

Returning Products

With Dry Cow Therapy season just around the corner, please be aware that this season we will not be accepting returned product due to concerns about how that product has been stored and handled since it left the clinic. We can't in all conscience on-sell that returned product to another client for the same reasons so this year please be accurate with your numbers because once DCT or Teatseal has left the clinic it is yours and we will not accept it back.

We also do not accept back vaccines, antibiotics or intra-mammary products for the same reasons. They need to be stored under certain conditions and we can't be certain what condition it is in if it is returned. We certainly can't put it back on the shelf or in the fridge and re-sell it to someone else. So if you're thinking of stock-piling products in-case you need them and think you can return them if you don't, please be aware that once you've left the clinic with one of these products it is yours and cannot be returned for a refund.

Purchase Alleva's Boss PourOn 5L +2.5L & receive an Oilskin Vest



FEBRUARY 2019

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We're just over a month into another year and the media hysteria over our "Heatwave" had my South African-born wife laughing hysterically into her gin and tonic. I have to say your average Australian would also have been rolling around the floor in tears over the reaction to 5 days of hotter weather than usual. But, from a farming perspective, an extended dry spell with high temperatures is a serious thing and the fact that we have seen spore counts over 20,000 in this area before the end of January certainly made us sit up and take notice. Near my home in Oakura counts were already approaching 100,000 by the end of the month and that is serious. So, I hope you have been planning ahead and have your facial eczema prevention strategy in place. I see John has a good number of Faceguard and Time Capsules put aside for many of you so that's encouraging. It's not too late to pasture spray either for those of you considering it but if you want the best results you'll need to get spraying very soon.



Early scanning has started and results predictably are all over the place at this stage so I'm not going to even try to give you an average empty rate yet. Please book well ahead when planning your pregnancy tests because we do fill up quickly and it's almost certain that if you ring today wanting your herd scanned this week you'll be out of luck. Mind you, at least when you ring us you get to speak to an actual person. Have you tried ringing your insurance company, a bank or even your local NZ Safety shop lately? I've tried all 3 and still haven't spoken to anyone even remotely local. How that policy can possibly improve customer service is beyond me ...


Our renovations are well underway now and we would like to thank you for your patience. It should be all done by the end of March they reckon so we'll conservatively say mid-April. We do apologise however, if your attempts to get through to us on the phone have been taking longer than usual. That's due to the temporary relocation of everything out the back including temporary phone lines. If you are struggling to get through please be patient or hang up, give it 5 minutes and try again. At least when you do get through you'll be talking to one of us and not a computerised answering service.

Dry Cow therapy is not far away now so we have included the DCT Consultation Form with this newsletter. Please give us as much information as you can and please try and get it to us at least a week before you intend drying off. This is the last season (we are told) where routine whole herd DCT will be allowed without documentation to show it's actually needed. We can debate that point as long as you want but next year, according to the powers that be, it will be prescribed only for cows that meet the treatment criteria (we assume using the tried & tested Samm plan criteria for selective treatment). Whether that's actually the case this time next year, who knows for sure? But let's assume that will be the case so if you're a big fan of routine whole herd treatment this could well be your last chance to get in while you still can. Having seen the benefits of whole herd therapy, we're unlikely to argue with you; this year at least.

Finally I would like to give a shout out to an old friend of this practice, Ian Eliason who is battling a serious health issue. You're a real-life legend mate and we're all thinking of you.

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Postage has risen again! Would anyone like our newsletters emailed? Let me know by emailing above address. 

WIN 1 OF 2 \$1,000 TRAVEL VOUCHERS



Every \$500 spent on Alleva or Boehringer drenches between 1st March & 30th June qualifies for entry in draw. Deferred Payment terms available.



Trust Boehringer Ingelheim products this season for results you can be proud of and you'll score a Degree polo to show your pride for your region too.



Married folk will get this. Young lovers won't understand it at all...

A man came home from work one day to find his wife sitting on the front porch with her bags packed. He asked her where she was going and she replied, "I'm leaving you and going to Auckland." He asked her why, and she told him "I just found out that I can make \$400.00 a night doing what I give you for free". He pondered that then went into the house. He returned to the porch a little while later with his own bag and sat down next to his wife. She said, "And just what do you think you're doing?" "I'm coming too" he replied. "Why?" She asked. "I want to see how you are going to live on \$800.00 a year!"

Hi I'm Michaela!

A few of you might recognise me as being a local girl or from meeting me during my time as a student. For those of you who don't I'm very local ... I grew up on a dairy farm in Matapu and spent a lot of time seeing practice/pestering the vets to take me with them to calls.



I am interested in both large and small animal work and look forward to getting out and meeting you either on farm or in the clinic. In my spare time I enjoy swimming, cycling, pilates, netball, following various sports, baking (keeps everyone sweet at work when I stuff up!) and catching up with friends and family.

Dairy Shed Audits – a plea for common-sense

Over the last 6 months we've had requests to add products to your annual prescription after a dairy shed audit. We've even had requests to add your dry cow prescription for this season when we haven't even had a consult yet! Some of this is due to a new auditor who maybe doesn't quite understand how the dry cow consultation and prescription process works but some of it is due to some of you folks not getting all your ducks in a row prior to your audit.

AUDIT

Here's the thing:

The only antibiotics and other restricted veterinary medicines (RVMs) that should be in your shed at audit time (or any time to be honest) are products that are on your annual RVM authority or products that were prescribed to treat a particular animal for a particular condition, and you have kept and filed the veterinary treatment and prescription form that the vet gave you. And, that animal is still currently being treated.

Things that shouldn't be in your shed:

- Antibiotics or other RVMs that were used on an animal months ago (with veterinary authority) and you've decided to hang onto whatever is left to use on a future animal. If that product isn't on your RVM authority it was meant only for the animal it was prescribed for. So that product should have been disposed of and definitely shouldn't be in your shed at audit time.
- Dry Cow Therapy. Other than at drying off time DCT should never be in your drug cabinet in the milk room for obvious reasons; it wouldn't be that hard to mistakenly grab a tube of DCT thinking it was a lactating product and use it to treat a cow with mastitis. Therefore, DCT should never be in your milk room and certainly not at audit time.
- Expired products. While there may be a temptation to hang onto RVMs "in case they come in handy at a later date" you should never hang onto expired products because once a product has expired there is no way of knowing whether it will still work and what it does to the withholding period.

Giving your drug room a decent clean up prior to an audit helps as does throwing away all the empty bottles and boxes that you seem to love to collect. The same applies to old, used syringes and needles. Chuck them away! It's quite simple really. You know when your audit is happening so be pro-active. Clean the place up a bit. Throw away expired and empty bottles and packaging. Make sure the only products in your cabinet are ones you have veterinary authority for, and your audit should go smoothly, and everyone is happy.

And by the way, if your auditor demands to see a prescription for a dry cow product you haven't even had a consult for yet, and won't be using until the end of the season, tell him/her to give me a call and I'll explain how prescribing works.

Rectal Perforation at Scanning

With another scanning season just about upon us we need to talk about the risk of rectal perforation in cows & especially heifers. This is an unfortunate risk of scanning and occurs when a cow or heifer decides to strain at the wrong time causing the head of the scanner to damage the lining of the rectum; we try our best to avoid this, but it can and does happen (fortunately very rarely).

It's more likely to happen if animals are stressed, poorly rowed up or able to run back & forwards up a race (heifers at grazing yards) so it's important to keep everything as calm & stress free as possible. Even then though it can happen & if not recognised can have fatal consequences.

Many dairy practices now get their clients to sign a waiver accepting that occasional mistakes are made in diagnosis and injury to the cow is an occasional and unavoidable outcome and they will not be held liable if they do.

We haven't got to the stage yet of pushing a piece of paper under your nose & demanding you sign it but please recognise that it is an accepted risk of ultrasound scanning & while we try our utmost to mitigate the possibility it can still happen. We need your help at scanning time to make sure this risk is as low as possible.

Get the Minda app for Scanning



For about five years now some of you have been getting us to bring our little yellow handheld devices to record aged pregnancy testing data. We then brought these back to the clinic and synchronised with Minda so you could download the information at home.

The new Minda app for smartphones has a pregnancy testing section in it which continuously synchronises live with Minda as we go. We used the app with a couple of farmers last year and found it to work well. We are unsure how much longer our "Trimbles" will be supported for so please use the new app.

Heifers for Export

With the return of the export heifer trade here is a reminder about vaccinating calves against BVD.

One of the two BVD vaccines we use in calves (**Hiprabovis**) also contains an IBR (Catarrh) vaccine. Heifers are tested for Catarrh antibodies before they can be exported and the test is unable to distinguish between prior infection and antibodies to the vaccine so everything that tests positive is removed from the group.

Some of you will have used Hiprabovis in the past due to having Catarrh issues in your herd while others will have used it because it is slightly cheaper than the alternative BVD vaccine (Bovillis).

If you have any potential future plans to export heifers please make sure you tell us when booking calf vaccinations in so we can bring the right vaccine.



Facial Eczema Prevention Strategies

It's that time of year again - hot, humid weather and an increasing spore count. So, it's time for a reminder about Facial Eczema prevention.

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 immediately 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 at least a week 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 learned on a few farms last year, 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. That is a major job; both physically demanding and time consuming so if you're going to do this plan ahead, make sure your head bale is working (don't even try if it isn't) and have plenty of help on hand.

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.

3rd Party Access request

This is an oldie, but with more and more focus coming on things like access to prescription medicines (so-called RVMs) and dry cow therapy, the more we need access to good records from you.

With respect to Dry Cow Therapy in particular, one of the things that helps considerably is 3rd party access to your production & quality records on Farmsource. Some of you will be considering drying a proportion of the herd off over the next few months if it goes dry and for that it helps greatly if you fill in your Dry Cow Therapy consultation form before coming to ask for some DCT.

Over the years, a number of you have ticked the box on the Dry Cow form claiming to have already granted us access but when we go searching you're not there. It's easy to check if you have by going into your account. If you haven't & want to speed up the process, then please follow the instructions below & grant us access ahead of time. Then you can tick "already have" with a clear conscience!

- Login to your fencepost account, now called 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 3rd 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 - that's all we need to see

Done & thanks!