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Merial Ancare products
 this festive season
 (promotion ends 20 December)
 (while stocks last)



Micheal Wyss and Leanne Holden pictured with Dion Smith, Virbac Stockgard, and our Trading Manager John Larkin receiving the Yamaha bike won in this years dry-off promotion.



Round the Mountain 2013

It started with a call from Craig from Stratford suggesting we reignite the social challenge of Round the Mountain Relay about three months ago. Those that had been involved in the last challenge (14 years ago) had stories about what a great day it was and the shenanigans that went on so it didn't take much convincing to get the start of a team organised.

Our team consisted of 14 staff, partners and kids along with two clients who qualified by having run for our team in the past. After weeks of rigorous training (which for Giles meant buying new shoes and leaving them in the box until race day) the day arrived and the first keen bunch set out at 2am at blistering pace giving us a lead against Stratford vets that we never relinquished. The day was a great success with the weather turning it on from lunchtime onwards making it great for supporters but hot as hell for anyone silly enough to volunteer to run with us. It was awesome to bump into plenty of clients along the way who were also getting involved and to experience the support that all runners received during the event! A special thank you to Daniel Gut and Andrew Sharpe for running for us, Merial Ancare for sponsoring us and I'd say all involved will be keen to get back into it again next year!



Some of the team approach the finish line after 12hrs 57min

Vaccination Planner for Sheep Farmers

Can't remember when the optimum time is to do all these blasted vaccinations pre-tupping?

Go to www.sheepvax.co.nz & you'll find that MSD Animal Health have done all the hard work for you. Click on the 'tools' option & a planning wheel comes up. All you need to do is put in your Ram in date & the program does the rest. It's brilliant.

The site also tells you all you need to know about Toxovax, Campyvax, Androvax & Salvexin-B so do yourself a favour & take a look, plug in your dates then get in touch with John to order your vaccination requirements for the mating season

Fly Options

Due to resistance issues Zapp and Fleecemaster have been withdrawn from our shelves. Cyrazin KO has been withdrawn from the market by the supplier because of stability issues. This means we now have limited options for the prevention and treatment of flystrike.

Preventative options - **Clikzin Spray On** and **Cyrazin Liquid**.

Cyrex is a new combination preventative/treatment option for saturation dipping or jetting.



Regular sheep farmer email updates have commenced. If you did not receive my email last week and would like to in future please let me know at john@elthamvetservice.co.nz.



December 2013



Another year whizzes by and we are back at that panic time of the year when you know you should be Xmas shopping but can't motivate yourself to get to the shops. Normally I'm on top of that by now but this year I admit I'm struggling. It seems the English cricketers are struggling a bit as well & one in particular has gone home. Sledging has always been a part of cricket (with some absolute rippers) and I hope it continues but when it gets nasty like it has across the Tasman you have to wonder. One of my favourites is the great Freddie Truman admonishing one of his fielders. The poor fielder in question let a ball go through his legs and away for four. He apologised to Fred "Sorry Fred, I should have kept my legs together". Fred replied "so should have your mother lad". Brilliant!

Now as it happens I cop a fair bit of sledging out in the field (aka on farm) mostly to do with my hairline & my advancing years. Lucky for you I can take it but remember if you're going to dish it out, you had better be prepared to take it in return!

Mating has come & (nearly) gone & surprisingly cidr use was up by 25% this season.

I don't believe there have been more non-cyclers than in previous years; in fact with the kind spring & cow condition most of you were reporting good numbers of cows cycling early so I'm hoping it's a sign that more & more of you simply see the value in doing this job early & reaping the rewards of more days in milk the following season. We also greatly increased the use of PMSG (Pregnecol/Novormon) with the 2nd injection on cidr removal. We are becoming more & more certain that the return is a positive one compared to the standard program (up to 10% increase in conception to fixed time insemination) & well worth the extra few dollars. So much so that we are considering offering it as the standard package next year with an opt out option if you really don't want it. We'll get back to you on that next year after we've seen the scanning results.

Will facial eczema be an issue this summer? As always it depends on the weather but with all the hay & silage making recently there's a good chance that there will be a fair bit of dead litter around this summer & if things become conducive to spore growth, long hot spells & humid weather should at least keep you on your toes. We'll be doing our usual spore counts after New Year & keeping you up to date with trends for our area. If you are considering spraying pasture with one of the eczema sprays remember you need to get onto that before spore numbers begin to rise so ideally your first application would be before New Year.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to you all. Take care & all the best this summer

Building Extensions Underway

You may have noticed all the earthmoving going on next to the clinic recently. That's the first stages of a dramatic increase in the size of our store along with dedicated vet parking (the locals are getting a bit hacked off at our vehicles blocking the paths) where the paddock was as well as significant re-organising of the internal workings of the clinic. It is essentially a two stage process because we will also need to do significant work to the historic part of the building within the next 5 years or so to meet new requirements for earthquake safety & so on.

The reasons are numerous & were well explained at the AGM this year so I'm not going to go into them again but when it's all finished we will have a facility to be proud of and hopefully secures the future of this vet practice for years to come, which benefits everyone.

It does mean that nearly all of our bulk supplies will need to be stored off-site for a while so our apologies for any inconvenience that might cause. We will keep limited amounts of bulky stuff hidden away in various nooks & crannies in the clinic but if you need more than a couple of bags of causmag or zinc please let us know before you turn up. It also means that **our traditional Xmas barbeque will not be able to take place this year** because of Health & Safety reasons (i.e. we aren't allowed to hold a party on a building site). But, don't fret; when it's all finished we will have a big knees up to celebrate its completion & you will all be invited to come & take a look around.

This Xmas we intend (weather permitting) to have the barbeque going outside (probably where the picnic tables are) for a couple of hours over lunch time in the days leading into Christmas. You are welcome to drop in for a bite to eat & a drink & a chin-wag in lieu of our normal Xmas party.

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 Nicola Childs Frank Suter

Theileria Update

A few weeks ago we sent out an e-mail reporting the diagnosis of Theileria here in Eltham. The body of that e-mail is available at the counter if you need to know more or on the news section of our website www.elthamvetservice.co.nz. We haven't diagnosed any cases since & are hopeful due to our geography that we won't see too many cases; and if we do that they will be isolated & related to stock coming into our area from high risk regions. As a profession we get regular updates from NZVA, MAF (now called MPI) & DairyNZ. Below is the latest update received last week.

- 327 farms have now been positively identified with ikeda (by PCR). Results of samples sent from a further 21 farms are still pending.
- Geographical distribution of clinical cases of bovine anaemia caused by ikeda remains correlated with cattle tick distribution. Only a case in Eketahuna, one in Napier and a second case in Reporoa are outside the North Island area identified as at risk for the cattle tick.
- The number of cases being reported weekly is about 20, but the numbers are falling slowly.
- Private veterinary diagnostic laboratories have received protocols for ikeda testing.
- MPI will be moving to monthly reporting.

The latest fact sheet regarding ticks & Theileria has been reproduced for your information and included in the newsletter.

Recent Deaths a Reminder to Vaccinate Young Stock Earlier

Sporadic deaths of cattle are common. Finding a valuable replacement heifer dead in a paddock is disheartening but often just prompts the statement "oh well... where there's livestock there's dead stock" and then things move on. However many of these deaths can be prevented, avoiding significant losses. These deaths start a lot earlier than your heifers. Recently we saw an outbreak of sudden deaths in recently weaned calves that might have been prevented if we had vaccinated earlier. It was caused by Clostridium perfringens type A, which isn't covered by the traditional 5-in-1 vaccines.

What is 'Sudden Death Syndrome'?

Sudden death syndrome describes deaths that occur due to toxins released by clostridial bacteria growing in the gut. This is often seen in fast growing animals on high quality pasture, but can be seen at any time. Another risk is heifers consuming dirt or mud while grazing (clostridia form their spores in the soil) or if grazing a paddock that was recently turned, bringing previously well buried spores to the surface.

These deaths have been reported even in animals that have been vaccinated. The reason for this is that there are clostridial organisms present in New Zealand associated with Sudden Death that are not covered by "traditional" 5 in 1 vaccines (notably Clostridium sordellii and C. perfringens Type A).

What can you do about it?

Vaccinate with Covexin 10 which provides protection for the 10 most relevant key clostridial pathogens. The vaccine protects against organisms that cause the "traditional" clostridial diseases such as pulpy kidney, tetanus and blackleg as well as a further five clostridial organisms.

When should you vaccinate?

A sensitiser and booster shot is required for calves, followed with an annual booster. As Covexin 10 can be given any time from 2 weeks of age, an ideal time to start the programme is when dis-budding calves at 4-6 weeks. A booster can be given 4 to 6 weeks later. Ideally you want your calves fully vaccinated by the end of November. A booster shot a year later will provide protection through to calving. If you haven't already vaccinated your replacement calves this season & think the danger period is over, think again. Come in & pick up some Covexin-10; it's cheap insurance.

Dinner at Marion's

An elderly lady was invited to an old friend's home for dinner one evening. She was impressed by the way her lady friend preceded every request to her husband with endearing terms such as: Honey, My Love, Darling, Sweetheart, etc. The couple had been married almost 70 years and, clearly, they were still very much in love. While the husband was in the living room, her lady friend leaned over to her hostess to say, 'I think it's wonderful that, after all these years, you still call your husband all those loving names.' The elderly lady said, 'I have to tell you the truth, his name slipped my mind about 10 years ago, and I'm scared to death to ask the cranky old fool what it actually is.'

Friend for supper

A husband said to his wife: Honey... I've invited a friend home for supper."
His wife yelled: What? Are you crazy?
The house is a mess, I haven't been shopping, all the dishes are dirty and I don't feel like cooking a fancy meal!"
He replied: I know all that."
She then snapped: So why did you invite a friend home for supper?"
The husband's answer was: Because the poor fool is thinking of getting married!"

Health & Safety Corner

Like all businesses we have obligations to provide a safe environment for both our employees & our clients. It's an ever increasing part of business life, whether you like it or not & needs to be taken seriously. Those of you who have taken the plunge & got serious about Health & Safety on your farms will agree; it can be a real pain at times (& sometimes it seems common sense has been removed from the equation entirely) but it is very important.

We are in the process of turning 3 previous Health & Safety manuals into an actual working document rather than another folder that sits on a shelf gathering dust. Part of the whole H&S thing is to talk about it with your clients & develop a long term relationship & commitment to H&S on both sides. In our job it gets a little complicated because most of our work is not supervised; vets are away on their own all day in someone else's environment and don't necessarily have much control over the environment they are asked to work in. That's where you come in.

As an employer we attempt to make sure our vets & lay staff are as safe as we can make them, when they are in the clinic & especially when they are away from the clinic on farm. That means that if they deem a working environment to be unsafe or likely to cause injury they have our permission to refuse to work in that environment until they are satisfied it is safe. I think you would agree that on the whole we are very accommodating when undertaking work on your farms but we ask you to occasionally step back & take a critical look at what you are asking us to do and what facilities you are providing. It's no wonder most of us older vets have bad backs & buggered elbows & shoulders. Our working facilities have improved markedly in the last 10 years or so but there are still some of you putting us into situations where we are really at risk of being unable to do that job again the next day without sustaining an injury. Lamé cows are a very good example; front feet do not get examined particularly thoroughly when tied to the front gate in a herring bone shed or in a race where a head bale is faulty or even worse, not there. We've got a few million dollar sheds with \$2 shop facilities, where it seems you are quite happy for us to attempt to fix 10 lame cows in pouring rain or intense sun (as an aside skin cancer is a real concern in rural NZ & an employer can be liable if it is believed they have put their employees at on-going risk of exposure to UV rays without taking appropriate precautions).

All we're really asking is that you take a look at your yards & if they aren't up to scratch do something about them. We're not going to walk off the job but we are going to start pointing out where improvements could & should be made.



Repeat Breeders & other matters

We are now getting well into mating, with AB all but done, and bulls going into the herds. Although the extra time is of use, don't drop your guards and assume that the bulls will mop everything up. Firstly, check that the bulls are serving the cows properly, and that there is no deformity such as 'Corkscrew' penis where they miss the target every time. Record the first week's bull activity and check that this is reduced by two thirds in three weeks, otherwise it could indicate a fertility problem. There will be cows that just keep on bulling every three weeks and by the time they are on their third cycle without holding they have become 'Repeat Breeders'. It pays to give them some help in the form of an injection of Receptal. This drug, given on the day of service, will ensure that the ovary fires the egg out, which may well not be happening otherwise. Doing this increases the holding rate by about 10%. A repeat shot eleven days later will reduce the rejection of the embryo, but it is the injection on day of service that will give the best results.

Finally, don't forget to keep up with the tailpainting for recording, and have those important days in mind when you should paint the entire herd so that you know the induction cows – the usual one is December 21st, as matings after then will result in October calvings.

Giles

America's Cup Scapegoat found



I know it's ages now since we managed to lose the America's Cup from a seemingly unbeatable position but if it still bothers you how we managed to lose it I think I've found you someone to blame. He's none other than a previous board member & long term friend of this Vet Club, Noel Boddie. Yes, when Team NZ went 8-1 up Noel was overcome by a fit of patriotism & jumped on the next plane to San Francisco to watch the boys "bring the cup home". The rest of course is history and frankly Noel; it's all your fault. As a result the current board have approved an immediate increase to all your vet fees as a suitable punishment and advise you to stay well away from the All Blacks at the 2015 World Cup.

God is watching

The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic elementary school for lunch. At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The nun made a note, and posted on the apple tray: 'Take only ONE. God is watching.'
Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies. A child had written a note, 'Take all you want. God is watching the apples....'