



## updates from the field

### News

#### Spring equine health checks

**Attention horse owners!** Crookwell Veterinary Hospital (CVH) is offering a spring equine health promotion to 30 November.

A great way to thoroughly check your horse or pony's health for a special promotional fee, the consultation includes:

- Complete physical check
- Dental and mouth check, with follow-up dental care
- Faecal egg count
- Worm drench
- Vaccination booster as required.

**The cost of a Spring Equine Consultation is \$220 per horse**, on site at CVH. Bring your horse to us, take advantage of the excellent horse handling facilities at CVH, and make the consultation even more cost effective. If travel is required, it will be charged at normal rates.

Ring us on (02) 4832 1977.

#### Drench resistance the focus at international conference

CVH Principal veterinarian Rob Churchill delivered a presentation in Perth during August at the 24<sup>th</sup> international conference of the World Association for the Advancement of Veterinary Parasitology (WAAVP).

**Read more** under News at: [www.crookwellvet.com.au](http://www.crookwellvet.com.au)

### Warm weather = fleas



Classic flea allergy dermatitis with inflamed and bare skin on the tail, rump and lower back.

Now is the time, with the onset of spring's warmer weather, to start an effective regular flea control program for your dog or cat. Flea infestation is a fact of life for pretty much every Australian pet. In fact, flea allergy dermatitis is by far the major cause of itchiness in our dogs and cats.

While fleas are annoying to the average pet, some dogs and cats become acutely sensitised to fleas – specifically, to the flea saliva that's injected when the flea bites. These unfortunate pets develop flea allergy dermatitis. This is a constantly itchy and painful dermatitis and it stays with them for life.

Pets with flea allergy dermatitis chew and scratch constantly, developing wheals, pimples, raw and eventually bald skin in specific areas: over the rump and lower back, the base of the tail and inside the hind limbs.

A regular, intensive flea control program is essential to give these pets relief, and to prevent other pets from developing the life-long allergy.

#### Treat your pet *and* your environment

Fleas don't live on your dog or cat – they only hop on to feed. Fleas live and lay their eggs in dirt, in cracks and crevices of buildings and kennels, and in your carpet (a favourite spot). They can survive up to a year without a blood meal.

#### Treating your pets

There is a myriad of flea control products available and all that choice can be more than a little confusing. Drop in to CVH and speak with our staff. We stock a wide range of high quality flea control products and our staff are qualified to advise on an effective and safe program to suit your dog, cat and particular situation.

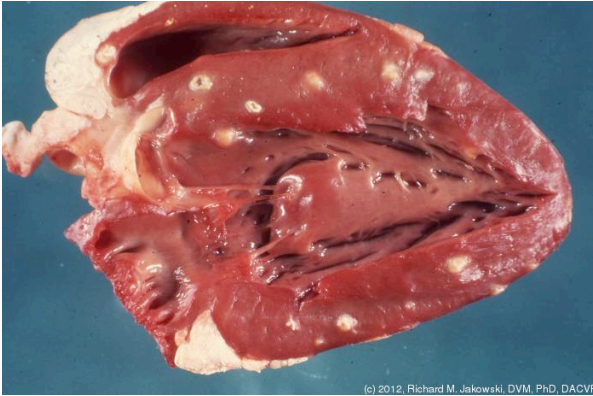
Products include the easy-to-use monthly "spot-ons" or tablets. Some of these also protect against other parasites such as heartworm, ear mites and some gastrointestinal worms.

#### Treating your environment

Ridding your home environment of fleas is also critical! Routine prevention includes regularly hot washing your pet's rugs and spraying kennel areas. Treat serious flea infestations with flea surface sprays and/or flea bombs (a combination is most effective), concentrating on areas such as skirting boards or under furniture.

# updates from the field

## Sheep measles - common and costly



(c) 2012, Richard M. Jakowski, DVM, PhD, DACVP

Sheep measles in heart muscle. The lesions are caused by the tapeworm *Taenia ovis*. As the dog is the final host, control requires regular dog worming.

Sheep measles – caused by the larval cystic stage of the sheep tapeworm *Taenia ovis* – is surprisingly common in the Crookwell district. Surprising because while it's not considered important to the health of sheep or humans, the parasite often causes condemnation of carcasses with significant loss of income.

*Taenia ovis* (formerly *Cysticercus ovis*) occurs wherever there are sheep, goats and domestic dogs. Sheep and goats are the intermediate hosts. They support the cystic stage of the worm in body tissues (the "measles"), while dogs (and sometimes foxes) are the final hosts and carry the adult tapeworms in their intestines.

The *Taenia* life cycle is similar to that of the hydatid tapeworm, *Echinococcus granulosus*, but there are two major differences: *taenia* grow to a huge 2 metres, while the adult hydatid tapeworm is only 4 to 6mm in length,

and *taenia* are not a public health risk unlike hydatids (although the calcified cysts are unpleasant to eat and considered unacceptable).

The *Taenia ovis* life cycle starts when eggs are passed out in a dog's droppings. Sheep or goats then eat the eggs when grazing pasture. The swallowed eggs hatch into larvae and these develop into cysts in muscle tissue. Dogs get re-infected by eating these infective tapeworm cysts in sheep or goat meat.

The term "sheep measles" comes from the appearance of the multiple small white calcified cysts about 3–10 mm long seen in body tissues at slaughter. It's important to note that *Taenia ovis* cysts in infected sheep will not disappear over their lifetime. This means that sheep measles may continue to be detected at slaughter for some time after a control program has been instituted.

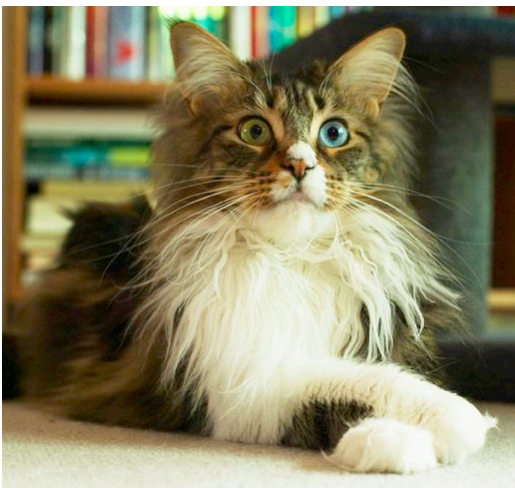
### Control

Like hydatids, the key to controlling sheep measles is breaking the sheep to dog to sheep life cycle. The good news: this controls both hydatid and *taenia* tapeworms.

1. control dog movements
2. prevent your canine pets or working dogs from eating sheep or goat meat or offal
3. treat all your dogs every 4-6 weeks with a wormer containing praziquantal
4. always cook or freeze any sheep or goat meat before feeding to dogs (this inactivates the cysts)
5. ensure contractor's dogs coming onto your property have been wormed with praziquantal within the previous 4 weeks.

Acknowledgements: NSW Department of Primary Industries and the WA Department of Agriculture and Food.

## OUR PATIENTS - a gallery of your pets and our special patients



Visit us at [www.crookwellvet.com.au](http://www.crookwellvet.com.au) and see **Our Patients**, a gallery of our vet patients, small and large. You're invited to send in a good quality, high resolution image of your pet or any favourite animal. Email to [info@crookwellvet.com.au](mailto:info@crookwellvet.com.au). We'll let you know when it's up on the site. Left: this is the beautiful Abigail, one of our gallery stars.

### Contact us

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