

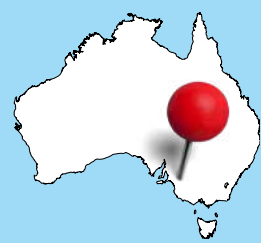
## Meet our new vets +

You might have met our new vets, Meg and Dave, who started with us 3 months ago! Meg, originally from Roxby Downs graduated from the University of Adelaide last year and is passionate about large animal medicine. Away from work when not reading, painting or camping, you may see her out on the netball court on Saturdays.

Dave moved to Australia from Scotland back in 2008. He later graduated from the University of Adelaide in 2022 with an interest in wildlife. When not working Dave spends his time shanking golf balls and playing drums in his band Terroir. Meg and Dave live together with their two adopted kittens and a fish named Kovu



## Casterton



After a 2-year hiatus, Dr Rory Speirs and Dr Nicola Pattison are excited to be able to provide a local veterinary service to clients in the Casterton area once again. They will be offering mobile services for routine consults for both small and large animals on Thursdays and Fridays on a weekly basis in collaboration with Naracoorte and Penola Veterinary Services. The mobile service will be supported by the clinics in Penola and Naracoorte for those patients' requiring surgery or hospitalization. Please phone 08 8737 2252 or 088762 1955 and talk to our friendly receptionists to arrange an appointment, or answer any questions.



## Producer Information session

We are putting on a second information session on Thursday, May 9th, for those who couldn't attend our first session, due to popular demand.

The session will cover management of ewes/cows around lambing/calving. Topics covered include hypocalcaemia, hypomagnesaemia (grass tetany) and ketosis in both sheep and cattle. 9am for approx 3hrs. Cost is \$150. Spots are limited, please contact the clinic on 8762 1955 to confirm your interest.



# Autumn Newsletter



## Faecal Egg Counts for Lambing Ewes

Faecal Egg counts (FEC) around lambing are critical. The ewe's immunity and their ability to withstand the burden of worms decreases dramatically during pregnancy and lactation, so a strong plan to help manage worms during this period is required. Ideally, this involves planned paddock rotations to low risk pastures, faecal egg counting prior to "pre-lambing drench" to assist on drench decisions, and ongoing monitoring.

- PRE-LAMBING: Be sure to bring your faecal egg counts into the clinic 6-8 weeks prior to lambing. This allows time to do a count, and help you decide what pre-lambing drench choices are needed, depending on your animal risk and paddock risk.
- LAMB MARKING: collect a sample from your ewes just prior to lamb marking. This enables us to complete an FEC and know if drenching is required while the ewes are in the yards for marking, therefore saving on double handling. This is still a critical time, even if capsules are used, so we can give a cover drench if the capsule is not sufficient.
- If capsules or long-acting injection are used, we need to be monitoring the worm burden throughout, depending on the product and if a primer was used, FECs should be done at 30, 60 and 90 days post administration. While long-acting treatments can be effective, they aren't a "set and forget" option for worm control, especially if drench resistance is unknown on farm.



## Managing stock with a "late break"

Given how this year's season has started, and the lack of decent autumn rain, its highlighted the importance of supplementary feeding of stock during pregnancy, and potentially lactation to meet their requirements.

A feed budget helps to work out the energy needs of the animal and highlights the nutritional difference between singles vs multiples, especially in late pregnancy and how to achieve this with supplementary feeding (e.g. hay, silage, grain), as well as supplements such as calcium, magnesium etc. The risks in a season like this for metabolic conditions such as pregnancy toxaemia, hypocalcaemia, dystocia etc. are much higher than when there is an early "break" and there is adequate food on offer in the paddock.

Its naive to think, especially with this late break that stock do not need to be supplemented.

If you require assistance in this area we have vets who are very capable of creating a feed budget and supplementation plan for your stock, or please come along to our information day (re-run due to interest) to cover all these topics in greater depth on Thursday May 9th.

See details below.



## Pregnancy Toxaemia/ Thiamine Deficiency

We have recently been getting quite a number of phone calls in regards to clients suspicious of having thiamine deficiency (B12 ) in ewes, which have turned out to be pregnancy toxaemia.

Outlined below is the basic differences and approaches to both conditions.



### Pregnancy Toxaemia “Twin lambing disease”



This disease occurs in both cattle and sheep and is associated with the energy imbalance seen in later pregnancy. It's often called “twin lambing disease” due to increased energy demands of multiple bearing ewes, however it can affect all stock during pregnancy. The disease is generally slow progressing, and can show a number of different signs which makes it tricky (and actually cannot be) diagnosed based on looking at the sheep/ cow in the paddock. Signs can vary from stock isolating from the mob, and looking “dull”, to sitting/ lying down, lethargic/ depressed, not showing interest when supplementary feeding, “star gazing”, twitching, then progressing to death. Usually they take 4-7 days to pass away from the disease, however usually its complicated by them developing a secondary condition (e.g. hypocalcaemia, PEM etc) which then speeds up the death process. Treatment is best when done early and aggressive, and involves correct diagnosis, to be done at least on consult with your vet. Common early treatments used are Ketol (energy supplement) and minbal 4-in-1 fluid therapy which are very handy things to be kept “on hand” on farm, and we urge you to have at least a small supply ready.

Its important to note, that these cases usually the “tip of the iceberg” and with every clinical case, usually there are multiple sub-clinical cases. Thus early, prompt diagnosis is really important in trying to prevent an outbreak of further cases.



### PEM “Thiamine Deficiency”



When you first hear of this condition, the first thing most clients think of is “stargazing” as this a classic sign of the condition.

While it can occur during pregnancy, it is not a common condition diagnosed. The disease is due to deficiency of Vitamin B1 (thiamine), normally produced by bacteria in the rumen of cattle and sheep. The deficiency of thiamine causes reduced energy available to the brain, leading to a condition known as PEM (Polioencephalomalacia).

The rumen produces thiamine when stock are on a well-balanced roughage diet. There are bacteria in the rumen which can break down and inactivate thiamine.

Usually, an upset to the rumen is due to a sudden change to the feed composition. The most common situation is when stock are suddenly placed into a feedlot, on a diet high in carbohydrates, and low in fibre.

Signs early on are twitchy, agitated stock, leading to muscle twitching, and head held high “star gazing” and a high-stepping gait. This leads to blindness, head pressing, down, seizures and death usually over 1-7 days.

Diagnosis needs to be made by a veterinarian, where then adequate treatment can be administered.

Treatment is based around Vitamin B1 supplementation.

### Calf Scours

A common question we get in the clinic is calves scouring, from immediately after birth throughout the first few months of life. Calf scours can be caused by a number of different agents, the main one being bacterial, viral, protozoal and nutritional, each having a different treatment approach.

Correct diagnosis is important for treatment, as well as ongoing management of other calves.

We now stock “Rainbow Scour Kits” which are a very quick, and in-expensive test we do on the stools, to help diagnose the cause.

If you are wanting any further information of this, or dealing with some scours at home please don't hesitate to call.

