



Eltham Vet Services

SEPTEMBER 2014

I learned a few things while I was away - firstly that travel is a wonderful thing & I highly recommend it; secondly that the rest of the world is very crowded & they have very little idea about New Zealand and lastly that we have absolutely no idea how fortunate we are to be living here. Spain & Portugal have unemployment rates above 30%, England is terribly crowded, everyone seems to hate Americans & Hong Kong is too hot & just swarming with people incubating the next outbreak of bird flu. And let's not even start on Africa. We may have our own problems but compared to the rest of the world, they are relatively minor. We've just got to stop moaning about everything & constantly looking to blame someone & just get on with it. Sermon over. So, how has spring treated you?

We had a busy late July & August (especially if you were on after-hours) with lots of calvings. For some reason we seem to be seeing more twisted uterus calvings than ever before & for the life of us we can't work out why. I can remember as a young vet (that's a while ago) that if you saw one twisted uterus in a weekend you went into panic mode. I saw 7 of them on my last weekend on call.

With the generally favourable weather (for cows at least; let's not mention the grass & need for a little rain) we saw a lot less metabolic problems & far fewer prolapses than usual. That makes sense because other than a heifer pushing out an enormous calf followed by her uterus, prolapses tend to follow a metabolic problem such as milk fever. That is also probably due to the fact that there is so much more emphasis these days on cow condition at drying off & calving (5 for mixed age, 5.5 for young cows) and if your cows are in better condition going into calving then a lot of the old "James Herriot" issues tend to just go away. So well done to you on that score.

Now that we're into September our thoughts turn to mating about a month away so there's a reasonable amount of related articles in this edition. Remember that with no inductions at all next season you have little option in avoiding late calving cows other than early treatment (pre-mating) & shortening your mating length so you need to be thinking about that now.

Also September is traditionally calf scour month so there's a little in here to remind you the basic principles of treatment regardless of the cause. Having said that, as the calving bell curve moves further into late July & August we do see plenty of cases earlier now as sheds fill up much quicker than in the old days. The fine weather and ability to get all your older calves outdoors has certainly reduced crowding & contamination levels in sheds, but having got through the bulk of your calvings don't let standards slip now with your later calves.

We've also seen a few more cases of Theileria than we were expecting or hoping for in the last month. For those of you who've forgotten, this is the tick borne anaemia that has been sweeping through the upper North Island. As a result we've got a bit paranoid lately when presented with sick cows so don't be surprised if we take samples just to

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Pizza and Johne's disease

There will be a short meeting at the clinic from 12 – 1 pm on Thursday 25th September to discuss the new Johne's Disease milk test.

This is for farmers who have already decided to add the Johne's Disease test to their herd testing *and* for anyone who would like to know more about the test. Everyone is welcome!

Pizza will be provided for lunch.



Your Calves Have Scours. What Next?

- **Diagnose the cause**
Take faecal samples to test or get vet advice
- **Clean well-draining bedding is vital; spray with virucide daily**
- **Have sick pen running**
Move all scouring calves to sick pen to reduce contamination and spread to pen mates
- **Dehydration is the killer!**
Supply electrolytes in water troughs to those still drinking and feed all those not drinking individually with good quality electrolyte (Revive or Kryptade).



	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Morning	Electrolyte, 2L	Electrolyte, 2L	Milk, 2L
Lunch	Electrolyte, 2L	Milk, 2L	Electrolyte, 2L
Evening	Electrolyte, 2L	Electrolyte, 2L	Milk, 2L
Overnight	Leave 3L electrolyte in feeder overnight		

Example feeding regime:

- **Administer appropriate treatments**
No matter the cost it's cheaper than dead keepers!
- **Decontaminate/clean any gear in contact with sick calves**
Feed sick pen last; clean any gear or clothing before dealing with healthy calves



Avoiding Scours

- Ensure every calf gets good quality colostrum feed in first 6 hours
- Mob size - no more than 20 of similar age
- Clean pens - good bedding, warm and no draft!

Rotavirus doesn't go away

Even if you have vaccinated your herd & fed all your calves with super-charged colostrum to get them through the first critical weeks, Rotavirus is still hanging around and can be detected in samples from later season scours in older calves.

Remember that vaccinated colostrum fed to new-born calves provides excellent protection against rotavirus for as long as you are feeding it. It also results in less virus building up in the sheds in those early stages of the season. But it's most likely still there lurking away ready to pounce, much like Winston Peters every time an election rolls around. Like Winston, it's an opportunistic pathogen so will take advantage & hop on board when a suitable candidate presents itself.

Whether it's the primary cause in older calves or just a passenger is often hard to tell, but we do still find it in samples taken later in the season so don't be too shocked if you still get the odd case of Rotavirus even if you vaccinate.

The good news is that rotavirus in an older calf (over 4 weeks old) is a much less dangerous beast than the brutal disease that can devastate new-born calves and given that these calves are older & stronger with a more developed immune system, most of them should respond to 1st principles i.e. fluid replacement with electrolytes & TLC without having to resort to

Treating your Calves for Worms

With calving comes a busy time of year that seems to go on until Christmas! Before doing what you've always done, take a moment to make sure it is still correct for your property.

Here are some basic rules that all farmers should go by:

- **Use combination drenches**
We used to say rotate drenches, but now we say use combinations as research has shown this is best for production and preventing resistance. You should always use combination products (double or triple) in all cattle under 15 months of age.
- **Give the drench properly**
Dose accurately for weight and take your time and do it right. Pour-on, injectable and oral drenches can all be given poorly, so make sure you do it correctly.
- **Take care with young calves**
Don't mix drench in with the milk as deaths can occur. Avoid abamectin containing products in calves <120kg.
- **Take care with yourself**
Choose a drenching method that works best for you and doesn't unnecessarily put you at risk of injury. There has been a lot of research published in recent years that has changed the advice given around drenching. Unfortunately that can make it confusing for the farmer who was told one thing, only to now be told another.

THEILERIA

We have all been hoping we would never get a proper outbreak of Theileria on one of our farms because the stories coming in from vets in other parts of the country have been pretty scary. Lindsay found one cow with it last year which was a bit out of the blue (herd originally from Northland) but we now have two farms with confirmed cases this year. In both these cases part of the herd had been grazed off farm over winter and the infection was picked up there.

Theileria is transmitted by the cattle tick, *Haemophysalis longicornis*. Ticks become infected when they feed on an infected animal and then transmit the infection to the next animal on which they feed.

Infected cattle become anaemic. Most infected animals will survive but they remain carriers for life. **Without the tick vector, infection cannot pass from one animal to the next.**

The time between infection and clinical signs showing up seems to vary between two to six weeks with stress being a major part of the expression of clinical signs.

The cases we have seen this year have been cows soon after calving that “crash”, rapidly lose weight and go off their milk. They will be slow to move anywhere, breathing rapidly and are often at the back of the herd walking to the shed. Some may show up as “unresponsive” downer cows. The mucous membranes around the eyes, the vulva and the non-pigmented teat skin will appear very pale or maybe yellow. The Field Anaemia Nearest Indicator Card can be used to roughly assess the level of anaemia in sick cows. Another print run of these cards is happening this week. In the meantime you can print one from the DairyNZ website: <http://www.dairynz.co.nz/media/777981/field-anaemia-nearest-indicator-card-fani.pdf>.

Really sick animals can be given blood transfusions from healthy donor cows but the best way is to catch them before they get that far. Take away as much stress as possible. Put affected cows on OAD or dry off completely if really bad. Feed them really well and make sure they aren't walking far from the shed.

Ways you might bring infected ticks onto your farm:

- **On service bulls**
- **On heifers or holdovers coming back from grazing**
- **On cows coming back from winter grazing**

NIL WITHOLDING PENICILLINS

Last season's high payout meant that there was no need to do the sums as to whether the nil-withholding penicillins were cost effective. With various scenarios as to the final payout this season, we have assessed the production point above which it is more profitable for the cow's milk to be in the vat as opposed to three days of white penicillin followed by 72 hours withholding.

The calculations below are for a 500 kg cow with footrot;

DRUG	Cost of treatment	Milk/Meat Withhold	PAYOUT		
			\$5	\$6	\$7
			Cutoff point for production		
Cephalexin	\$45.39	Nil/4 days	1.1Kg	0.9Kg	0.76Kg
Excenel	\$57.39	Nil/2days	1.47Kg	1.22Kg	1.05Kg
ExcedeLA	\$58.82	Nil/56days*	1.52Kg	1.26Kg	1.08Kg
Intracillin	\$13.30	72hrs/10 days	---	---	---

Through the spring flush there is little need to worry about the production points, but later on it may

Good Luck Katey!

Best wishes & good luck to local girl Katey Craig who represents New Zealand at the World Young Shepherd Competition in France at the end of this month. She competed at the New Zealand Young Shepherd 2014 competition at Lincoln, in July, and was one of two chosen to represent our nation at the world championships. That's a pretty impressive effort. Best of luck Katey; we're sure you will do your country proud.



A young boy enters a barbershop and the barber whispers to his customer, This is the dumbest kid in the world. Watch while I prove it to you."

The barber puts a dollar bill in one hand and two quarters in the other, then calls the boy over and asks, Which do you want, son?"

The boy takes the quarters and leaves. What did I tell you?"said the barber. That kid never learns!"

Later, when the customer leaves, he sees the same young boy coming out of the ice cream store. Hey, son! May I ask you a question? Why did you take the quarters instead of the dollar bill?"

The boy licked his cone and replied, Because the day I take the dollar, the game's over!"

Seasonal care is essential to the continued health of your herd and your home
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eg. Choose between
**the Joseph Bentley
 & Fork**

OR
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**When you purchase
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Spade



John is pictured with Clarice Lowe winner of the Macpac 60L Koru Wheeled luggage in the recent Merial

New Flea & Tick Products for Working Dogs



TICK



FLEA

Are you as slack as I am when it comes to remembering or even bothering to treat your dogs for fleas & ticks? With spring here & summer on the way, these little beggars become more active & once established it doesn't take long for fleas & ticks to work their way

through a whole kennel of untreated working dogs. This means unhappy, constantly scratching dogs that end up with skin infections & it does affect their ability to work as well as you would like.

In the "good old days" you just threw them in the sheep dip or put a flea collar on. Sheep dip is no longer an option & those old flea collars went out with the ark because after a few days they really didn't work anymore.

Nowadays the trend has been for "spot on" type products such as Frontline, Revolution or Advocate. They work a treat but the issue is remembering to apply them every month (or second month in the case of Frontline) and just the hassle of actually applying them to a whole troop of working dogs on a regular basis. Also if your dogs are in & out of water troughs all summer regularly it can shorten the effectiveness of the products.

What if I told you could treat your working dogs for fleas and ticks with a tablet that you only need to give every 3 months? Interested?

Or how about a brand new, space age collar that kills fleas & ticks for up to 8 months and is waterproof? Even better? That's nearly all of spring, summer & autumn covered, when fleas & ticks are most active.

Take a look at the enclosed leaflets & then talk to us about Bravecto chewable tablets that kill fleas & ticks for 3 months and Seresta Flea &

SHEEP FARMERS

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A boss was complaining in a staff meeting the other day that he wasn't getting any respect. Later that morning he went to a local sign shop and bought a small sign that read, "I'm the Boss." He then taped it to his office door. Later that day when he returned from lunch, he found that someone had taped a note to the sign that said, "Your wife called, she wants her sign back!"