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 Be in to **WIN**
 1 of 7 Yamaha **AG100s** worth **\$5,000 each***
FIRST FOR DRY OFF

Micheal & Kaye Wyss were winners of this years Virbac DryOff promotion



Andy Gavin looking smart in the Amphibian Jacket he won

Eltham Vet Services

September 2013

We can't complain about the weather so far this spring; it's been sensational! I've never had a spring where I've been getting e-mails from Dairy NZ & other dairy organisations giving advice on how to deal with too much grass! It's also a treat to be able to drive across a paddock without even putting it in 4-wheel drive to see a downer. Not surprisingly we haven't been as busy as past springs. Much of that is due to weather but also to your continuing improvements in terms of having cows in better condition at calving time than they were even 5 years ago. Given the drought we had, your efforts have been terrific & your cows should be thanking you for that. Well done. It's also been perfect weather to get calves outside in the sunshine and away from potentially contaminated sheds. A typical wet August usually means calves are stuck in the sheds all month and as numbers rise so do contamination levels. That normally leads to "calf scour month", otherwise known as September. Touch wood, we hope that this September won't be as bad as it often is unless the weather turns and they all get crammed back inside.

Add the good spring to the recent pay-out news and things are looking up. Certainly with mating around the corner you have every reason to be pro-active this year and get stuck into your non-cyclers nice and early to capitalise on more days in milk next season.

A good part of this newsletter is dedicated to mating and covers your treatment options for the coming season. This is also the month to get stuck into your "At-Risk" cows; you know the ones: retained placentas, difficult calvings, milk fevers etc. Get them checked before the end of this month and treated as required so they are clean & ready to conceive by the start of mating. There's no point finding dirty cows a week out from AI because they won't get in calf until they have cleaned up, which will probably be at least a month later. So get onto those suspicious cows this month.

So good luck for the run-in to mating & the tail-end of calving & lambing. Take advantage of favourable conditions & get onto things early this year. It will pay for itself at the other end.

And is it worth even mentioning the Taranaki team this season? So far to call them underwhelming would be a compliment & what were those blue/black monstrosities they were wearing the other night against Southland? I guess they can only get better from here (Tui billboard coming up?)

The only upside of the season so far is that the shield has moved around so much we could find ourselves with a couple of challenges before the end of the season at this rate. If we win the Log of Wood back all will be forgiven! Finally we hope you have enjoyed your Jelly Beans? It was an idea discussed at a board meeting as a little "spring treat" to lift your blood sugar levels & give you a boost when you needed it most. Don't get too used to them because they will run out soon but based on the feedback we've had there's a good chance they will make a return next spring.

Mating starts in just over a Month.
Tail painting starts Now!!!



Clinic & Farm Supplies
 Railway Street, Eltham
 Ph. (06) 764 8196
www.elthamvetservice.co.nz
Trading Depot
 Hollard Engineering,
 Victoria Street, Kaponga
 Ph. (06) 764 6686
J Larkin 0274 482 585

Veterinarians

Alistair McDougall BVSc - CEO
 Giles Gilling BVSc BSc MRCVS
 Andrew Weir BVSc, PGDip (Epi)
 Jim Robins BVSc, BSc, DipPharm
 Polly Otterson BVSc, MSc,
 Teresa Carr BVSc
 Adrian Clark BVSc
 Linley Gilling BVSc
 Lindsay Lash BVSc
 James Bruce BVSc
 Leon Christensen BVSc

Office

Joan Hughes John Larkin BBS
 Jill Watson Sue Morresey
 Nicola Childs Frank Suter



CONGRATULATIONS & THANK YOU

We at Eltham Vets are very fortunate that we have loyal staff who have made a long-term commitment to this practice. Recently we acknowledged Alistair McDougall who has spent the last 20 years continuously working here.

2013 Scholarship Winner

Chairman Phil Muir presents this year's Michael Higham Memorial Scholarship to Sophie Pilkington from Kawhia. The award is given every year to a 4th year vet student for the final two years of study. Sophie saw practice with us in August & will see practice with us again throughout her last two years of study.

Post-Calving Pour-on Options:
GENESIS
 5.5L \$690.00
 Or 2 x 5.5L + GET 1 FREE

COMBAT
TOPLINE
 5L \$406.00
 2.5L \$205.00

Promotion Extended
EPRINEX 3 + 1 FREE
 3 x 5 litre + 1 x 5 litre FREE
 (20 litres @ 15 litre price)
NO WITHHOLDINGS
 Promotion ends 30 September



LED Lensor H7 *Our very own celebrity!!!*
 This lightweight easy to wear headlamp is FREE with selected drenches



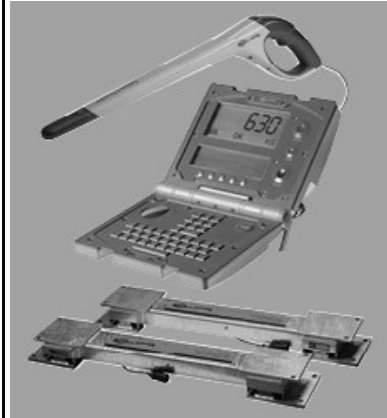
Your Weddings

Blair & Nicola Childs
 After a romantic proposal on the rocks in New Plymouth, Blair Childs and his bride-to-be, Nicola Duthie, promptly set about preparing for the wedding by mowing half an acre of Nicola's parents' farm every week for six weeks. The result? A beautiful, fun-filled celebration.

BRIDE of the WEEK

New Scales for Hire

For those of you who use our scales you will be pleased to know that we have just upgraded both sets of scales and added new Gallagher W610 EID compatible systems. Other than a different sized platform both systems are now identical so it doesn't matter which set you use, they will operate the same.



Data is stored on the recorders for later transfer to your own computer and is fully compatible with Minda. On return of the scales to the clinic we will download the data & e-mail it to you to be uploaded onto your system. For confidentiality reasons we will wipe the data after each use but not before we store that data on a computer file with your name on it so we can load back all previous weighing data onto the scales prior to the next time you use them. That way you can get instant growth rate information and so on. We have also purchased two EID reader wands which are linked to the data reader/recorder. John & Frank are becoming intimate with the new scales so they can set you up the first time you use them & show you how it all works. Last time I saw them they looked a little overwhelmed but in good time they will be very familiar

with the scales & then they will be ready to get you started.

We hope that this new service will be a popular one so once it's up & running if you want to hire our scales it might pay to book a week or so ahead at least until the fuss dies down.

Talk to John or Frank for more information



Veterinary Authority for simultaneous drug use

Over the last year there have been murmurings that we might be required to issue vet prescriptions for farmers who decide to use more than one antibiotic at once to treat a sick cow. Generally this would be simultaneous



use of an injectable antibiotic along with an intramammary. Confusion can arise about what the withholding period should be when two products are used together.

Traditionally the accepted approach has been to work out which product has the longest WHP, which one was given last, use your common sense and add an extra 12 hours to be safe.

Apparently that's not good enough anymore and Fonterra are required by their customers to demonstrate they are minimising the perceived risk of residues when simultaneous use of antibiotics occurs.

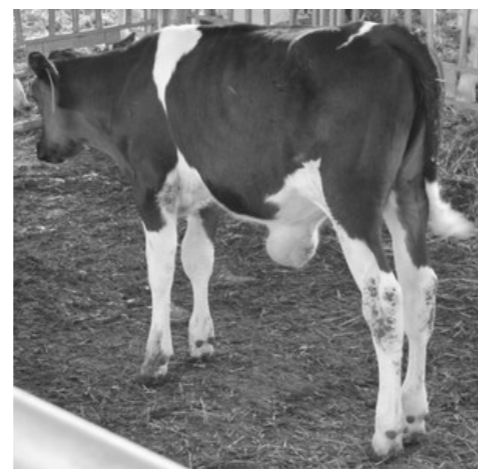
There are an infinite number of combinations that could be used and as yet no company or allied interest group have come up with official WHP recommendations for this so for now it's up to us vets to issue recommended WHPs for simultaneous use of drugs based on what is on your Annual Veterinary Authority.

So, if you do tend to use more than one antibiotic when treating a cow for mastitis in particular, please let us know what combinations you use and we will work out what an appropriate WHP would be and put that on your Veterinary Authority so if you are audited you have something to show.

Calf Hernias

A request from the vets — if you have a calf with an umbilical hernia that looks like it needs surgery can we please see them before they are 120kgs of strapping weaned calf? The ideal age & size from a surgical point of view is around 4-6 weeks of age. If it is bigger than 3 fingers wide then we may have to see them before then.

Hernias normally are there from the very start so you should have had plenty of opportunity to spot one & get us to check whether it requires surgery or not. While still doable at 120kgs, everything is harder both for the vet & for the calf so please get us in before they have a fully developed, grass-laden rumen & while we can still lift them!



BVD testing of bulls – this is a no brainer

Avoid disasters – make sure all your service bulls are BVD free

BVD is a widespread viral infection of NZ cattle and has a wide ranging impact on cattle performance and hence productivity, including growth of young stock, pregnancy rates, susceptibility to disease and milk production. A proportion of cattle that get exposed to the virus become carriers for life. These are the animals that become infected whilst still a foetus. These 'persistently infected' animals are the major cause of spread of infection and should be detected and culled.

Persistently infected bulls are a great way to spread the virus as their semen contains large amounts of virus.

They are also introduced to the herd at a time of greatest potential impact – at mating and first 3 months of pregnancy. The virus affects conception rates and causes increased early embryonic loss. The semen quality of these bulls may also be inferior. If this isn't sufficient, there are likely to be persistently infected calves born the following spring. These can be hard to rear and may well die before reaching 2 years of life.

To avoid such disasters, it is essential that all bulls brought in for mating are tested free of BVD virus.

It is preferable that they are also BVD vaccinated prior to their use. When purchasing bulls that are advertised as BVD tested, ask to see a veterinary certificate of proof, or the actual laboratory results. Make sure the result says 'BVD Ag negative' or 'BVD PCR negative.' If they haven't been BVD tested, purchase them conditional on a free test. Purchase them early enough to allow this to happen and give time for 2 vaccinations one month apart prior to their use – i.e. purchase at least 6 weeks prior to putting them into the herd.

Given the devastating economic impact a BVD persistently infected bull can have on a herd, it is a no brainer to insist all bulls are BVD free at the time of purchase, even if you have to pay slightly more for such assurance.

Incidentally TB testing of service bulls is free so if there is any doubt on the TB status of a bull ring TBfree New Zealand on 0800 482 4636 to check the status or arrange a test.

For more information on BVD, refer to www.controlbvd.org.nz

Veterinarians are still one of NZs most trusted professions

For the third year running, veterinarians have ranked eighth in Readers Digest's annual Most Trusted Professions poll.

The annual poll ascertains which professions New Zealanders consider to be the most honest, dependable and reliable.

In a top 10 lineup which is mainly unchanged from 2012, veterinarians are up there with rescue personnel such as paramedics, firefighters, rescue volunteers and doctors and nurses.

New Zealand's top 10 most trusted professions

1. Paramedics (+1 from 2012)
2. Firefighters (-1)
3. Rescue volunteers
4. Nurses
5. Pilots
6. Doctors
7. Pharmacists
8. Veterinarians
9. Police (+1)
10. Armed forces personnel (-1)

Sarcasm at its best

A woman takes her 16-year-old daughter to the doctor.

The doctor says Okay, Mrs Jones, what's the problem?

The mother says, It's my daughter, Debbie. She keeps getting these cravings. She's putting on weight, and is sick most mornings.

The doctor gives Debbie a good examination, then turns to the mother and says, Well, I don't know how to tell you this, but your daughter is pregnant - about 4 months, would be my guess."

The mother says, Pregnant?! She can't be. She has never ever been with a man! Have you Debbie?"

Debbie says, No mother! I've never even kissed a man, I'm still a Virgin!"

The doctor walked over to the window and just stood there staring out of it.

About 5 minutes pass and finally the mother says, Is there something wrong out there doctor?"

The doctor replies, No, not really, it's just that the last time anything like this happened, a star appeared in the east and 3 wise men came over the hill. And there's no way I'm going to miss it this time!!!!"



Synchronising Heifers. Your options

If you want to synchronise heifers this season you basically have two options and what option you choose will depend on where they are, how easily you can get an AB technician out there and how much you want to spend.

Option 1. Two Prostaglandin (PG) Injections 11 days apart (10-12)

This is the lowest cost option, but comes with a few provisos:

We inject all heifers with PG on first day and repeat a second shot 10-12 days later. Heifers will start coming on heat from about the 2nd day after the last shot and the bulk will come on heat over the next 5 days. You can continue to AB longer if you want but generally after 5 days the bull is put out to 'mop up' any late cyclers and returns.

- Heifers must be cycling. PGs only work on cycling animals so if your heifers are small and you haven't seen any action this won't work.
- Insemination needs to be to observed heats so this option is not suitable if you want to do fixed-time inseminations
- Do you or the AB technician have time to visit every day for 5 days after the second injection to inseminate heifers seen on heat?

So, if your heifers are in good order, cycling and you are able to visit each day for at least 5 days after the second injection this option may be suitable for you. It is cheap at **\$6 per injection + visit fees.**

One last fish-hook however: even in ideal circumstances occasionally we find we get a very poor result with this option. Frankly we don't know why (something to do with follicular waves apparently...). Usually, all things being equal it works well when inseminating to observed heat, but be warned, occasionally it just doesn't go well.

Option 2. Cidrs

This is your only practical option if you intend fixed-time insemination and works as follows:

- Day 0. Vet visit to insert Cidrs and inject with GnRH
- Day 7. Vet visit to remove Cidrs and inject with PG
- Day 9. Inject with GnRH and inseminate all heifers on that day

This is basically the same as the cidr program for adult cows except you are inseminating on the *same day* as the final injection. This is because you are generally dealing with *cycling* animals and it turns out about 50% of heifers tend to come on heat on Day 9 so the recommendation is to do them at the time of the 3rd injection. It also saves you an extra day of yarding. We will usually leave you the 3rd shot to give yourself, saving you another visit fee. Cost \$39.70 + visit fees.

A word of **warning re bull power** - if you do fixed time AB you should assume 60% of the heifers will return to heat over a three day period so you will need enough bulls to serve 20% of your heifers per day. (This is pessimistic but safe, the last thing you want is a third of your heifers calving *six* weeks after the start of calving because the bulls were overwhelmed).



Late Night Phone Call To The Vet

A dog lover, whose dog was a female and 'in heat', agreed to look after her neighbour's male dog while the neighbours were on vacation.

She had a large house and believed that she could keep the two dogs apart. However, as she was drifting off to sleep she heard awful howling and moaning sounds, rushed downstairs and found the dogs locked together, in obvious pain and unable to disengage, as so frequently happens when dogs mate.

Unable to separate them, and perplexed as to what to do next, although it was late, she called the vet, who answered in a very grumpy voice.

Having explained the problem to him, the vet said,

Hang up the phone and place it down alongside the dogs. I will then call you back and the noise of the ringing will make the male lose his erection and he will be able to withdraw.."

Do you think that will work?'she asked.

Just worked on me,'he replied



NON CYCLERS - TREAT THEM EARLY

This season you were able to induce a maximum of 4% of your herd to tighten up your calving spread.

Next season - who knows? Perhaps none at all; perhaps 2%?

The changes to the Induction Code and the invariably poor response we get to inductions done in July means using alternative methods to tighten the calving pattern becomes more important each season.

Bringing late calving cows forward and avoiding late calving cows in future seasons will continue to be a priority on farm this year as we work towards the day when inductions are finally banned. One way to tighten calving pattern is to treat non-cyclers early instead of waiting for them to start cycling on their own, often many weeks later.

By tail painting or applying heat detectors to your herd 35 days before mating and recording heats, you can have a very good idea of the anoestrous cows in your herd before mating starts. This allows us to develop a plan to deal with them early and get maximum benefit from the intervention.

Research throughout NZ has highlighted the value of anoestrus treatment at the planned start of mating (PSM).

Studies have shown that treating with a CIDR programme at PSM advances conception date (and subsequent calving date) by 10-16 days. This means cows calve earlier and the extra days in milk more than cover the cost of treatment.

An early conversation around the subject now will prove ultimately far more valuable, and constructive, than a reflective one in autumn at scanning time, or next spring when calving drags out. Once late September/early October arrives, much of the scene on the farm is set for how mating (and next season's calving) will play out - body condition score can't be changed much and feed levels are at the mercy of the weather.

Early anoestrous intervention provides an opportunity to impact herd reproductive outcomes before mating starts. This in turn maximises the farm's production in the following season.

Talk to us about treatment options this mating season.

Looking to get your cows in calf with ease this season?

ESTROTECT™ Heat Detectors are a decidedly easy solution to catch your cows in heat as they are easy to apply and accurate for your heat detection needs.

Once per cycle for application and you're done, compared to the alternative of tail paints and paint sticks which must be applied or touched up daily. Simply warm the detector to body temperature, give the application area on the cow's rump a quick brush and wipe down, and then stick the detector in place.

Beyond being one of the most convenient products to use, ESTROTECT™ Heat Detectors are farmer-proven to work. Some farmer comments in New Zealand include: "Once you apply them they don't come off" - "They are so easy to read, we will definitely not go back to tailpaint" - "They are very good, we used them for the first time, cuts out picking cows too early"

Studies completed at the South Dakota State University, USA, show that rub-off technology found in ESTROTECT™ Heat Detectors is 91% accurate at identifying the right cows in heat - just as good as the bull himself. That can be another \$18 per cow based on extra days in milk in your pocket, based on the industry benchmark of 90% submission, 60% conception, 21 days, 1.2kg MS per day, @ \$6.00 per kg MS.

For more information on making it easier to get your cows into calf, visit www.getyourcowsincalf.co.nz.

We have stocks of EstroTECT at the clinic.

Vaccinations

Included with this newsletter is the form requesting your vaccination requirements for the season.

Please complete and return the form to enable us to schedule appropriate visits.

Note - blackleg vaccination for your calves can be done from two weeks of age and the younger it is done the better to prevent losses. We can do this or you can pick up the vaccine to do yourself.

REMEMBER! Vaccines need to be kept under refrigeration.

Bovillis booster vaccination for BVD is due now for heifers pre-mating to cover them through pregnancy.

Rye Bread

Two old guys, one 80 and one 87, were sitting on a park bench one morning.

The 87-year-old had just finished his morning jog and wasn't even short of breath.

The 80-year-old was amazed at the guy's stamina and asked him what he did to have so much energy.

The 87-year-old said, Well, I eat rye bread every day. It keeps your energy level high and you'll have great stamina with the ladies."

So, on the way home the 80-year-old stopped at the bakery. As he was looking around, the saleslady asked if he needed any help.

He said, Do you have any rye bread?"

She said, Yes, there's a whole shelf of it. Would you like some?"

He said, I want five loaves."

She said, My goodness, five loaves! By the time you get to the 3rd loaf, it'll be hard."

He replied, I can't believe everybody knows about this stuff but me!"



NON-CYCLERS – TREATMENT OPTIONS

How and when are you going to treat your non-cyclers this year?

Actually a better word for these cows is “non-visible oestrus” or NVO’s because most of them will cycle, it’s just a question of when.

Advice from all professionals should be the same when talking about NVO’s; the earlier you do it the greater cost benefit you will get. Remember we are talking about a treatment plan that will result in **more days in milk** the following season and therefore greater return 12 months down the line. While it’s always tempting to leave your NVO’s “a bit longer” to reduce the up front cost you should bear in mind that leaving non or late cyclers until the end of AB will hit you harder in the pocket in terms of milk production the following season and probably result in you needing to treat even more cows the following year as well. NVO cows are a natural occurrence in the seasonal dairy system. The average number of cows not seen cycling prior to mating is about 20% nationwide so unless you are one of the lucky ones who gets very few the only question you should be asking yourself is how will I treat them.

If you decide to be proactive and deal with these cows you have two options:

OvSynch on its own or with the addition of a Cidr.

We will call the programs “**OvSynch**” and if we add a Cidr we will call it “**CidrSynch**”. There is a third twist with the CidrSynch option that I will get to in due course.

How do the programs work? A refresher:

OvSynch:

- Day 0 - line up all non-cycling cows for their 1st injection of “**OvSynch 1**” by vet
- Day 7 - give all cows an injection of PG “**OvSynch 2**” by vet (we will leave you 3rd shot at this visit)
- Day 9 - all cows receive their final injection, “**OvSynch 3**”, generally at evening milking
- Day 10 - fixed time insemination of all cows in the morning

A couple of points:

We used to recommend that if a cow came on after the 1st injection you should pull her out and inseminate her thus removing her from the program. Recent findings would suggest that the conception rates to this insemination after the 1st shot is very low, perhaps only about 18%. The advice nowadays is that those cows should not be removed and stay in the program at least until after the 2nd shot.

The only exception to this advice regarding the 1st shot would be if you are using OvSynch later in the mating season, say after 3 or 4 weeks. In that case, it’s always possible she has cycled earlier and been missed in which case this heat could be a ‘real’ one and you can inseminate her if you wish (especially if she was an older cow in good condition).

Cost of OvSynch is **\$23.70** (incl. GST) **per cow plus visit fees.**

CidrSynch:

Essentially do the OvSynch program but on day one put in a Cidr. If you want cows individually examined this does attract an extra cost of \$3.85 per cow. The advice these days is that unless a cow has obviously cycled (i.e. has a ‘CL’) examination is not cost effective (how many times have we examined a cow, thought she was going to come on and left her only to return 2-3 weeks later and put in a Cidr because she never came on? Not treating her the first time has just cost you 3 weeks potential milk production)

So the program is:

- Day 0 - vet visit to **insert Cidr and inject with CidrSynch 1**
- Day 7 - vet visit to **remove Cidrs and inject CidrSynch 2**
(we will leave you 3rd shot at this visit)
- Day 9 - farmer inject cows with **CidrSynch 3** at evening milking
- Day 10 - Fixed time insemination of all cows, generally in the morning

Cost of CidrSynch is **\$39.70** (incl. GST) **per cow + visits** + examination fees if applicable.

There is a twist to this program. There is an option of an extra injection on day 7. **For another \$7.00** (incl. GST) we add an injection of PMSG as well as the PG at day 7. This has been shown to increase conception rates further, perhaps by as much as another 20%. Now, if you already get pregnancy rates of 45-55% with CidrSynch you are unlikely to get another 20% whatever you do. But if CidrSynch isn’t giving you the results you would like, adding PMSG to make it “**CidrSynch Plus**” could be what you need.



So which program should you use?

Obviously OvSynch is cheaper and less hassle so was very attractive especially in low payout years. In some herds we have found it to be very successful, in other herds less so. OvSynch will deliver lower conception rates on average than CidrSynch. If your cows are in good condition and have been calved more than 40 days, there is a chance it will deliver results comparable with Cidrs. On a few farms we have achieved 50% conception to the fixed-time insemination with OvSynch. However I believe those cows were not truly anoestrus, rather what I would term ‘sub-oestrus’ and just needed a “kick” to get them going, which is why OvSynch worked so well for them.

In truly anoestrus cows the evidence is overwhelming that added use of a Cidr will consistently deliver better conception rates than OvSynch on its own and would certainly be our recommended treatment option in thinner and/or younger cows that are likely to have very little activity on their ovaries. There is obviously a greater up front cost to this but the return on investment will outweigh the cost of treatment especially early in the mating season. The extra \$7.00 to turn CidrSynch into CidrSynch Plus is less than one day’s milk so it doesn’t need to get many extra cows in calf before it pays for itself.

The earlier you treat non-cycling cows the greater the initial cost obviously, but also the greater the return in terms of increased days in milk the following season which translates to more money.

Note: TREATMENT PRICES REMAIN THE SAME AS LAST YEAR.

No increase for the 3rd year running

Have a chat with your vet to decide what is the best option for you and when is the best time to treat.

Please note that due to a general malaise when it comes to returning injection guns and unused drugs (3rd shot non-cycler programmes), there is a 7 day amnesty for their return. If you haven’t returned the left over 3rd shots within 7 days of giving that injection you will be charged for what we left behind and \$50 for the missing injection guns. They are of no use to us returned 2 months later because in the meantime we have had to buy more guns to replace the ones you haven’t returned!!



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 under 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.

If you are in any doubt, talk to your vet to discuss your particular requirements.



Now available at the clinic

Boss Injection

Multi-active.

Delivers potent dual activity against parasites, including resistant strains, as well as effective control of lice.