

Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health Deer Weaning Checklist

Farmer name: _____

Veterinarian: _____

Pre-rut vs. Post-rut Weaning

- ▶ The timing of weaning has trade-offs concerning both the fawn's weight gain and the hind's reproductive performance.
- ▶ Weaning before the rut will help ensure that the hind is in good condition to receive the stag. However this does come at the cost of some fawn weight gain in the March to June period.
- ▶ Weaning after the rut can be beneficial to fawn weight gain, especially in late born animals. A later weaning however means that the hind may be in a lower condition prior to mating.

Recommended Weaning Timing:

- ▶ Pre-rut Date: _____ No: _____
- ▶ Post-rut Date: _____ No: _____
- ▶ Other recommendations:

Weaning Strategy

- ▶ Traditional weaning: removal of all fawns from the herd at one time.
- ▶ Soft weaning: gradual removal of fawns from the hind over a period of 1 to 2 weeks.
- ▶ Indoor weaning: fawns are held indoors for a few days post-weaning.
- ▶ Fence-line weaning: similar to traditional weaning, however hinds and fawns are grazed in adjacent paddocks after weaning.

Recommended Weaning Strategy:

- _____

- ▶ Other recommendations:

Yards and Races

Prior to weaning, check yards and raceways for stones and other projections that may cause injury to feet. A foot injury to a fawn during weaning can significantly reduce its weight gain and can lead to other health problems.

Parasitism

- ▶ Lungworm and abomasal worms are the two major internal parasite types in weaner deer.
- ▶ Adult lungworm live in the air passages of the lungs and are a significant cause of ill thrift in weaner deer. Lungworm is also a common cause of stress for young deer, and can be a pre-cursor to diseases such as Yersiniosis.

Recommended Parasite Control Strategy:

- ▶ Recommended Parasite treatment(s):

- ▶ Recommended treatment(s) start date(s) (if not started already):

- ▶ Recommended treatment(s) cycle(s) (i.e. every 4 weeks):

- ▶ Other recommendations:

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Yersiniosis Vaccination

- ▶ Yersiniosis is the leading cause of death in fawns during autumn and winter.
- ▶ Yersiniosis is a particularly vile and highly infectious disease. First signs in deer fawns are green, watery, smelly diarrhoea which soon becomes bloody.
- ▶ Two doses of Yersiniavax® 3 to 6 weeks apart are required to stimulate immunity, the timing of vaccination of the first dose is critical in determining the effectiveness of the programme.

Recommended Yersiniosis strategy:

- ▶ Number of fawns to be vaccinated: _____
- ▶ Date of first vaccination: _____
- ▶ Date of second vaccination: _____
- ▶ Other recommendations: _____

Leptospirosis Vaccination

- ▶ Clinical signs can include sudden death, fever and lethargy. New studies indicate that subclinical Leptospirosis can significantly reduce weight gain in deer.
- ▶ The observation of white spots on the kidney at slaughter is a useful tool. Herds with lesions are considerable more likely to be infected.
- ▶ The same vaccination schedule applies in deer as it does in cattle. Two doses of Leptavoid® 4 to 6 weeks apart. Vaccination can be done at the same time as Yersiniosis vaccination. An annual booster is required for previously vaccinated deer.

Recommended Leptospirosis Strategy:

i.e. diagnosis, investigation or vaccination

- ▶ Number of fawns to be vaccinated: _____
- ▶ Date of first vaccination: _____
- ▶ Date of second vaccination: _____
- ▶ Other recommendations: _____

Johnes Disease

- ▶ Johnes Disease is of growing concern in deer farming. Current control strategies involve a test-and-cull approach to stop the spread of disease in herds.
- ▶ Blood testing of hinds and replacement yearling hinds should be done at weaning, prior to mating.

- ▶ Blood testing dates: _____
- ▶ Other recommendations: _____

Other Weaner Health Issues

- ▶ Clostridial Diseases – Recommended strategy:

- ▶ Facial Eczema (North Island) – Recommended strategy:

- ▶ Ticks (North Island) – Recommended strategy:

- ▶ Trace Elements i.e. Selenium, Copper – Recommended strategy:

Transport

- ▶ If fawns are to be transported post-weaning, ensure that you are familiar with the recommendations and regulations concerning the restrictions on post-weaning transportation. These can be found at www.biosecurity.govt.nz and www.deernz.co.nz

- ▶ Unweaned deer and deer that have been weaned for less than 10 days must not be transported.
- ▶ Check requirements for TB movement control if weaners are moving to another farm post-weaning.

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