

Woody tongue

Most of you – who own cattle - will know or have heard of the disease called “Woody Tongue”.

It is a reasonably common problem and actually an infection of the tongue/cheek/lips by the bacterium “*Actinobacillus lignieresii*” which causes the affected parts of the body to thicken eg have a “woody” feeling to them.

The bacterium is present in the environment and can enter the tongue/cheeks etc if there is an open wound caused by something like sticks, stalky hay, sharp teeth etc.

Presenting signs that we usually hear from our clients when they call about a “Woody Tongue Beast” are drooling, weight loss, a depressed, sad looking animal and a swollen area underneath the jaw.

Although as mentioned before, this is a reasonably common problem. The above described signs are “VERY BROAD” and can be caused by a number of other diseases as well.

For us to confirm that the animal has Woody Tongue – we will always closely examine the tongue /cheek/lips by putting the animal in a head bale, pulling out the tongue and having a look into the mouth.

It is very important to confirm Woody Tongue before we start treating it with an expensive Antibiotic. Here are some other conditions that can cause similar signs:

- Grass impaction
- Swelling underneath the jaw due to protein loss or so called “bottle jaw” which can be caused by low blood protein levels from diseases such as parasites, liver disease, Salmonella, Johnes disease
- Tooth root abscess
- Laryngitis
- Broken jaw
- Foreign Body in the mouth or jaw



None of the above diseases would have been cured with the antibiotic treatment for Woody Tongue as it has only a small spectrum of efficacy and you would have ended up with an animal that may have either died or been on a 30 days meat WHP for no reason.

So if you have an animal that you think has Woody Tongue keep an open mind and consider calling a vet to assess the animal – let us come out and have a look. It may be a completely different problem with totally different treatment.

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our services and products

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CHB VETS LTD

Veterinary newsletter

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Sheep measles

One of the great things about owning a dog is the chance to take the dog into a new area, and have the opportunity of allowing the dog additional freedom possibly not available at home. Many of New Zealand's recreation areas are adjacent to farm land, or even on land where sheep graze. If you are taking your dog out to a rural area or an urban one grazed by sheep, have a chat to us how you can ensure your pet doesn't leave any unpleasant surprises behind.

Rural Contractors

Rural contractors visit numerous farms in their roles, & as a result any dog they have with them will also have been on a variety of farms. If this dog gets access to a dead sheep carcass on any previous farm it can contaminate other farms, as much as weeks later.

Where possible, contractors should not bring dogs onto sheep farms unless they are required. In the case that the contractor does take their dog with them, they need to be able to show the farmer clear evidence that the dog has been treated for sheep measles within 30 days, and no later than 48 hours ago.

Urbanites

Sheep Measles occurs when dogs have access to raw or untreated sheep or goat meat. Many urban people are unaware of the issue, and don't realise that their pet dogs can transfer the disease to sheep, by defecating on or near farm pasture. Even a “poop” not collected on the rural road, can mean eggs are either blown onto pasture or carried by flies.

You may live near the country, or you may be visiting cousins in the holidays – regardless of why you have your dog on or near a farm, the best method to ensure it is free of Sheep Measles is to treat it with Praziquantel drugs within one month or at least 48 hours prior to going onto farm land.

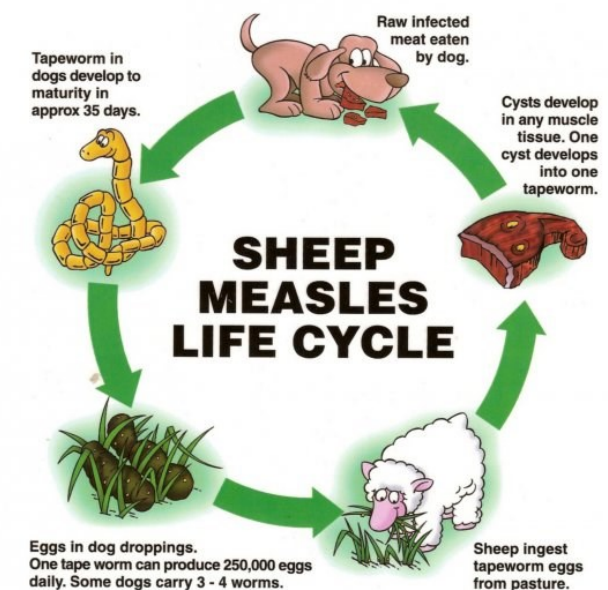
Rules for having dogs in the country:

1. If going on private land, always ask permission from the Farmer.
2. Dose all dogs with a Praziquantel drug at least 48 hours or within one month prior to going.
3. Carry some evidence of treatment such as a treatment certificate or receipt from vet. Any decision to allow entry to a dog rests with the Farmer.
4. Carry enough bags to pick up and remove dog faeces should your dog defecate.

Be Wary of Feeding Sheep or Goat Meat to Dogs

As the carriers of the Sheep Measles tapeworms, meat from sheep or goats needs to be treated by freezing at -10°C for 10 days, or cooking until brown throughout prior to feeding.

Sheep or goat meat purchased from a butchers or supermarket CANNOT be guaranteed to be sheep measles free and should ALWAYS be treated before feeding to dogs. This includes any bones or off-cuts designated as petfood.



To all Rabbit Owners

We will be organising “Rabbit Vaccination days” where you and your furry friend can come into our clinic – in a quiet rabbit friendly environment – during a time where we will try to avoid having dogs around . These days are going to be organised to ensure the regular vaccination of your pet rabbit – in a stress free surrounding – to protect him from the most deadly disease in New Zealand.

It also gives us the opportunity to give your Bunny his yearly check up and to plan and have the new Vaccination – Filavac for you available , which is the only vaccination that covers all 3 strains of the Calicivirus and needs to be ordered in specifically. Your bunny has to be at least 10-12 weeks old and an annual booster is necessary to ensure full protection.



As long as you are our client- registered with a rabbit - and we have your current email - you will hear from us soon with dates for “Rabbit Vaccination days” – if you are unsure stop by or give us a ring and we make sure we’ll update your details.

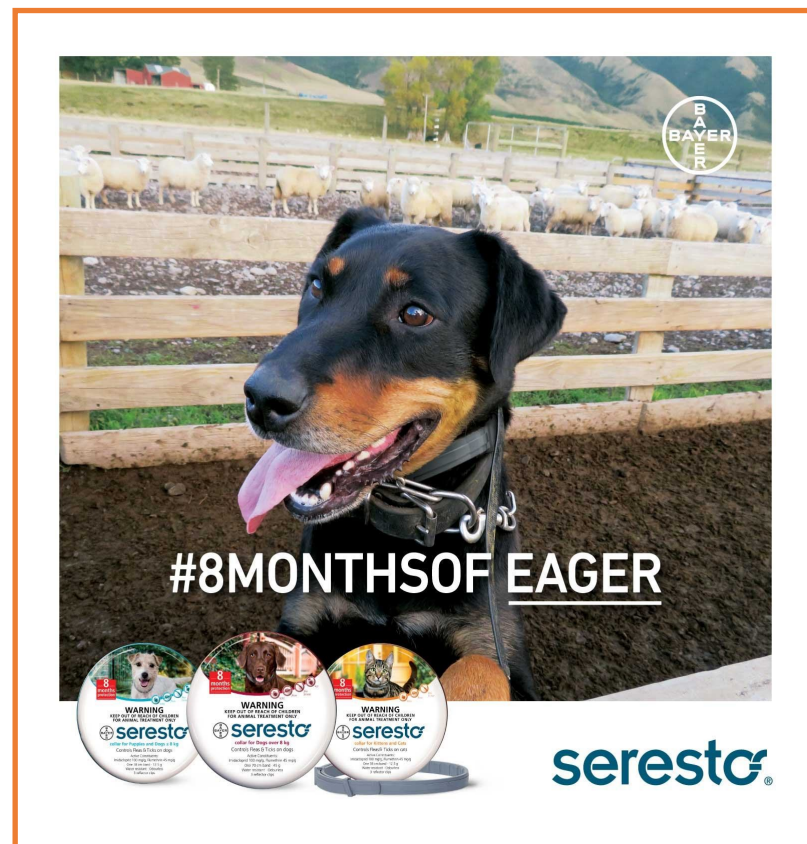
Below is a short outline of the Calicivirus:

There 3 strains in New Zealand – Rabbit Haemorrhagic Disease Virus DV 1, RHDV 1K5, RHDV 2 Your Rabbit can get the Virus from direct contact with other rabbits – through their eyes, nose, and mouth from flies, fleas, and possibly some mosquitos, which can carry the virus.

Signs are:

- ♦ Anorexia
- ♦ Apathy
- ♦ Depression
- ♦ Nervous or Respiratory signs

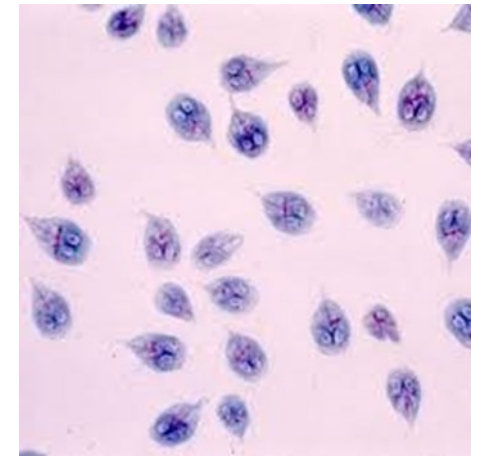
Often they don’t show any symptoms at all and die quickly.



Giardia infection/Diarrhoea

Cause

These are one-celled organism classified as protozoa, which is a class of their own. Animals are infected when they ingest the cyst. The cysts can be found in food, contact or faeces but more likely in water. The water could be from contaminated rivers, lakes, ponds, roof water or toilets. These cysts are resistant to environmental factors and can survive for weeks to months in cool, moist conditions. After ingestion the cysts undergo a few changes within the small intestines and affects normal digestion by altering the villi.



Clinical Signs

Dogs generally get it more frequent than cats. A diarrhoea is usually the presenting complaint. The time from ingestion to cyst excretion via the faeces vary from 5-12days. The soft-watery diarrhoea can be self-limiting, intermittent or chronic. The parasite is also excreted in 'waves', therefor the recurrence of diarrhoea is common. The animal is otherwise healthy most of the time or can show weight loss.

Diagnosis

A fresh faecal sample is necessary to be send to the lab for diagnosis. If a sample comes back negative it doesn't rule it out, it all depends on when the sample is collected during the 'wave' of excretion. At least 3 samples should be tested over a 7-10day period before it can be ruled out, if it is not picked up earlier.

Treatment

Treatment failures are not uncommon, more so in dogs than cats. The most commonly used drug is Metronidazole, the length of treatment can range from 8-30days. Other medicines are Albendazole or Fenbendazole (usually 3-5day treatment). The animals’ immunological status will also affect the outcome of treatment. Usually it is a good prognosis. Unfortunately, the animals can get re-infected over and over again. It can be lethal if the animal is immunologically challenged, very young or old.

Human risk

Personal hygiene is very important when it comes to having an infected pet. People can get it from their pets when they don’t wash their hands after picking up faeces from the lawn, cleaning the litter tray or administering treatments. Animals that do not get treated can be infective for 6-36 months.