

Pathology in focus

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Fast Worm ID - GIN PCR testing

NEW

In April we launched Fast Worm ID – Gastrointestinal Nematode (GIN) PCR. We developed this new diagnostic test in partnership with, and with funding from, Beef + Lamb New Zealand. It provides veterinarians with earlier species-level insight into parasite infections in sheep and cattle.

How does GIN PCR work?

This DNA-based test identifies gastrointestinal nematode species directly from faecal samples, with results available in approximately three working days. Traditional larval culture is limited by turn-around time and practical constraints, particularly in time-sensitive or low egg count situations. By detecting parasite DNA directly, GIN PCR enables earlier identification of the species contributing to infection.

Gastrointestinal nematodes continue to present a significant clinical and production challenge. Species such as *Haemonchus contortus* in sheep and *Ostertagia ostertagi* in cattle can contribute to production loss and clinical disease prior to increases in faecal egg counts. Earlier species identification supports more informed and proactive parasite management decisions.

Igor Obradovic, Head of Business Development at Awanui Veterinary, says the test addresses a key gap in current diagnostic approaches. “GIN PCR provides veterinarians with earlier species-level insight, particularly in situations where timing or practical limitations reduce the usefulness of larval culture. It supports more timely and informed treatment decisions.”

How do I use GIN PCR?

GIN PCR is a semi-quantitative assay, reporting relative parasite burden rather than eggs per gram. Interpret results alongside faecal egg counts and clinical findings to provide a comprehensive assessment of parasite burden and significance. The test does not yet provide a fully quantitative result and is not currently suitable for faecal egg count reduction testing (FECRT).

We developed and validated under New Zealand conditions and it integrates into existing diagnostic workflows using standard faecal samples. Its ability to detect low levels of parasite DNA makes it particularly useful in cattle, and in early or low egg count scenarios.

GIN PCR complements existing diagnostic methods. It provides a practical option for rapid species identification when timing and specificity are important.

This new tool is now available through Awanui Veterinary laboratories nationwide.

Need more information?

To learn more about GIN PCR and how it can support your parasite management approach, download the [quick reference guide](#) or contact your local Awanui Veterinary laboratory – 0800 474 225.

Dedicated submission forms are also available online:

- > Download a [bovine submission form here](#)
- > Download an [ovine submission form here](#)

Please refer to our current price book for sample types, test turn-around times and pricing.

Species insight. Faster decisions.

GIN PCR can be bundled with our Parasight® FEC - see page 22 of our price book for more details.



Elevating support with our new team

Recently, Awanui Veterinary welcomed Karen Good and Emma McDonald to the team as Business Development Managers, supporting clients across the North and South respectively. Together with Igor Obradovic, our Head of Business Development, we have a strong team that are happy to support you as required.

Igor Obradovic

Igor (below left) began his career in medical laboratories with a focus on quality and productivity before moving into commercial roles spanning a range of diagnostic and therapeutic areas.

Based in Auckland, Igor leads our Business Development team, working with clients to create solutions that support their clinical and commercial outcomes through a value-focused approach.

Outside of work, Igor enjoys travelling and exploring both New Zealand and overseas. A devoted dog lover, he currently finds himself held hostage by his cat, Tudor.

E: Igor.Obradovic@awanuigroup.co.nz

M: 027 316 7066

Karen Good - North

Karen (below centre) began her career in the veterinary sector, training as a veterinary nurse and spending over a decade in full-time clinical practice. She later transitioned into veterinary pharmaceutical sales, before broadening her experience across the medical pharmaceutical and medical capital equipment sectors in the United Kingdom. She continued to work in emergency veterinary clinics at the weekends to maintain her clinical skills.

Since moving to Aotearoa over eight years ago, Karen has held a number of leadership roles within the animal health industry, including business development leader, head of sales, general manager of retail services, and operations manager.

Outside of work, Karen enjoys caring for her two cats, maintaining tropical fish aquariums, and keeps active with aquafit and exploring the local walkways. She is also a volunteer for Make-A-Wish NZ, capturing wishes and delivering them once everything is in place.

Karen is based in Auckland and her contact details are:

E: Karen.good@awanuigroup.co.nz

M: 027 604 8690

Emma McDonald - South

Emma (below right) has spent all her career in the veterinary sector. Along the way, she's worked in a variety of roles including veterinary nursing, inventory management, practice management, sales, business development, communications, and marketing.

These experiences have given her a well-rounded understanding of the veterinary business and how Awanui can partner with clients to achieve great outcomes.

Emma enjoys making the most of the mountains for skiing, as well as the surrounding countryside for horse riding and walking her dog.

Emma is based in Timaru and her contact details are:

E: Emma.McDonald@awanuigroup.co.nz

M: 027 644 6892

All members of the team bring valuable experience and a strong commitment to providing responsive, high-quality support. They will be working with clients to deliver solutions that support clinical and commercial outcomes through a collaborative, value-focused approach. They're looking forward to connecting with you soon.



Antech

Smarter Diagnostics. Better Care.™

Proud to be partnering with Antech



Awanui Veterinary is now the exclusive distributor of Antech's point-of-care (POC) diagnostic testing solutions in New Zealand.

Local expertise.
Global innovation.
Choice at every step.

Supported by Awanui's local expertise and nationwide laboratory network, together we bring globally proven diagnostic technology with a flexible and workflow-led approach to point-of-care diagnostics.

Clinics can select from a broad range of biochemistry, haematology and immunodiagnostics platforms – tailored to the individual clinic and scalable across diverse practice groups.

Find out more

Talk to us about whether your current point-of-care testing (POCT) setup is working effectively.

Call 0800 474 225
or visit awanuivets.co.nz/poct

Antech™ Point-of-care systems

Element DC5X™ & DCX™ – Clinical Chemistry

Shared-platform chemistry analysers delivering fast, accurate results with flexible single-sample or up to 5-sample workflow to support any type of practice.



Element HT5+™ & HT5™ – Haematology

Five-part differential haematology in 60–90 seconds, with optional reticulocyte analysis on HT5+™.

Element i+™ – Immunodiagnostics

In-clinic immunoassay testing including endocrine, inflammatory markers and access to Nu.Q® canine cancer screening.



EUROlyser CUBE-VET – Specialty Chemistry

Compact analyser providing in-clinic access to selected veterinary biomarkers including SDMA and Phenobarbital.

trūRapid™ FIV/FeLV – Rapid Testing

Simple, point-of-care FIV/FeLV screening during consults.



Element AIM™ – Faecal & Urinalysis

Fully automated faecal and urine analysis with minimal hands-on time.

Nu.Q® – Canine Cancer Screening

The only in-clinic canine cancer risk screening test, delivering results during routine wellness and senior checks.



Featured analyser – Antech's Element DCX

- Chemistry analyser

Element DCX™ in-house chemistry analyzer - designed for any practice that needs speed, ease of use, and accuracy.

Antech's trusted dry slide and Ion Selective Electrode (ISE) technologies bring the quality of reference laboratory results into your clinic. It provides unmatched savings, so you can reinvest in your practice and patients. Bring convenience, speed and confidence to your clinic today.

Key features:

ISE electrolyte technology - Reference lab technology, with auto-cap feature to maintain continuity of reagent solution

Automated and efficient - Preload 12 tips at once, automated dilution, no calculations necessary.

Small sample size – Only 10uL sample per test required. Accommodates juvenile and exotic patients.

Easy-to-load slides - Individual slides and prepackaged panels with eWrap™ - insert, pull tab, and go.

Highly accurate and reproducible - Trusted Fujifilm dry-slide chemistry.

7" colour touchscreen - Intuitive navigation with multi-functional interface.

Element DCX™ customizable test menu

With the Element DCX™ analyser, configure profiles without wasting unneeded tests. Add electrolytes and lipase to any sample run. Run a panel, run an individual slide, or combine panels and individual slides to create virtually unlimited options specific to a patients' needs. And with weighted slide stabilization, slides are transferred into the incubator seamlessly with no jamming.

Panels

- Kidney Panel (ALB, BUN, CREA, Ca, PHOS, TP)
- Liver Panel (ALB, ALP, ALT, GGT, GLU, TBIL)
- Equine Panel (ALB, AST, BUN, CREA, Ca, CK, GGT, GLU, LDH, PHOS, TBIL, TP)

eWrap Panels: Open one foil pack for all slides

- Pre-surgical Panel (ALP, ALT, BUN, CREA, GLU, TP)
- Comprehensive Panel eWrap: ALP, ALT, BUN, CREA, GLU, TP, TBIL, ALB, PHOS, Ca, CHOL, GGT
- Plus Panel eWrap: LIP, AMY, Mg, TRIG, AST, Na+ , K+ , Cl
- Comprehensive Plus Panel (ALP, ALT, BUN, CREA, GLU, TP, TBIL, ALB, PHOS, Ca, CHOL, GGT, LIP, AMY, Mg, TRIG, AST, Na+, K+, Cl-)

Note: Individual slides are available for all tests in panels.

Set slides, set sample,
press start.



Find out more

Supported by Awanui's local expertise and nationwide laboratory network, together we bring globally proven diagnostic technology with a flexible and workflow-led approach to point-of-care diagnostics.

Talk to us about whether this analyser suits the needs of your practice.

Call 0800 474 225 or
Visit awanuivets.co.nz/dcx

Infectious canine hepatitis

JiYe Ahn

A three-year-old, female, New Zealand Heading dog that had arrived at a farm three weeks previously, was found dead in a pool of blood originating from the anus. No external evidence of trauma was identified.

On post-mortem examination, haemorrhage of the large intestine was noted. Samples of liver, kidney, spleen, and small and large intestine were collected and submitted to Awanui Veterinary for histopathology.

Histopathology showed hepatocytes at the periphery of necrotic areas often contained basophilic, 4–5 µm diameter, round to oval intranuclear viral inclusion bodies that were occasionally surrounded by a clear halo and marginate the chromatin. Additionally, intranuclear viral inclusions were identified in renal glomeruli endothelial cells. Other findings included haemorrhage and congestion of the small and large intestines, and diffuse splenic lymphoid depletion.

The lesions were consistent with infectious canine hepatitis (ICH).

Infectious canine hepatitis is caused by canine adenovirus type 1 (CAV-1), which results in viral hepatitis and endothelial damage in canids, leading to haemorrhage.

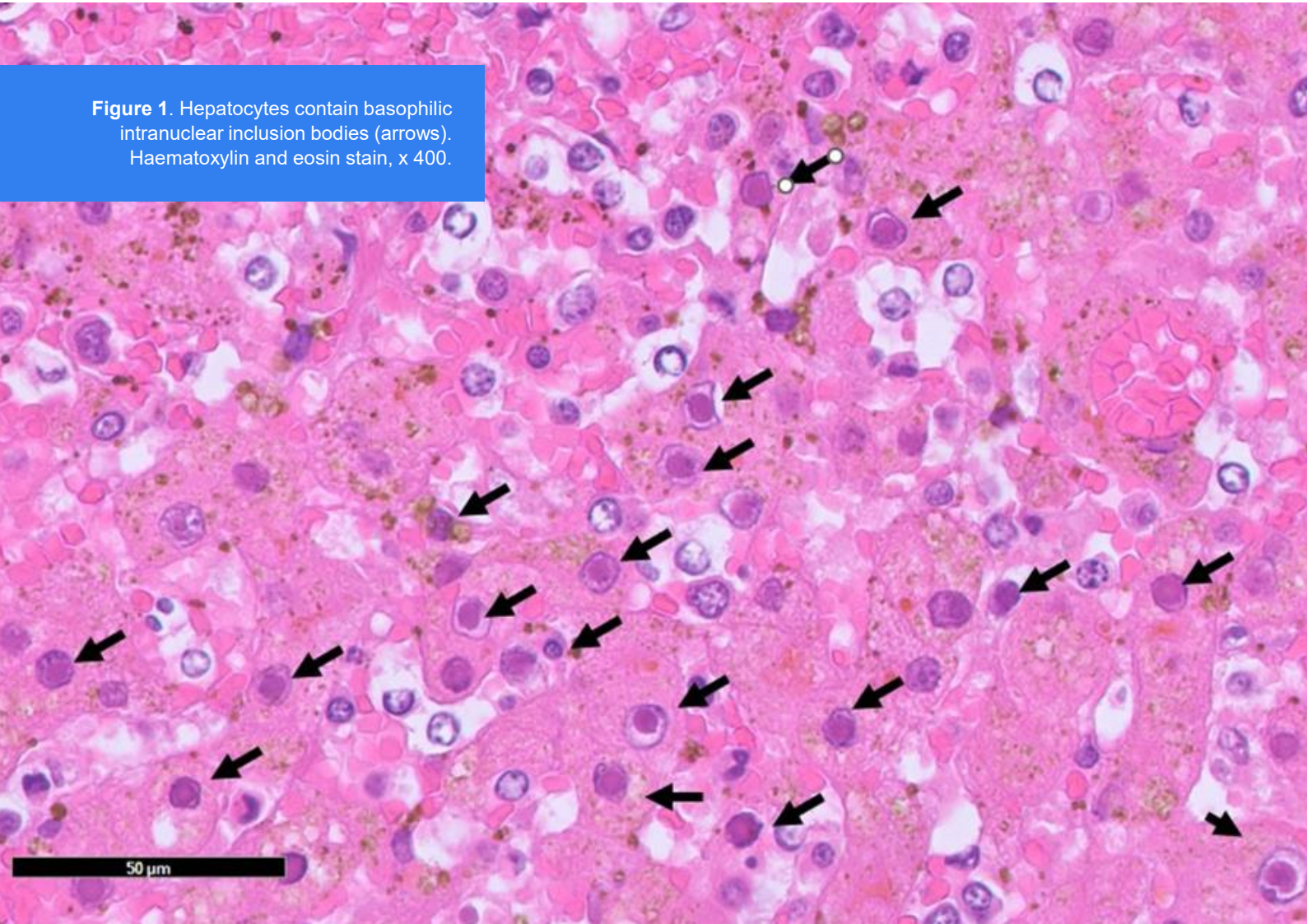
Transmission occurs through direct or indirect contact with contaminated fomites, nasal and conjunctival secretions, faeces, or urine. Corneal oedema (“blue eye”) can occur as a result of viral replication within corneal endothelial cells and a type III hypersensitivity reaction.

In New Zealand, diagnosis can be made by correlating history, clinical signs, clinicopathology results and histopathology as molecular testing is limited. Differential diagnoses include toxins such as xylitol or carprofen, chronic passive congestion, or infection with canine herpesvirus 1 (CaHV-1) or canine parvovirus (CPV).

Infectious canine hepatitis should be suspected in dogs with questionable vaccination histories that present with fever and signs of hepatic, gastrointestinal, or respiratory disease.

[Read the full case write up here.](#)

Figure 1. Hepatocytes contain basophilic intranuclear inclusion bodies (arrows). Haematoxylin and eosin stain, x 400.



Lab tips

Containers for formalin fixed samples

We have recently received several leaking histology samples in the pictured containers. If you have these containers in your clinic please do not use them for samples. These containers leak and crack, even when sealed with parafilm, which poses a health and safety issue for couriers and our staff.

There is no seal inside the lid of this sample container (photo right), and the formalin is clearly starting to escape via the thread on the lid.

Instead, we recommend you use the pre-filled formalin containers [available via our website](#) - they have wadded lids, good seals and do not leak or crack. The other sample containers on our website are also suitable if you wish to fill your own with buffered formalin.

Equine ACTH and selenium testing

If you require whole blood selenium and ACTH testing on the same submission, please send us two EDTA tubes. If you separate the plasma from the EDTA sample, please ensure the sample is clearly labelled as such and DO NOT send us the separated red cells (we cannot use these for anything).



[Order consumables online here](#)

Email addresses for your local lab

If you're wanting to know the best email address to contact your local lab, look no further than the Contact Us page on our website.

- **Auckland**
auckland-vetlab@awanuigroup.co.nz
- **Palmerston North**
palmerston.vetlab@awanuigroup.co.nz
- **Christchurch**
christchurch.vetlab@awanuigroup.co.nz
- **Dunedin**
dunedin.vetlab@awanuigroup.co.nz

Many of you are using the email address we use to send this newsletter from, and while this works, it isn't your best option as isn't monitored on a daily basis.

Sometimes we also get emails forwarded to us from our sister business Awanui Labs, so please make sure you use the contact details on [Awanui Vets website](#). Once again, this works, but our reply will be delayed because of the rerouting.

Visit us at the NZVA conference this month, grab some giveaways and learn about our exciting new products. We look forward to seeing you there!



Fat'hieh BRAF mutation PCR

This test has been a great success since it was introduced in December. Previously BRAF mutation testing was limited to referral overseas. This made the test expensive and added extended transport time. Developing this test to run in our local laboratories has made this non-invasive test option much more accessible to the New Zealand market.

Our live webinar in February covering the practical use of the test, including when it is most useful in practice, how to interpret results, and how it can be used for screening and confirmation in dogs at risk of urothelial carcinoma, was a great hit with all who attended.

What is the test?

This duplex qPCR assay detects the canine BRAF mutation responsible for canine urinary tract transitional cell carcinoma (TCC). We are very excited to be the first New Zealand laboratory to offer a BRAF mutation test locally.

This mutation can be detected in a free-catch urine sample, sometimes before a detectable mass is present. Up to 85% of TCCs contain the BRAF mutation and it is absent in healthy control dogs, so its presence in urine is strongly suggestive of TCC (Mochizuki et al., 2015; Mochizuki and Breen, 2015).

When to use this test?

The Fat'hieh BRAF mutation PCR is particularly useful when there is strong clinical suspicion of TCC based on signalment, history, clinical signs, imaging, or

cytology, and confirmation is desired without resorting to more invasive or costly procedures such as biopsy and histopathology.

It can also serve as a screening test to detect preclinical disease in high-risk dogs (those over 6 years old and breeds with up to a 20-fold increased incidence).

A free-catch urine sample is sufficient, carries minimal risk, and is easy for clients to collect.

Read more about the clinical application of this test in a [VetScript article](#) by our pathologist Dr Wilson Karalus.

Test details

- **Test name:** Fat'hieh BRAF mutation test (canine)
- **Turn-around time:** 7 working days
- **Price:** \$175.00 ex. GST
- **Sample type:** Free catch urine collected into a free specialised urine sample collection container (available on our [website here](#)).
 - ✓ Take a free-catch sample of at least 30mL and place into the specific collection container.
 - ✓ Store at room temperature and send to your local laboratory for testing.

If you have any questions regarding this test, please contact the pathologists at your local laboratory – 0800 474 225 or visit our [website here](#).



Equine ACTH sample requirements

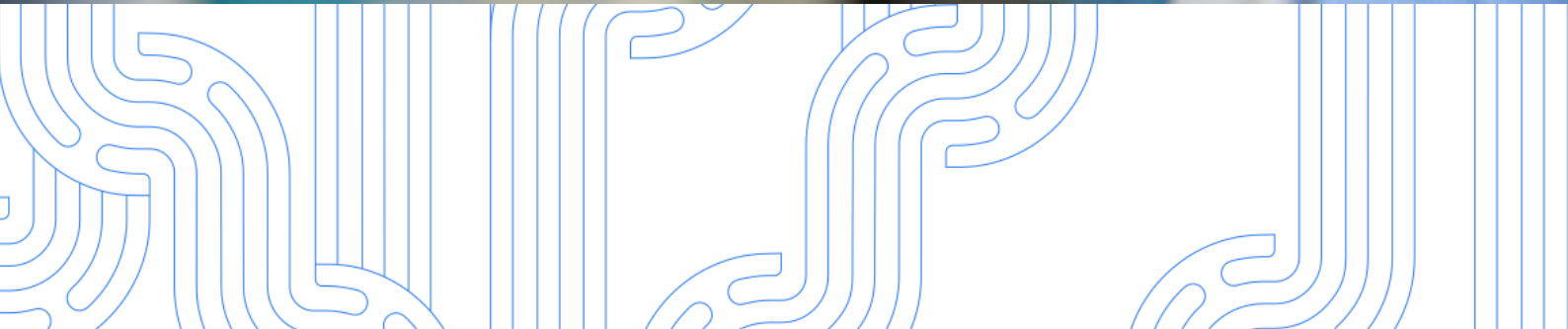
To help ensure endogenous ACTH samples remain stable and suitable for testing on arrival, we would like to highlight the sample requirements for ACTH testing. We have recently seen an increase in samples received in conditions that compromise sample integrity and prevent testing from being performed, so we would like to share a few important reminders.

The sample requirement information for endogenous ACTH testing can be found on our website here (<https://www.awanuivets.co.nz/endogenous-acth/>). Key points to note:

- The only sample suitable for ACTH testing is EDTA plasma.
- Samples for ACTH testing **must** be received chilled; otherwise, they will be unsuitable for testing.

- If plasma is separated and frozen at your clinic, please **clearly label** the sample container to identify the contents.
- If plasma is separated, please **discard the cells** and send only the plasma to the laboratory.
- Send samples for ACTH testing to your **local laboratory** to reduce transport time and ensure they are received in a suitable condition for testing.
- Samples submitted as part of the Boehringer ACTH promotion must be accompanied by a separate request form and sample. If additional testing is required for the same animal, please complete a second request form and provide separate samples for those tests.

As always, if you ever have any questions, please just give us a call - 0800 474 225.



Contact details

Call 0800 474 225
or visit awanuivets.co.nz

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Monday – Friday 8.00am – 5.30pm
Saturday 9.30am – 12.00pm

Palmerston North

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Opening hours:

Monday – Friday 8.00am – 5.30pm
Saturday 8.00am – 11.00am

Christchurch

T: 03 379 9484
E: christchurch.vetlab@awanuigroup.co.nz

Opening hours:

Monday – Friday 8.00am – 5.00pm
Saturday 9.00am – 11.00am

Dunedin

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Opening hours:

Monday – Friday 8.00am – 5.00pm
Saturday 9.00am – 12.00pm

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