day)	Protein (gram)	Fibre (kg)	Intake (kg/DM/day)
300kg pony light work	54	520	3	6.8
500kg horse turned out	68	653	5	10
Pregnant mare (500kg) 8-11 months pregnant	75-82	720-787	5	10
350kg yearling (growth)	83	797	3.5	7.9

Remember that good shelter and warmth are also imperative. If your cover isn't waterproof, it is far worse than no cover at all! Good shelter belts and/or sheds help to keep your horse or pony warm and save them from wasting excess energy generating heat.

In summary, the three major considerations for maintaining your horse in good condition are freedom from oral disease, freedom from internal parasites/worms and an adequate feeding programme. If any of these areas are lacking, they will become an issue over the colder winter months.

At Franklin Vets, we provide free winter dental checks for peace of mind. We can also help you to determine a cost-effective feed programme for your four-legged friends, so contact your local clinic today to book your horse in for its warrant of fitness.

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