

### SHEEP FARMERS

Scabine, lamb vaccine, lamb drench & docking requirements available now.



Lamb drench specials—see enclosed flyer.  
All Blacks caps and scarves available with qualifying purchases



### The Kiwi way

Receive a Rugby Jersey with Eprinex 20L or Eclipse Pour-On 10L or Genesis Pour-On 10L

Buy Ivomec Injection Plus 500ml & go in the draw for a rugby jersey

Receive a Polo Shirt with Eclipse 2.5L or 5L Eprinex 5L Genesis Pour-On 2.5L or 5L

### Golf Nut

Tim and Janice met on a singles cruise and Tim fell head over heels for her. When they discovered they lived in neighbouring cities only a few miles apart Tim was ecstatic. He immediately started asking her out when they got home. Within a couple of weeks, Tim had taken Janice to dance clubs, restaurants, concerts, movies and museums. Tim became convinced that Janice was indeed his soul mate and true love. Every date seemed better than the last. On the one-month anniversary of their first dinner on the cruise ship, Tim took Janice to a fine restaurant. While having cocktails and waiting for their salad, Tim said, "I guess you can tell I'm very much in love with you. I'd like a little serious talk before our relationship continues to the next stage."  
"So, before I get a box out of my jacket and ask you a life-changing question, it's only fair to warn you, I'm a total golf nut. I play golf; I read about golf, I watch golf on TV. In short, I eat, sleep, and breathe golf. If that's going to be a problem for us, you'd better say so now!"  
Janice took a deep breath and responded, "Tim that certainly won't be a problem. I love you as you are and I love golf too; but, since we're being totally honest with each other, you need to know that for the last five years I've been a hooker."  
"Oh wow! I see," Tim replied. He looked down at the table, was quiet for a moment. Deep in serious thought he added, "You know, it's probably because you're not keeping your wrists straight when you hit the ball."



**Pre-lamb prize draw**  
Lloyd Bishop, Mangaehu Road, is pictured receiving the 56 litre Chilly Bin he won after purchasing Exodus L.A. Injection.

### Post-Calving Pour-on Options:

**GENESIS**  
5.5L \$709.00  
(till 31.10.2011)  
Normally \$809.00



**COMBAT TOPLINE**  
5L \$695.00  
(plus FREE 2.5L)



**ANOTHER WINNER**  
Congratulations to Chris & Val Meier, Cheal Road, who recently won the iPod touch after purchasing Multimin

### National Herd Fertility Study

A big Thank You for your co-operation over the last 2 1/2 years to those clients who have taken part in this research.

### 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."



### September 2011

What a bizarre few weeks: snow all over Taranaki (even in Oakura), riots in England, Adidas trying to screw us over "The Jersey", Phil Goff still thinking he can win the election and Telecom encouraging us to abstain in support of the All Blacks. Thank goodness my wife didn't cotton on to that one; it's not like she needed another excuse. But all that fades into insignificance after the mighty 'Naki' lifted The Shield in Invercargill. A wonderful result for our province and I'm thrilled for people like Colin Cooper and our own Leo Crowley. Memo to Leo though, if either of your halfbacks try brainless box kicks like the one that nearly cost us the match against Southland (good one Tyson) again, give them a damn good thrashing please! I went to the Hawkes Bay match and am pleased to say that I didn't see a single box kick so it seems the thrashing may already have been administered.

Talk of abstinence leads nicely into the theme of this newsletter, which is of course reproduction. Nothing has changed folks - cows need to be in good condition and cycling to get in calf and it's your job (with our help) to get them as ready as you can in the next 4-6 weeks leading into mating. Your mind may be on the World Cup but when it clears for a few minutes you need to get back to what is really important (I can't believe I said that) on your farm and that's all the preparation needed and checklists to be ticked during September and early October. This newsletter will address much of that.

You will also find a press release from Pfizer NZ regarding the withdrawal (very suddenly and unexpectedly) of their BVD vaccine, Pregsure. Earlier this year we heard rumours of a new calf disease that might be associated with this vaccine - nothing proven but there appears to be some kind of link. Five cases have been reported this spring in NZ so Pfizer have done the right thing and withdrawn it immediately. Don't panic if you use this vaccine; we have already replaced it with Bovilis BVD from MSD (the one we used to use) and the good news is that it is actually a few cents cheaper now than Pregsure. If you do have some Pregsure in your possession, please don't use it but return it to us for a refund. The release in this newsletter will explain more.

Giles continues his recovery from shoulder surgery and hopefully will resume light duties officially later this month. It will be good to have him back. Actually I've never seen a man so keen to get back to work; is it that boring at home or does Linley give you too many farm jobs to do?

Not surprisingly after that extreme weather a few weeks back we saw an increase in calf scour outbreaks. What was surprising was the fact that many of these outbreaks were due to Cryptosporidia rather than Rotavirus. It seems as we gain some measure of control over one cause of scours another one, previously thought of as insignificant or incidental, sneaks in through the back door. As with any scours outbreak, aggressive and persistent treatment with electrolytes, maintaining energy levels and good hygiene and facilities play an important part in recovery. What has concerned me is how many people appear to rear calves without giving them any free access to fresh water. All calves should have free access to fresh water at all times in every pen. As soon as we get some sun and warmth, get those older calves out of the sheds and, in my opinion, a lot of your problems will magically disappear.

Good luck in the lead up to mating, get organised and proactive and take it from me that if the All Blacks won the World Cup due to enforced abstinence, we would have won at least the last 3.



Finally, welcome to Shield Country - I like the sound of that.

### Vaccinations

Included with this newsletter is the form we send each year regarding vaccination requirements.

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

Remember no IBR (catarrh) vaccination for calves if they may be exported to China or Mexico as heifers. IBR is a component in our routine BVD vaccine 'Viracare' which gives good protection for calves away grazing against BVD and IBR/Catarrh.

Please tell us if there is any chance of export and we will vaccinate your calves with Bovilis instead to protect them against BVD when away grazing.



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

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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  
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## NON CYCLERS - TREAT THEM EARLY

Next season you will only be able to induce a maximum of 4% of your herd to tighten up your calving spread. 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 even more important.

Bringing late calving cows forward will need to be a priority on many farms this year as we work towards the induction targets. 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 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.

**As an added incentive we are throwing in a draw for a sexy little iPad2 for those who treat their non-cyclers on or before the start of mating. Look for the notice in this newsletter.**

## Teaser bulls

A 2008 Dairy Insight trial in Canterbury on farms with herd sizes from 450 to 1500 split the herds and non-cyclers evenly and ran teaser bulls with one mob from the start of mating until the end of A.B. found these results;

- 1) An extra 7% of the teaser group were submitted for AB over the first 21 days of mating.
- 2) A 6% improvement in the 4 week in-calf rate in the teaser mob.
- 3) An average reduction in the time taken to get back in-calf of 2.7 days over the first 28 days of mating.
- 4) A significant shift in cumulative pregnancies to the left over the first 33 days.
- 5) A lower empty rate in the teaser mob.



These bulls were only added at start of mating, whilst most in Taranaki are introduced for the last three weeks prior to the start. Farmers who have tried them certainly stick with them, so if you are thinking of getting some made, now is the time to find one or make one – we need a downtime of at least a month after vasectomising (preferably six weeks) before we can guarantee sterility. We test them for BVD and send the samples to the lab to confirm that the correct bits have been removed, and usually remove the second testicle so that identification is easy. The preferred source for these bulls is beef-based breeds (for temperament), starting as yearlings or at the most rising two year olds. Once finished with they

will go through the works as Bull Beef. Most farmers get two years out of them before they start to throw their weight around too much.

So if you are thinking of using teaser bulls this season, now is the time to act. Talk to one of the vets.

Our own bulls are already fully booked, but we may know of some available for hire. Giles

**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 3<sup>rd</sup> shots within 7 days of giving that injection you will be charged for what we left behind and \$30 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!!**

## How to do a Rapid Mastitis Test/Tackling High Bulk Counts

Getting on top of a cell count problem is easiest when you have fewer cows to deal with. In other words, the earlier you make the effort the quicker you will be able to identify and deal with problem cows. So, if your bulk count is climbing you should act now before all your cows are in and before you grade, which you inevitably will if you are heading into the 300's in September. The Rapid Mastitis Test (RMT), also known as the Californian Mastitis Test, is often recommended to farmers as a simple 'cowside' test they can do to quickly identify cows with high somatic cell counts that may be contributing to a grading problem. It is a simple test to do, but many people are unsure or scared of this test and therefore shy away from it or turn to more expensive options such as electronic testers, which may not be as good as we originally thought at picking up genuine high SCC cows.

Inflammation of the udder causes massive numbers of white blood cells to move into the milk to fight the infection. These white blood cells, together with a smaller number of damaged udder cells make up the 'somatic' cells of the milk, thus the SCC increases in cows with mastitis. It is these cells that react with the RMT reagent and cause the formation of a thickened slime or gel. This makes the RMT test very specific to somatic cells and therefore probably more reliable than other cowside tests out there. So, how do you do it?

1. Get hold of an RMT paddle and reagent. The newer blue ones are easier to read than the older ones so use them. (If you own an older white paddle, consider painting the inside of the wells black to make interpretation easier) Never make up your own reagent; always use a proper commercially prepared RMT reagent for consistent results. Old washing liquids or shed detergents do not work and will handicap your efforts to find problem cows.
2. Discard the first few squirts of milk and then squirt 2-5mls of milk from each quarter into a separate well on the RMT tray. (A little bit of cow dung won't affect your results; a lot might - if this happens start again)
3. Get out from under the cow before she knocks that paddle out of your hand forcing you to do it again!
4. Mix each milk sample with an equal amount of reagent
5. Swirl the mixture vigorously for 10 or 20 seconds then assess the degree of gelling in each sample
6. Rinse the RMT paddle in clean water and move to the next cow to repeat the test.

The reagent ruptures the somatic cells and causes them to thicken into a gel. The degree of gelling or thickening will give you an indication of how severe the infection is or how high the SCC is in that quarter.

Detection and interpretation is subjective, but with practice you can get pretty good at deciding what is important and what isn't. Here is a scoring system guide to help you interpret what you see:

Score	Gelling	approximate SCC	appearance
Negative	none	100,000 or less	normal milk, no thickening
Trace	slight	100-300,000	slight thickening then disappears
1	slight to moderate	300-900,000	distinct thickening but no gel forms
2	moderate	around 3,000,000	thickens immediately and gel forms
3	heavy	around 8,000,000	obvious gel forms with "fried egg" appearance

Remember that this relates to SCC for an individual quarter when deciding what cows need to come out:

A slight gel in one quarter represents a count in that quarter of maybe 300,000. If the other quarters are negative then her total SCC would be say 500,000 ÷ 4, which is 125,000. She is unlikely to be the cow causing you grading problems. You are generally looking for cows with strong reactions in a single quarter or moderate reactions in multiple quarters that are the ones you need to remove from supply and sample i.e. the 2's & 3's.

You will find the first time you sample a large number of cows with the RMT to sort out a SCC problem that you will pull out a lot of cows. Don't panic. Pull them out and then bring them back in after milking and resample them to sort out the real problems from the others, which for now should be monitored and examined more closely after your next herd test. Generally there are only a handful of cows causing you to grade and they are ones you need to find and remove.

### Time of year is also important:

In spring, colostrum contains very high numbers of somatic cells, which can cause mild gel reactions, whereas milk from an infected quarter will create a very thick, almost solid gel. Look for very definite reactions when testing cows within a few days of calving. In very late lactation, low milk volumes and the natural drying off process can also increase the cow's SCC; once again, only interpret the very definite gel reactions as sub-clinical mastitis.

Where we have helped a client get on top of a SCC problem we generally get them to grant us 3<sup>rd</sup> party access to their production details in Fencepost.com This enables us to keep an eye on their count through the rest of the season and be ready to respond if a problem appears to be re-surfacing.

I'm delighted to report that of the 45 clients who have granted us 3<sup>rd</sup> party access this season, only one had an SCC alert on his page last week. My only problem with using the Fonterra site is how appallingly slow it is; or is that just my computer?

To get third party access we need your username & password or you can grant it to us from your end using our username "prolapse". We particularly want access to your 10-day production & quality records, SCC graph, production & quality summary and historical production records because these can help us when investigating trends in grading problems. Contact the clinic for more details if you need help.

## BLOAT

With the official arrival of spring, warmer weather and (hopefully) some sunshine soon, we could see an explosion of new grass. With that comes Bloat so below is a re-print of some bloat basics from previous newsletters: Pasture bloat is a potentially fatal condition that typically affects cattle grazing pastures with high clover content. The problem is due to the normal gas bubbles produced during digestion being unable to coalesce, forming stable foam in the rumen rather than free gas. This causes an increase in ruminal pressure which stimulates increased rumen movements, worsening the formation of foam. The frothiness causes a physical obstruction that prevents the normal burping reflex causing the cow to bloat up. Bloat may occur as soon as one hour after being let onto bloatogenic pasture. Control options include:

**Grazing and pasture manipulation** - Several techniques are available. In severe challenge situations grazing can be restricted to 20 minute sessions on high bloating pasture before stock are shifted onto less bloating pasture. Strip grazing can be used to control access to pasture. Roughage content in the diet can be increased by feeding out straw or hay. Sward composition can be manipulated to increase the grass to legume ratio. Pasture can be allowed to mature to increase lignification of the stems, reducing leaf. Hungry cattle can be fed hay or straw prior to introducing to bloating pasture to prevent rapid intakes of dangerous pasture.

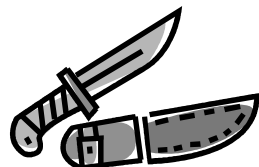
**Surfactants** - drench twice daily at milking or add to water troughs. Can be added to lick blocks or sprayed onto pasture. Many products are available, including **Bloateze, Bloatenz or Bloataid**.

**Ionophores – Rumensin** can be drenched once daily, added to the water, as a pre-mix or as a capsule/bullet. Ionophores reduce the amount of methane and carbon dioxide gas produced in the rumen by altering the rumen bacterial population. It also lessens the bacterial slime production that contributes to the foam formation. Ionophores do not remove foam once it has been produced. More expensive, and not considered to be effective in the face of a severe outbreak of bloat, but has the side-effect of increasing production! Need to start at least 14 days before bloat challenge.

**Use of oils and fats** - these can be drenched twice daily at milking time. Can mix with water and spray onto pasture that is providing part or all of daily allowance. Can also add to water troughs. **Paraffin oil** is an example. Rather old-fashioned approach and an expensive option.

### WHEN BLOAT STRIKES:

- 1) DON'T PANIC. Have an action plan; use a knapsack and gun set on high dose or bottles with doses made up ready
- 2) SLOWLY move all the cattle off the paddock
- 3) Use high volumes of diluted detergents or liquid Paraffin oil. NEVER use undiluted bloat detergents - as little as 300mls can be fatal
- 4) Hugely bloated cows that are at risk of going down won't last long - stab them!!
  - a) Use a sharp knife, preferably a bloat knife with a guard plate.
  - b) Stab; LEFT SIDE ONLY, one hand span behind the last rib, one hand below the spine where there is maximum pressure.
  - c) A firm stab, and then let the gas and foam escape.
  - d) Treat the animal with a high volume of bloat detergent or liquid paraffin.
  - e) Administer an antibiotic; book a visit to get large wounds stitched a few hours later.



Call John for FREE delivery of  
bloat oil in 200 litre drums  
(Blocare discontinued;  
now stocking Bloateze DFA)



### Another “Recipe” for making heifers stand still

You probably all have your own recipes for getting heifers to stand still at milkings and swear by them as the definitive method. Here's a new one that a concerned farmer brought to our attention. Apparently you clip the tail and stick it into the heifer's vagina and hey presto she stands still! When asked our opinion on that method we all agreed that it wasn't one of the better approaches we had heard. Not only would there be welfare issues to consider I wonder what state that heifer's reproductive system is in by the time mating comes around? Nothing like a raging vaginitis to reduce her chances of conceiving. It would be a bit like sticking a bottle brush up there; I'm surprised they stand still - I would have thought she would be very uncomfortable and end up worse.

Either way, **Eltham Vet Services strongly disapprove of sticking a heifer's own tail into her vagina as a suitable method for getting her to stand still at milking.**

## NON-CYCLERS - CIDRS OR OVSYNCH?

How and when are you going to treat your non-cyclers this year? Advice from all professionals should be the same when talking about non-cyclers; 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 non-cyclers “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. Non-cycling 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 1<sup>st</sup> injection of “**OvSynch 1**” by vet  
Day 7 - give all cows an injection of PG “**OvSynch 2**” by vet (we will leave you 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> shot.

The only exception to this advice regarding the 1<sup>st</sup> 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 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 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 \$6.60 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 \$6.60 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.**

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

### 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 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 \$5.50 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. 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

Last season the recommendation was to inseminate the day after the last injection but what happened was about 50% of heifers came on heat on Day 9 so the recommendation this year is to do them at the time of the 3<sup>rd</sup> injection. It also saves you an extra day of yarding. We will usually leave you the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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).

### Pfizer Voluntarily Suspends Sales and Implements Recall of PregSure™ BVD Vaccine in New Zealand

Pfizer Animal Health has voluntarily suspended sales of PregSure BVD, a vaccine against Bovine Viral Diarrhoea Virus (BVDV), and is implementing a recall of the product in New Zealand. Pfizer has taken this precautionary action following reports within the past week of five confirmed and two suspected cases of Bovine Neonatal Pancytopenia (BNP) reported in calves from herds vaccinated with PregSure BVD in New Zealand.

BNP is a relatively rare immune mediated syndrome seen in calves up to four weeks of age. It emerged in 2007 in Europe. Characteristic signs include external and internal bleeding.

Pfizer has informed the regulatory authority (ACVMG) and veterinary customers across New Zealand of the voluntary suspension of sales and recall of PregSure BVD. Farmers who hold PregSure BVD vaccine should not administer it to their cattle and should contact their veterinarian to return product and arrange for a refund.

The exact cause of BNP is not known and is thought to be multifactorial. A cause-and-effect relationship between PregSure BVD and BNP has not been established, and there are many unanswered questions about this disease.

While scientific research is still ongoing, recent independent epidemiological surveys conducted in Europe have described an association with the use of PregSure BVD in the dams of calves that later develop BNP in Europe.

Pfizer Animal Health voluntarily suspended sales of PregSure BVD in the European Union in June 2010.

PregSure BVD became available in New Zealand in 2008. Since then more than one million doses have been administered to cattle in New Zealand over the course of four different seasons. The recently reported cases of BNP are the first to be reported in New Zealand.

PregSure BVD is an inactivated vaccine for the immunisation of cattle to prevent infections with BVDV. Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) costs the New Zealand dairy industry an estimated \$120 million annually.

BVD remains a threat to New Zealand's dairy and beef cattle and Pfizer Animal Health is committed to continuing to research and develop innovative solutions for veterinarians to provide to their farmer clients in the fight against this disease.

### Bull Power - don't economise!

A reminder that cutting costs on bulls can cost you more in the long run if you are left short on bull power just when they are needed.

The table below gives recommendations for the number of bulls which should be *with the herd at any one time*. More are needed to allow for rotation and rest. You will see that the actual number recommended depends upon the size of the herd and the % which are pregnant when the bulls go in. The % pregnant will depend upon the length of AB, the submission rate and the 3 week non return rate. The 6 week in-calf rate from your last Fertility Focus Report can give some indication but if you are in any doubt about how well AB has gone, you should assume a low percentage - about 40-50% - are pregnant when the bulls go in.

I know that bull hire is expensive but \$650 for a 2 year old bull is less than one empty cow. Don't economise on bulls, it will cost you more in the long run.

#### Likely % of herd pregnant at start of bull mating and Bulls needed

No. cows in milking herd	Very low (less than 40%)	Low (40-50%)	Moderate (50-70%)	High (more than 70%)
100	2-4	2-3	2	2
200	5-6	4-5	3	2
300	7-8	6	4-5	3
400	9-11	7-8	5-6	3-4
500	12-13	9-10	7	4-5
600	14-15	11-12	8-9	5-6



### 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.

For more information on BVD, refer to [www.controlbvd.org.nz](http://www.controlbvd.org.nz)

### Lost!!

If you have found a pair of fancy dehorners, like the ones shown here, on your property and they have "Eltham Vets" or something similar written on the handle, they are ours.



Please return them no questions asked (you can sneak them in or even leave them lying on the doorstep -we don't care, we just want them back).