

## How often do you change your liners?

Teat cup liners are like tyres, they wear out and need to be replaced. And like worn tyres, worn liners are dangerous.

The condition and maintenance of liners is critical in mastitis control and efficient milking. As they age, liners gradually lose their elasticity. They take longer to open, and they close less crisply. Milking time increases and with it the potential for teat damage. The surface of the liner is the only part of the milking plant in contact with the cow. As liners age their interior surface becomes rough and pitted. Long before you can feel this roughness with your finger, microscopic damage leaves pits and cracks which are hard to clean and provide a safe haven for mastitis bugs. *Staphylococcus aureus*, in particular, spreads from cow to cow in the plant. Staph. infections are notoriously hard to cure, and many infected cows continue to be high SCC and shed Staph. bugs in their milk even after treatment.

Worn liners make it easy for these bugs to spread to the rest of the herd.

So, how often should you change your liners? As often as the manufacturer recommends! This is usually after 2,500 milkings for rubber liners and 10,000 milkings for silicone liners.

**Example:** 40 aside herringbone milking 400 cows TAD with rubber liners.

Each cluster milks 10 cows/milking x 2/day = 20 milkings/day.

2,500 milkings/20 = 125 days. The liners should be changed every 125 days.

Of course, this herd doesn't milk 400 cows from the first day of milking and progressively dries off light cows in autumn. PSC is August 5<sup>th</sup> so for practical purposes I would recommend liners be changed at Christmas, easy to remember.



**BUY 7.5L BOSS POUR-ON  
AND RECEIVE A FREE  
BREVILLE SCRAPER MIXER**



## Gratitude

This letter was sent to a High School Principal's office after the school had sponsored a luncheon for seniors.

An elderly lady received a new radio at the lunch as a door raffle prize and was writing to say thank you. This story is a credit to all humankind.

*"Dear Principal,*

*God bless you for the beautiful wireless I won at your recent Senior Citizens luncheon.*

*I am 87 years old and live at the St Anne's Nursing Home for the Aged. All of my family have passed away, so I am all alone. I want to thank you for the kindness you have shown to a forgotten old lady.*

*My roommate is 95 and has always had her own wireless; but she would never let me listen to it.*

*She said it belonged to her long dead husband, and understandably, wanted to keep it safe.*

*The other day her wireless fell off the nightstand and broke into a dozen pieces. It was awful, and she was in tears. She asked if she could listen to mine, and I was overjoyed that I could tell her to #@%\$ off.*

*Thank you for that wonderful opportunity.*

*God bless you all.*

*Vesna"*



## Treat cows during Autumn with a Pour On

Trial work in New Zealand and overseas has shown that there is an economic response in milk production and increased weight gains with treatment of lactating cows and heifers. During late lactation, heifers and second-calvers in lighter condition will benefit from an abamectin PourOn treatment, such as our competitively priced **Reflex**, prior to winter to help maintain condition. Due to increased demands of the foetus during the late dry period it is difficult to put weight on cows at this time. Cows put on body weight up to 20% more efficiently during lactation compared with the dry period. It is preferable to increase Body Condition Score now and dry cows off as close to the optimal calving BCS as possible.



## April 2018

With the sudden change in the weather, we can put the zinc away, pull on our winter clothes, bring in the firewood & start thinking more seriously about International Rugby and drying off.

For those of you who have already returned your Dry Cow forms, thank you. It makes our job a heck of a lot easier if we can get access to facts & figures before making a recommendation. In the next few weeks the rush will be on as the majority decide its time to dry the cows off & plan a winter break. This annual rush puts a lot of pressure on our team, both at the front desk & as the vets rush to make their recommendations in time for you to pick up your DCT requirements.

This pressure is eased enormously if you have already returned your DCT forms rather than have a bunch of you arrive red-faced at 4pm on a Friday clutching a hastily filled in form & wanting to dry your cows off over the weekend.

It helps even more if you grant us 3<sup>rd</sup> party access to your production & quality records in your Fencepost account. Many of you tick the box on the form saying "Yes" we'll grant you access and even more tick the box saying, "I already have".

The problem is when we go into Fencepost to take a look, we find that you haven't.

So, let's make it easy for you - this is how you grant us 3<sup>rd</sup> party access. Remember all we want is production & quality data so don't worry that somehow we can get a look at your financial details or who you're having an affair with (this isn't Facebook ..) **Login to your fencepost account, now called [nzfarmsource.co.nz](http://nzfarmsource.co.nz)**

**Click on the Farm Business tab & then the settings tab on the far right.**

**The drop-down menu will then give you the option of assigning 3<sup>rd</sup> party access so click on that.**

**Our user name is Elthamvets & should come up when you type it into the existing user box.**

**Click continue & then grant us access to production & quality- ideally for an indefinite period rather than just a few weeks around drying off, since this information is very helpful to have access to during the season if you're having bulk count issues for example. That's all we need to see.**

At the end of May we will be saying farewell to a much-loved member of the support team here at Eltham Vets. Frank Suter is hanging up his gloves, boots, overalls & various other things and retiring. Frank has been here fixing things, delivering things, tidying things, cleaning things, counting things (including FE spores) and mowing things (namely the lawns) since 2001. He's been the guy you turned to when you needed stuff fixed, delivered or found. He has also been a great source of information on anything to do with gardening (especially over morning tea) and local gossip in Eltham. Now knowing Frank, he'll find a way not to retire completely (he's already mentioned that he wouldn't mind continuing to mow the lawns and if John's away he could come back & 'help out' ...) but officially he finishes at Eltham Vets at the end of May. We're going to miss you Frank; your willingness to lend a hand at anything, your consistent good humour & common sense and your ready smile. Enjoy your retirement & don't be a stranger. Oh, and if Colleen gets sick of you hanging around her feet, we can always find an odd-job or two for you here at the clinic. Go well mate.



**'Winners are grinners'**  
**Guy Brown pictured with Alistair McDougall receiving the Webber barbeque he won in the Elanco Animal Health promotion after purchasing Cyrex fly dip**



### Farmers Golf Day

at Eltham Golf Club

## Thursday 7th June

Entry Fee \$10.00. Entries limited.

**Entries to the clinic by 29th May**

**Ambrose format—teams of three**

Special entertainment for after-dinner laughs - if you haven't heard of a bloke called "Gish", check him out on YouTube. He's hilarious & will have you in tears by the end of the night

**Clinic & Farm Supplies**  
Railway Street, Eltham  
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**Trading Depot**  
Hollard Engineering,  
Victoria Street, Kaponga  
Ph. (06) 764 6686

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## Changes to the Animal Welfare Act

As of the 26<sup>th</sup> of March this year, a number of changes were made to the Animal Welfare Act. Some such as the humane killing of crayfish & rodeo welfare are less relevant to you (although let's face it; some of you are cowboys) but there are a few things that have changed that you need to know about.

As of now:

### Castrating cattle beasts

You must use a local anaesthetic when castrating cattle over 6 months of age.

You must use a local anaesthetic at any age when using high tension bands to castrate cattle.

A high-tension band is a band that is mechanically tightened during application, with tension maintained by a crimp or similar device when the band is released from the applicator. A rubber ring is not a high-tension band.

### Prohibition on transporting young calves by sea across Cook Strait

Transport of young calves by sea across Cook Strait is prohibited.

### Docking cattle beasts' tails

Docking cattle tails is prohibited, except by a veterinarian as a treatment for disease or injury. Dock means to shorten or remove the tail by any method.

So the old "last 2-3 vertebrae" rule no longer applies.

### For next year:

Disbudding and Dehorning Cattle Beasts

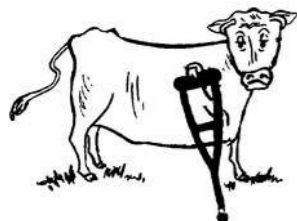
From 1 October 2019, local anaesthetic must be used when disbudding cattle of any age.

This procedure isn't limited to veterinarians – talk to your vet clinic or disbudding contractor about training and providing anaesthetic.

There will be plenty more information about this leading into 2019 so don't worry too much about it for now; just be aware that things are about to change



## Lame Cows and Antibiotics Give pain relief a go



It's very tempting, I know, when you see a lame cow to simply "give her a jab" of penicillin & move on. If it happens to be Footrot then you'll be spot on. Footrot though is pretty easy to spot, namely sudden lameness & obvious swelling around or

between the toes. Generally, if you lift the foot it looks like someone has taken a breadknife & cut swollen tissue between the toes. So, in that case a course of penicillin is certainly justified.

With most other cases of lameness, especially early on, use of antibiotics can be delayed or may not be needed at all. A day or two of rest close to the shed, trimming of the hoof & so on is often all that's needed.

However, some of you (and you know who you are) throw antibiotics at every lame cow that walks past.

When they come right you of course point to the use of antibiotic but in reality, many of them would have come right with rest or proper hoof trimming & didn't need any antibiotic at all. With the on-going scrutiny on overuse of antibiotics it's time you re-thought your reflex use of antibiotics on every cow.

If you feel the need to give the cow something then how about instead of reaching for a bottle of penicillin, you reach for a bottle of anti-inflammatory? Treat the pain, give her a spell & unless there is an obvious infection present, give the antibiotics a rest.

Recent field studies showed a clear correlation between the use of pain relief (anti-inflammatories) & an earlier return to the herd for cows with lameness that didn't require antibiotics.

## Teatsealing Heifers

Your heifers are the future of your herd and you have invested considerable money and time in them before they start milking. The quickest way to devalue this investment is calving mastitis, which often leaves heifers with light quarters and a high risk of being culled.

If heifer mastitis in your herd is an issue, **using teat sealants 4-8 weeks prior to calving is by far the best and most cost-effective way to deal with the problem.** This is because infection can get into the quarter well before calving, and ticks away until calving, when it is discovered. Blocking the teat before the udder springs stops this happening.

Using teat sealants dramatically reduces calving mastitis giving approximately 80% reduction in *Strep. uberis*. at calving and a 70% reduction in clinical mastitis in the 1<sup>st</sup> 2 weeks of calving

Heifer mastitis will adversely affect lifetime production even if the quarter is not lost, so the economics of prevention are extremely good.

Dealing with the issue before calving by treating heifers with Teatseal also means a smoother run during calving when time is always at a premium. It also gives your heifers the best chance to remain uninfected as they enter the milking herd, so they produce to capacity and have a reduced risk of getting culled.

Teatsealing heifers pre-calving is a surprisingly achievable job, **especially when performed by our experienced team.** Farms that have already tried Teatsealing heifers are repeating the treatment year after year in their first calvers. Call the clinic now to discuss heifer Teatsealing with your vet, or to book in our heifer Teatsealing team

## DRYING OFF MANAGEMENT

Dry cow therapy (DCT) is a significant investment in your herd so we have put together a few pointers below to help you get the most out of it. For further information, there is an Administration Guide available from the clinic or from [www.dairywellness.co.nz](http://www.dairywellness.co.nz). This website also has a video demonstrating how to correctly administer dry cow therapy and Teatseal<sup>®</sup> tubes and a short online training course with a certificate which is suitable for anyone who will be administering dry cow therapy or Teatseal.

### PREPARATION

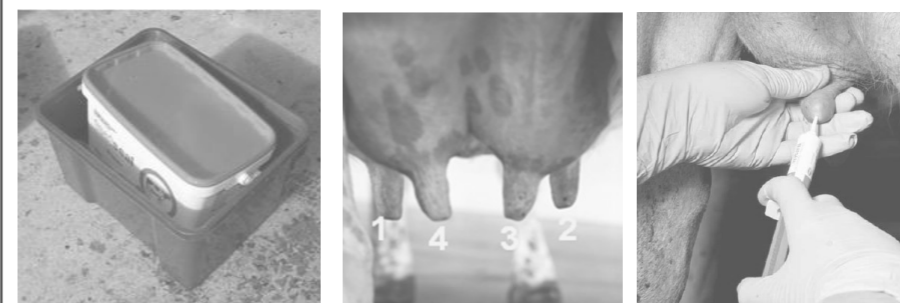
Recommendations for a DCT programme suitable for your herd will be made during your Milk Quality consult. Also, check out the new SmartSAMB tools on [www.smartsamm.co.nz](http://www.smartsamm.co.nz) to see what your best options are. Once the programme is established it is wise to get all product on farm, ready to be used when required. You will need to make sure to have plenty of gloves, paper towels, teat wipes, teat spray and spray paint. Groups of cows should be selected for dry off based on milk volumes, SCC, body condition score, and calving date.

Guidelines around this can be found in the SmartSAMB plan, or can be discussed with one of the vet team.

### DRYING OFF

It is important to make sure you have plenty of help on hand and plenty of time to do the job properly. If it is cold, the intramammary products can sometimes be harder to administer. If this is happening, the bucket of tubes can be placed in a larger bucket of hot water to gently warm the syringes up without getting them wet.

**Do not put the syringes directly into the water** because water can carry bacteria which may cause mastitis if transferred into the udder on the syringe.



The udder should be clean and dry. Disinfect the teat end using **at least one teat wipe per teat**; making sure the wipe comes away clean when you are finished. When removing the cap from the dry cow syringe, be sure not to touch the end of the nozzle (and don't use your mouth!). **Partially** insert the nozzle into the teat end up to 3mm and infuse the product (full insertion can damage the delicate inner lining of the teat and reduce effectiveness). If using an antibiotic, massage it from the teat up into the udder. If using Teatseal in combination or alone it must NOT be massaged into the udder, but must stay in the teat. One way to help the Teatseal stay in the teat canal is to gently squeeze the top of the teat where it attaches to the udder while inserting. Disinfect and treat one teat at a time, starting with the front left teat and working clockwise round the udder. Treat all four quarters and follow with freshly mixed teat spray of the correct concentration.

Immediately after treatment, mark each cow and record the id number and treatment given.

### AFTER TREATMENT

Once the mob has been treated and clearly identified, they should be walked quietly back to a clean paddock, preferably away from the milking shed and the milking mob. The cows should have access to water and a maintenance ration. Avoid activity that may encourage excessive soiling or movement of the udder during the dry period.

The dried off mob should be checked daily for the first week or so for any swollen udders that may need investigating. It is best to keep the treated mob away from the dairy shed for the first week to avoid milk let down, which can slow down the process of udder dry off and affect the teat plug formation.

If you or your staff need further information or training on dry off management, please contact one of our vet team.

## Don't forget those Eczema cows

While we are now over the worst in terms of spore counts we are still seeing plenty of cows showing up with signs of facial eczema. As well as the short term visible damage you also need to consider the long-term damage many of these cows will have suffered, which may not show up until they come under stress at spring time.

It's important these cows get treatment as it's like having an incredibly bad sunburn with the added complication of liver damage making these cows feel sick.

Treatments include pain relief, B12 injections, oil drenches like Mander-son's mix, good quality zinc-based creams, top nutrition and provision of shade.

Over the dry period and especially close to calving look for cows that are going backwards compared to their herd mates. They will need special attention to get through the stress of calving & early lactation.

