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The pastor asked if anyone in the congregation would like to express thanks for answered prayers. Susan Smith stood and walked to the lectern. She said, "Two months ago, my husband, Tom, was out cycling with his friends and he came off his bike. His scrotum was completely crushed. The pain was excruciating and the doctors didn't know if they could help him." You could hear a muffled gasp from the men in the congregation as they imagine the pain that poor Tom must have experienced. "Tom was unable to hold me or the children," she went on, "and every move caused him terrible pain. We prayed as the doctors performed a delicate operation, and it turned out they were able to piece together the crushed remnants of Tom's scrotum, and wrap wire around it to hold it in place." Again, the men in the congregation cringed and squirmed uncomfortably as they imagined the horrible surgery performed on Tom. "Now," she announced in a quivering voice, "thank the Lord, Tom is out of hospital and the doctors say that with time, his scrotum should recover completely." All the men sighed with relief. The pastor rose and tentatively asked if anyone else had something to say. A man stood up and walked slowly to the podium. He said, "I'm Tom Smith." The entire congregation held its breath. "I just want to tell my wife the word is sternum."



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DECEMBER 2019

A former director of the vet club came to see me the other day with a complaint. I thought "God, what have I done now?" Fortunately his complaint wasn't about anything we had done on his farm; it was much more serious than that. His complaint was that there haven't been anywhere near enough jokes appearing in recent newsletters. And frankly, I agree with him. I have to fight like hell to get jokes into our newsletters because it's always full of vet and farming related articles and I'm constantly told "we don't have room". Well bugger it. I'm taking up the baton on behalf of all those clients who don't give a hoot about "important stuff" and just want to read more jokes in their newsletter. This edition will have hardly anything in it that will be of any benefit to your farming operation other than (hopefully) making you smile. And with all the crap farmers are getting thrown at them these days, if this puts a smile on your face and puts you in a good mood then perhaps this will end up being the most beneficial newsletter you've read all year.

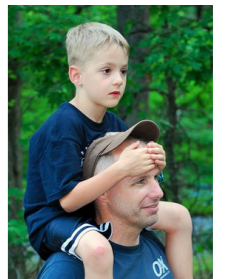
We can't ignore facial eczema as it seems to be an annual thing these days, where in the old days it came around about every 6 years or so. So, we'll throw in something about that just to remind you that it's around the corner and you should take all the necessary precautions. But other than that and a few strategically placed articles & ads designed to get you to buy from us rather than RD1 and Farmlands, it's going to be mostly wall-to-wall humour. Given it's nearly Christmas it's most appropriate that the director who brought this all to my attention was christened Noel.

We say goodbye to a much-loved member of staff this month. Sue Morresey has been at the front desk since 2010 and will retire just before Xmas. Her last day is actually our end of year Xmas barbeque so make sure you give her a big hug when you see her. Sue has been "camp mother" pretty much since the day she arrived, and we're not sure how we are going to cope without her. We all love Sue and are very sad to see her go. But, it's got to the stage where she's earned the right to spend more time with Tony in their beautiful campervan and with her grandkids, so we bid her a fond but tearful farewell. So long Sue, you will be missed xx.

On that sad note we wish you all a very Merry Xmas everyone and a Happy New Year. We hope to see many of you at our annual Xmas barbeque on the 19th.

Little Johnny

One day, Little Johnny's Dad asked him if he knew about the birds and the bees. "I don't want to know!" little Johnny said, bursting into tears. Confused, the father asked Little Johnny what was wrong. "Oh Dad," Johnny sobbed: "At age 6, I got the 'there's no Santa' speech. At age 7, I got the 'there's no Easter bunny' speech. Then, at age 8, you hit me with the 'there's no tooth fairy' speech! If you're going to tell me now that grown-ups don't really have sex, I've got nothing left to live for!"



Join us at the clinic for an end of year celebration



**THURSDAY
19th December
5 -10pm**



New Staff Member

Welcome to our newest member of staff, who is replacing Sue at the front desk. Leilani Hohaia-Gray starts here on 16th December to learn the ropes before assuming control of Sue's desk formally after the Xmas break. We welcome Leilani to the team and are confident she will be a great addition to the front desk. We'll let Leilani introduce herself properly in our next newsletter.

Clinic & Farm Supplies
Railway Street, Eltham
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Facial Eczema Prevention Strategies

With Facial Eczema becoming pretty much an annual occurrence around here now is a good time to consider what prevention strategies you should consider on your farm for the summer. Here are a few options for you to think about and discuss with us before spore counts start to rise:

1. Feed less spores

Feed alternate feeds and pastures such as turnips, chicory, fodder beet, plantain, maize silage, PKE, meal and silage or hay made more than 6 weeks previously.

Spores are thickest low down in the sward so keeping post grazing residuals above 4cms will reduce the number eaten.

2. Spray pasture with fungicides

Fungicides only work when the pasture is green and growing. Do a spore count before spraying, it should be less than 20,000 immediately before application. Be sure the spray goes right to the edges of the paddocks, under the hedges and beneath any trees. Helicopter spraying won't achieve this. The spray lasts 4-6 weeks so you should start doing spore counts after 4 weeks and respray as soon as they start to rise.

3. Feed zinc

The gold standard is **daily drenching of zinc oxide** and some farmers still do this. The difference between a full dose of zinc and a toxic dose is small. Most NZ dairy herds have about 150kg difference between their lightest and heaviest cows so it is a good idea to weigh a few cows to ensure your dosing is accurate.

Next best is to **feed zinc oxide in a pelletised feed or from a mixer wagon**. Poor mixing and unpelleted feeds risk underdosing the shy feeders and overdosing the gutsy ones. The difference between a full dose of zinc and a toxic dose is small.

Zinc boluses are more convenient for young or dry stock. Young and dry stock don't drink enough water to get protective levels of zinc from water treatment. Boluses take two weeks to reach full protection and last for 6 weeks so a crystal ball is helpful in deciding when to put them in. If spore counts are dangerously high when the boluses are coming to the end of their protection period it is a good idea to do a faecal zinc test to make sure zinc levels are still high enough to give protection.

Add **zinc sulphate or zinc sulphate hepta hydrate** to the water supply - milkers only. Young and dry stock don't drink enough water to get protective levels of zinc.

As we have learned in the past, water treatment doesn't prevent Facial Eczema when the spore challenge is very high. In bad eczema years it will protect at the beginning and end of the season but not at the peak. If you only do water treatment you need to have a backup plan to use if spore counts go through the roof again this year. That backup plan may be to put zinc boluses down your cows to cover them through the worst 6 weeks of the Facial Eczema season.

Putting zinc salts straight into the trough is never good enough. The difference between a full dose of zinc and a toxic dose is small. You need a Dosatron or Peta dispensers. Wonder's Zinc Soxx are the next best option. The recommended dose varies between products so be sure to follow the instructions carefully.

Whatever method you use, you need to **check if it is delivering a protective dose** of zinc to your stock. Wait 3-6 weeks after you reach full dose rates and do a blood or faecal zinc test on 10 animals. A GGT test on the same blood samples will tell us if sub clinical eczema damage is already happening.



Getting a bear off your roof

An Alaskan man comes home from work to find a young grizzly bear on his roof, so he calls the local bear removal company (yes they exist).



The guy from the bear removal company arrives, looks up at the bear and then takes a ladder, a baseball bat, a shotgun and a Pitbull terrier out of his vehicle. As he puts the ladder up against the house the homeowner asks, "what are all those things for?"

"It's pretty straightforward really. Once I'm up on the roof I'm going to knock the bear off with this baseball bat. When he hits the ground my Pitbull will grab him by the testicles and won't let go. This will subdue the bear to the point where I can tie him up, put him on the back of the truck and take him away for release."

"Okay; so what's the shotgun for?"

"Well, if the bear knocks me off the roof instead, I need you to shoot the dog"

Ethical Dilemma

A priest tells a man who hasn't been to confession for many years that he must give up smoking, drinking and sex if he wants to get into Heaven.

The man says he'll try.

A few weeks pass and the man visits the priest again for advice.

"How's it going?" asks the priest.

"Not bad," says the man: "I've given up smoking and drinking but the other day, when my wife bent over to get something out of the freezer, I couldn't help myself and I ravished her then and there"

"They don't like that in Heaven," the priest tells him.

"I didn't think they would," the man replies:

"They weren't too happy about it in Countdown, either."

Following Instructions

A wife asks her husband, "Can you go down to the dairy and buy one carton of milk, and if they have eggs, get 6."

A short time later the husband comes back with 6 cartons of milk.

The frustrated wife explodes, "Why the hell did you buy 6 cartons of milk?"

He replied, "They had eggs."

Fathers - who needs them?

There is a famous quote from Oscar Wilde that goes "when I was fourteen I couldn't believe how little my father knew. When I turned 21, I couldn't get over how much he had learned in 7 years"

This quote sprang to mind the other day when I visited a property where the running of the farm is now in the hands of the son, who was pretty keen to point out how useless and out of touch his old man was. I seem to have visited a few of these farms recently and have come to the conclusion that the above quote applies to quite a few guys in the 18-30-year bracket who have taken the farm over from Dad. It seems whatever Dad did was out of date, made no sense and was designed to run the business into the ground. This is interesting since I know most of these Dads who are now retired comfortably and enjoying life, and when I worked with them they seemed to have a pretty good grasp of farming and were successful at it. This begs the question, when did they become incompetent? It must have happened suddenly because when I last talked to them they were still coherent and talking common sense.

Another cockie asked me recently whether I noted any common threads amongst the more successful farmers in our district. When I thought about it, most of them were organised people who had clear farming goals, concentrated on feeding their cows as well as they could, didn't rely on overuse of urea to get them out of feed pinches and most importantly used common sense and kept things simple. They certainly didn't hang on every word their farm advisors (or vets) said, tended not to be the loudmouths at discussion groups (if they even attended) and they didn't jump from one trend to another when it came to feeding, fertilizer or general farming practice. The KISS principle applies just as much to farming as anything else in life and as soon as you try to over complicate things you tend to get into trouble. And the most common group to make life hard for themselves, generally speaking, are the young guys trying to get ahead fast and ignoring all the years of experience and common-sense advice that is sitting right in front of them - their fathers.

Your Dad has probably already made many of the mistakes you are about to make and learned from them. Instead of throwing off at how old and out of touch he is, take some time out and talk to him. Maybe even ask him some questions and seek his advice.



Some great quotes

"When I die, I want to die like my grandmother who died peacefully in her sleep. Not screaming like all the passengers in her car."

Author Unknown.

"It's so long since I've had sex; I've forgotten who ties up whom."

Joan Rivers.

"My girlfriend said to me in bed last night 'you're a pervert' I said, 'that's a big word for a girl of fifteen'."

Emo Philips.

"My wife is a sex object. Every time I ask for sex, she objects."

Les Dawson.

"I'm such a good lover because I practice a lot on my own."

Woody Allen.

"There are a number of mechanical devices that increase sexual arousal, particularly in women.

Chief amongst these is the Mercedes-Benz 380L convertible."

Unknown.

"You don't appreciate a lot of stuff in school until you get older.

Little things like being spanked every day by a middle aged woman: Stuff you pay good money for in later life."

Emo Philips.

"Instead of getting married again, I'm going to find a woman I don't like and just give her a house."

Steven Seagal.

"If life was fair, Elvis would be alive and all the impersonators would be dead."

Johnny Carson.

"Sometimes I think war is God's way of teaching us geography."

Paul Rodriguez.

"Bigamy is having one wife too many. Monogamy is the same."

Oscar Wilde.

A drunk is stumbling through the woods when he happens upon a preacher baptising folk in the river. He ambles down to the water's edge then trips and falls down before the Holy man. Almost overcome by the smell of alcohol, the preacher pipes up:

"Lord have mercy on your drunken soul, brother - are you ready to find Jesus?"

"Yes I am!" replies the drunk, out of his skull.

And with that, the preacher grabs the man and dunks him under the water.

Moments later, he drags him back up

"Brother, have you found Jesus?" asks the preacher.

"No, preacher" stammers the drunk, "I have not!"

Stunned by this, the preacher sends him down again ... this time leaving him there a little longer. Shortly he drags him back up again:

"Rid your soul of the poison, brother - have you found Jesus?"

Gasping for air, the drunk splutters "No preacher, I have not!"

At his wits end the preacher sends him down one last time. A full minute later, he pulls him out:

"For the love of God" shouts the preacher, "tell me you have found Jesus!"

Coughing his lungs up, the drunk wipes his eye and turns to the preacher

"Are you sure this is where he fell in?"