

DEER NOTES

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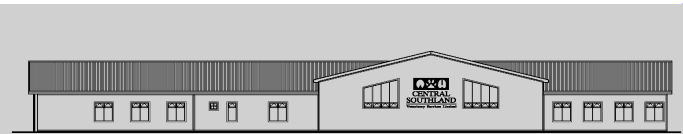
www.thevets.co

Issue 3

August 2004

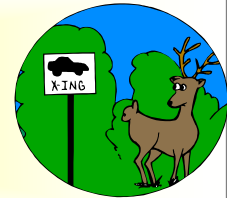
The big news is we are now in residence in our new building on Welsh Road. Despite the fact we are still negotiating our way around builders, painters and electrical people, the transition has gone relatively smoothly and we are all enjoying the extra space and improved display, office and surgery facilities.

We are sure that you will appreciate the fact that all your supplies will now be in one place and there should be plenty of whatever you want!



IN THIS ISSUE:

- Spring ACVM Round
- Velvet Update
- Velvet Preparation
- Spring Drenching
- Fawning



ACVM REQUIREMENTS

As we move into the spring/summer period, we will need to touch base with those of you who do your own velveting, when you come in for your season start consultation.

A few changes have been made to last year's system as we identified problems (mainly in the paperwork department), but they are pretty minor from your perspective. There will also be a discussion of other drugs you may require. (This can include your spring consult for sheep and/or cattle if you wish).

VELVET SEASON 2004

You will all be aware by now, that the industry has been given a five year reprieve, such that the status quo remains. Recent work indicates that residue levels can be easily addressed and results are very promising, being well received by the FSA.

The main difference is that there will be a recommendation to place tourniquets around the pedicle before injection of local anaesthetic. This has been shown to reduce residue levels 3-4 fold from the more traditional technique of application post – local injection.

Current work indicates another form of local anaesthetic with no residue issues is likely to be acceptable, but it is very expensive and will only be resorted to if lignocaine becomes untenable in the FSA's eyes.

Alternative sedative trials have been unsuccessful thus far, with drugs tested being very variable and unreliable (and expensive).

The main goal for farmers over the next five years is to try to achieve standardised residue levels which can be confidently quoted. This means adhering to with-holding periods for drugs and **putting that tourniquet on first.**

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I know a lot of clients have commented that they seem to require more drug or have to wait longer to gain the same effect, and also that it is harder to inject local. Injecting the local a little lower on the pedicle will help make it easier to administer, but does contribute to an increased volume of local used.

Unfortunately, if it's in the name of being able to continue with the current system, we just need to do it!!

PREPARING STAGS FOR VELVETING

Ideal preparation for maximal return (kg/hd) starts before button drop when you need to ensure stag health is good, lamenesses are resolved, no trace elements are lacking and that you have good quality feed ahead of the stags to maximise velvet growth and quality.

Once buttons drop the stage is set, and if things are not right by then, it's too late.

Copper, selenium and a drench may be worthwhile investments depending on how stags have been wintered.

If you have any queries regarding the merit of any treatments, give us a call.

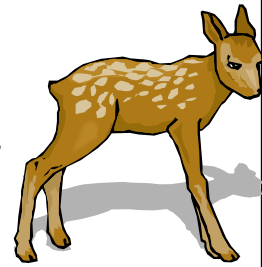


SPRING DRENCHING

Weaners wintered on pasture and those in the first 3-4 weeks out of a wintering shed, generally benefit from a spring drench. Eggs that have over-wintered on pasture can develop in a bunch under the right conditions in spring (similar to autumn) and can create serious burdens in that early spring period. Be pro-active and either implement a regular drenching programme, as soon as feed comes away, or monitor stock closely for scouring, coughing and poor weight gains.

FAWNING

Many will have read in a recent Deer Farmer article about Adam Whaanga, at Black Forest, who fawns his hinds in 'cohort' mobs (hinds that have grown up together etc). This is a great idea as it creates a



settled environment for hinds to fawn in with no hierarchal problems, interference from 'bossy' hinds, or unsettled first calvers stuffing off or not letting a fawn suckle because they are nervous.

However, I'd imagine this system involves a fair bit of organisation and recording to achieve.

What other options are there for creating a good environment that maximises percentage? (Fawning to weaning has been clearly identified as period of great production loss on deer farms).

Basics are:

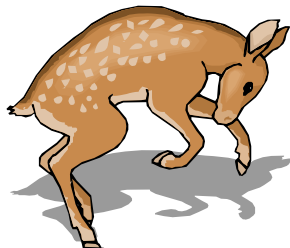
- Set stocking hinds
- Fawning first calvers separately
- Paddocks with good cover or variable terrain to allow hinds to isolate themselves for fawning or 'plant' fawns safely eg. -
 - scrub
 - paddocks with gullies
 - paddocks with significant fenceline (rectangular vs square)
 - adjacent treelanes +/- access for fawns to these areas
 - unmown sections of paddocks (perimeter or middle)
- Low stocking rates

However, if you have scanned and have obtained some fawning date data, you have even more management tools at your disposal.

The simplest form of information is IDing late calving hinds. Fawns from these hinds are far more vulnerable/susceptible to beatings from older hinds and fawns, disturbance from older fawns and scours as a result of build-up of contamination levels in a

paddock full of older fawns.

Late fawning hinds are also more prone to dystocia (a lot of our vet-assisted fawnings are around Christmas time), as they will have been on pasture best suited to lactating hinds (the rest of the mob).



Fawning these in a separate mob helps limit all the above problems as you have much more control over feeding and cover. (High feed levels at fawning is not necessarily a problem, but if hinds are already fat, it seems to be more of an issue).

Older fawns and hinds can then be put onto a rotational grazing system which has pasture management benefits as well as improving lactation and fawn growth while on their mothers.

Next step up is fawning 'back-up' hinds separate from 'replacement' hinds based on projected fawning dates. There is a bit of a margin of error, depending on when scanning took place, but it does help limit those big hybrid-looking hinds coming through in a year or two, if that's not what you intended!

Big herds can date hinds even more, to separate hinds into fawning mobs (as per ewes based on mating crayon marks). We have a number of clients who scan their hinds early which allows them to divide the herd into mobs based on fawning date. Benefits as before of eliminating beatings etc and starting staggered rotational grazing even earlier are obvious, but it also may provide an opportunity to start up on Adam Whaanga's theory of 'cohort' groups as these fawns will be of similar age, therefore similar weights etc.

Plenty of food for thought!



WEATHERSHIELD

This product has been around for a bit. Essentially, it is a trace element lick which supplies trace elements in a readily absorbable form. It is an ideal source of iodine and copper in a wintering shed situation, but can be placed in paddocks for velveting stags, growing weaners etc.



Contact us for prices and info. We have one or two clients trying it currently, so we'll keep you posted of their opinion of it

LEPTOSPIROSIS

Those of you who receive the Southlander and Vettalk will no doubt be sick of hearing about a leptospirosis outbreak in weaners in Southland by now.

It has got we vets very excited as to get a definitive diagnosis of disease in deer is always a major achievement, but also because there have been lots of noises for years about lepto being 'out there' but it has been difficult to prove.

It is likely most properties will have had some exposure to lepto – the 'naïve' herd in this case would be considered to be pretty unusual – but the level of infection is bound to be very variable and hard to quantify. Really, we just want you all to be aware it is a disease that is present, that all weaner deaths may not just be lungworm or Yersiniosis(!), and that this may become, in the future, a similar issue in deer farming, as it is in the dairy industry, where a national vaccination programme keeps clinical cases in humans at a nominal level. Perhaps most importantly, please be aware, it is a disease that can affect humans and it is nasty. Take care when handling deer, avoiding urine splash to eyes, nose, mouth, and cover all cuts on hands etc, as that route of entry is quite acceptable to leptospira too. (Refer to poem in previous newsletter!)

VETSOUTH

Our annual deer seminar will be coming up in mid-late October as per usual. This year, there seems to be a lot for deer farmers to

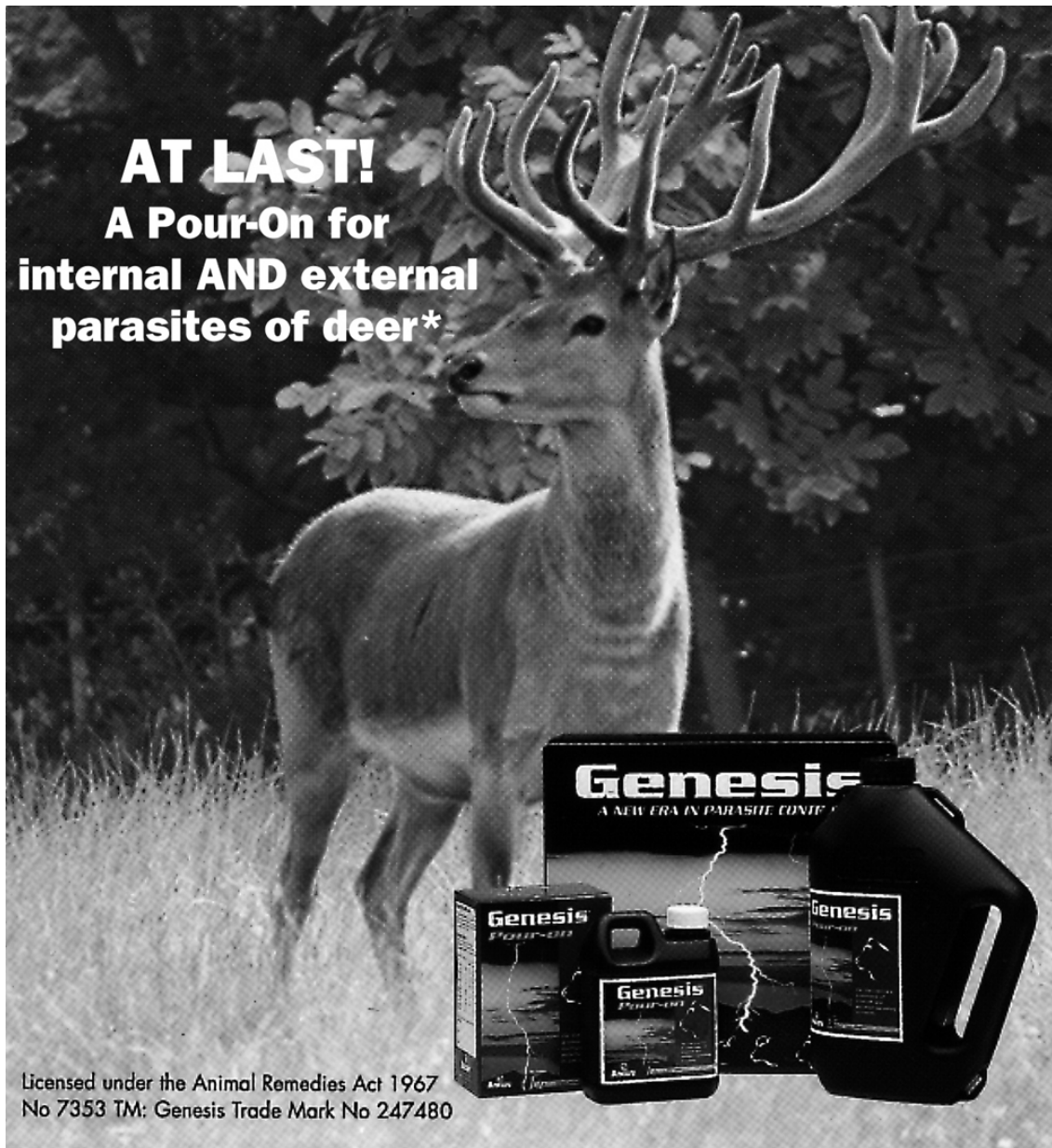
do off-farm about this time (not to mention on-farm) with the Deer Farmer of the Year, a field day at the farm of Sir Peter and Lady Elworthy Environmental Award winners, George and Mary Scott, and the DeerSouth open day.



So, we are joining with DeerSouth on their day, to make it one less function to attend!! DeerSouth usually holds an annual open day, so people can see what is being achieved by this progressive group. Our seminars are open to all clients of VetSouth practices. The opportunity will exist for you to come along to one or other of the sessions or both!

Hopefully, we will have a compatible and diverse programme for all attendees as well as a good feed! We are always trying to find topics of interest to deer farmers, so if you have any suggestions, or names of people you'd like to hear, don't hesitate to let us know next time you are talking to us. (The tentative date has been set for Thursday 28th October 2004). Flyers will be sent out with details nearer the time.

AT LAST!
A Pour-On for
internal AND external
parasites of deer*



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