

In-House Milk Testing

We have set up our own laboratory for culturing mastitis samples. This will be a simpler, quicker and cheaper service than is presently offered by the commercial laboratory we use.

Our in-house testing will be a next day service costing \$15 ex gst per sample. Samples which are brought to the clinic *before 11 am on Mondays – Thursdays* will get their results the next morning. Samples which grow unusual or especially serious bacteria will be sent on to the commercial lab to confirm our results.

We will not be able to offer full antibiotic sensitivity testing. If you want full antibiotic sensitivity testing your samples will still be sent to our commercial lab. Turnaround time there will be 2-3 days and cost will be \$48 incl. gst per sample.

We will not be testing over the weekend, so Friday samples won't get their results until the following Tuesday. Samples should be taken *before* treatment. Best results will come from fresh samples kept cool and brought to the clinic the same morning that they are taken. If you are keeping Samples over the weekend please freeze them. Sample pottles are available free of charge at the clinic.

If you want to know more speak to Polly, Teresa, Adrian or Leon.

Getting answers from mastitis samples

The most frustrating result when we culture mastitis samples is 'Contaminated'. This means the sample has grown a mix of bacteria from outside the udder and we can't learn anything from it.

Correct technique is essential for collecting clean samples from inside the udder. Sterile pottles are available free from the clinic along with the flyer reproduced below to remind you how to get the best results from your samples.



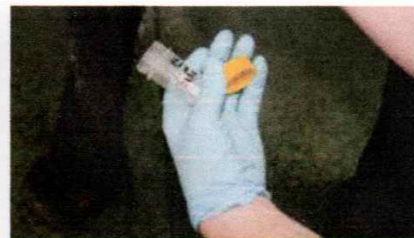
1. Record

Record cow number, quarter and date on the tube and lid. Use clean gloves.



2. Scrub

Scrub each teat end with a teat wipe or cotton wool ball soaked in 70% meths. **Scrub until the teat end is clean.**



3. Prepare

Prepare tube. Remove lid, taking care not to touch inside of the lid or tube. Hold lid between thumb and little finger.



4. Discard

Discard the first 1-2 strips of milk onto the ground.



5. Collect

Collect 1-2 strips of milk into sterile tube. Hold tube at 45° angle 3-4cm from teat end so dirt from udder does not fall in. Re-cap immediately.



6. Refrigerate

Refrigerate sample. If not being tested same day, freeze samples. Take to vet for analysis.



Every \$500.00 spend on Spring Products between 1st of August and 30th of September receives an entry for two to join us at TET Stadium at Stratford, Friday 12th October Taranaki v Wellington Ranfurly Shield Challenge. Platters & refreshments provided



SEPTEMBER 2018

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Are your biosecurity standards still up to scratch or have they slowly slipped as the pressure of spring takes its toll? I ask because while most of you are still putting in the hard yards with respect to keeping things clean, maintaining good biosecurity borders & providing us with hot water & disinfectant to clean up with before we leave your farm, it's clear some of you have started strong and run out of puff. Given this province's low risk status with respect to M bovis I can see why it would be easy to think "I'm okay, nothing's going to happen around here". But there is still potential for infection to occur – we do have one farm in the province under notification and since we don't know who that farm is how can we be sure? I noted an ad in the paper the other day asking for calf milk, including penicillin milk & would collect from anyone, anywhere. That seems pretty risky behaviour to me. I am hearing reports that standards are already slipping in the most affected areas of the country (farmers and stock buyers) so how can we be sure that infected stock aren't being sent our way? We can't - so it's down to you to stay disciplined and maintain your standards. I went to one farm recently where the vet race & surrounding yards were filthy, with rubbish everywhere and old cleanings from previous calvings still lying around on the yards, needing to be kicked out of the way to gain access to the cow. Something tells me that biosecurity on that farm isn't up to scratch. We are getting close to the time where there will be maximum people movement on and off your farms - mating. You'll have vets coming and going to metricheck herds and later undertake pre-mating cidr programs and of course you'll have AB technicians coming onto your farm every day for a couple of months. And sales reps from every company known to man trying to sell you something to improve your reproductive performance (and your herd's...). The place where we all will congregate during that period is your cow shed and your yards. If nothing else please keep this part of your farm as clean as you possibly can and make sure there is always a clean bucket, hot water, soap & disinfectant and a towel available for your visitors to clean up with afterwards. If we all do our bit maybe, just maybe we can eliminate this disease before it can no longer be contained.

With mating a little over a month away this newsletter contains lots of stuff you already know about preparing your cows for a successful mating. But as with all good advice, it's worth repeating. School pet days are also coming up and since no-one can take a calf to school this year we expect lots more pet lambs being reared this spring. As we know pet lambs have a habit of dropping dead about a week before the big day; often as the result of bloat from over-feeding so we've thrown an article in about that as well.

Finally, we said goodbye to one staff member last month and say hello to a new one this month. Nina Bloemen has left her part-time job here for a fulltime job at Inglewood Vets. Nina has been with us for many years and we are sad to see her leave but wish her every success in her new job.

We say hello this month to Helen Snook, who is joining us in an admin role. Helen is from the Eltham area but has been in the Waikato for the last 20-odd years. Many of you may already know her. We are sure she is going to fit in extremely well to the front office team and look forward to her starting at Eltham Vets towards the end of this month.

Upcoming Changes to Animal Welfare Regulations

There are new regulations coming into force on the 1st October 2018. These regulations will be more strongly enforced with fines ranging from \$300 to \$25000.

- Changes to regulations mean you:
 - Cannot stimulate milk let down by inserting anything into a cow's vagina
 - Must not let horns become ingrown
 - Cannot dock cow's tails AT ALL
 - Must not calve a cow using a moving vehicle, or an instrument that doesn't allow the immediate release of tension (includes a motorised or mechanical winch).
 - From 1st October 2019 you must use local anaesthetic to disbud or dehorn any age animal. We will be making local anaesthetic available for selected users provided they have training and certification.

With regard to our role in all this, please be aware that we cannot "turn a blind eye" if we see an obvious breach to animal welfare regulations. So, if you continue to dock cows' tails for example and we become aware of that during a visit we are obliged to report it.

Clinic & Farm Supplies
Railway Street, Eltham
Ph . (06) 764 8196
Trading Depot
Hollard Engineering,
Victoria Street, Kaponga
Ph. (06) 764 6686
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Veterinarians

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Teresa Carr BVSc
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Lindsay Lash BVSc
Leon Christensen BVSc
Erika Pieper BVSc

Office

Joan Hughes Sue Morresey
Jill Watson CVN/RAT
Nicola Childs CVN/RAT
Helen Snook
John Larkin BBS Daniel Kidd

End-of-Spring Barbeque at the clinic on Thursday October 4th 11-3pm

A good opportunity to get off the farm for a few hours, share some hot food & beverages while discussing & comparing the start to the season & saying goodbye to calving. And of course, the chance to win a spot prize!

Are you recording your At-Risk cows?

Remember them? They include any cows that had - RFMs, metabolic diseases eg. milk fever, assisted calvings, prolapses, twins, dead calves, sick cows and cows in poor body condition at calving. Recent research shows benefits from checking these cows in batches 2-4 weeks after they have calved. Waiting longer means pus may be gone but inflammation is still present meaning chances of a cow conceiving is lowered. New Zealand research has shown that cows with untreated endometritis have:

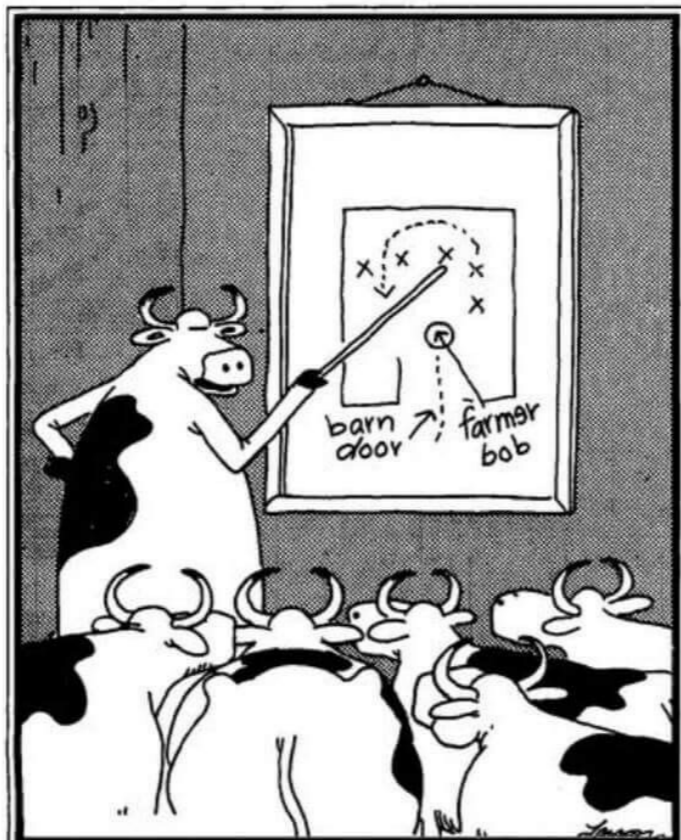
- Lower 28-day submission rates (74% vs 94%)
- Lower 28-day pregnancy rates (26% vs 51%)
- Higher non-pregnant rate at the end of the breeding period (7% vs 26%)

Appropriate treatment can result in very significant cost benefits through:

- Improved submission and conception rates
- Improved six week in calf rates
- Extra days in milk
- Fewer empties
- More AB calves
- Less wasted semen

In an environment where we need to focus on high submission and conception, shorter mating periods and lower empty rates we cannot afford to miss infected cows.

Ring the clinic to book your early metrichecks.



"So when Farmer Bob comes through the door, three of us circle around and ... Muriell ... Are you chewing your cud while I'm talking?"

Going all AB this year? A few things to consider



With the advent of *M bovis* and the national eradication program, many of you are looking for ways to reduce the number of animal movements on and off your properties. Understandably, some of you are thinking about 100% artificial breeding (AB) for cows and/or yearling heifers so you can avoid buying bulls. Going "all-AB" is not something to take lightly. We want to make sure you are fully informed, so here are some of the main points you should consider.

Unless you synchronise your cows, going all-AB relies entirely on sustained excellent heat detection. In reality, on many farms, heat detection performance typically declines in the second round of AB suggesting that people can struggle to maintain focus even with a

standard AB length. You should objectively review heat detection performance on your farm and, even if it is good, think hard about whether you will be able to keep the effort up for even longer before committing. Once you start on the all-AB track, you cannot easily change your mind half way through mating. The longer AB is performed, the more important heat detection accuracy is, so we recommend using two heat detection aids if you go all-AB.

Secondly, if you plan to AB your heifers, you may want to reduce the amount of heat detection and yarding by using a synchrony program. Heifer synchrony programs are usually followed by bull mating. Without bulls, you may not be able to match the pregnancy rates you previously achieved. You will either need to re-synchronise the heifers at least once or perform daily heat detection and yarding and mate to detected heats. Therefore, the conception rates of your synchrony program are crucial to the overall mating success. The better grown and healthier your heifers are, the higher their conception rates will be, so you should weigh your heifers to ensure they are well-grown and rule out other factors, such as BVD, that decrease their fertility. You should also consider the amount of labour involved with repeated synchrony programs and the suitability of facilities.

We can help you work out if mating heifers entirely by AB is a good option for you.

We recommend working through these things well in advance of mating and making sure the communication between all the parties (the breeding company, the vets, graziers) is very clear. We are more than happy to assist you. If you would like to know more, please have a chat with one of our vets.

High Praise for Eltham Vets

Occasionally we get feedback from students who have seen practice with us. Recently we received two e-mails within a week of each other that really caught our eye. It reinforced our belief that the scholarship we offer is working and worthwhile; and that the more students we host, the stronger our reputation becomes at Massey and the better our chances of attracting new vets to Eltham as we look to the future. Take a read of these:

Hi Al,

Sorry I missed everyone on Friday being out on the late call! It was awesome though - Andrew let me go solo on correcting my first prolapse.

I just wanted to say a huge thank you to you and the rest of the team at Eltham. I can honestly say that the last 2 weeks have been my best placement experience to date. It was great to learn so much and get hands on experience from vets who truly love their job and are keen to get students stuck in and having a go. It was also lovely to feel so welcomed as a student, and I have definitely developed a soft spot for Taranaki.

Thanks for putting us up as well - it was greatly appreciated!

Have a great week!

Megan.

Dear Eltham Veterinary Services.

I just wanted to write a quick letter to share my story of 'Emma at Eltham'.

I was fortunate enough to receive your generous scholarship, which meant that I spent two weeks seeing practice in Eltham. Without the scholarship I cannot say for sure that I would have known where or what Eltham was, and more importantly I may have never visited your extraordinary vet clinic. I am so glad that I was given the opportunity to do so.

If I had never visited Eltham, I would not be able to say that I spent an hour and a half in the first sun of spring helping Andrew massage the most enormous prolapse I have ever seen back into a very patient cow. This was probably one of the most rewarding cases I have been involved in during my entire time at Massey, and it showed me that even the impossible is very much possible with a little persistence. I am too scared to ask if the cow is still alive, but as far as I know it was when I left.

If I had never visited Eltham I would not have been able to see what a truly mixed practice looks like. It was neat to see everybody pitching in with the smallies clinic when needed before darting out to a calving in the large animal department. Most clinics I have experienced don't have the capacity or the will to let their vets dabble in more than one area of expertise. When I reflect on what I thought a vet was before I entered vet school, the image I had was of someone that could fix almost any animal (except horses because they cannot be fixed, only broken).

I think the majority of vets fit this description at your clinic upholding this very important childhood image and public perception.

If I had never visited Eltham I would have never been exposed to the cheapest source of parmesan cheese in the country.

If I had never visited Eltham the number of calvings I have been involved in would be significantly less. I was fortunate enough to see multiple calving's in the second week that I was there. Twisted uterus's, head backs, true breeches, caesarians; the list of quirky calving's goes on. When I compare what I have been exposed to with the likes of my class mates, it seems I was the fortunate one. The raft of experience I have gained from time spent with your clinic will be invaluable in the future.

My experience in Eltham was nothing but positive. Thanks to the generosity of your vet club I can proudly say that I am forever grateful that I visited Eltham. In a long and arduous final year, a week with your team provided the perfect motivation to knuckle down and make the most of the last of my degree.

Keep doing the excellent work you do, please pass my gratitude onto the team and all involved.

Regards, Emma – an Eltham enthusiast.

Thank you to all our farmers who welcome students on to their farms and allow us to teach them on their animals.



Dogs & Calf Feed

In the last couple of weeks we have seen two dogs with unexplained severe illnesses that on trace back may have been caused by ingestion of calf feed, meal or Moozlie. We can't be sure, but the presenting signs do suggest the link and in one case especially, the signs occurred within 30 minutes of the dog having been seen hanging around the calf sheds.

Calf meal often contains ionophores or feed additives – Bovatec, Rumensin, Monensin and Lasolacid. These are used as growth promotants and coccidiostats in calves but are highly toxic & often fatal when eaten by dogs, pigs and horses in particular. Calves themselves can also be affected in high enough doses (never feed milk or water for example from an old bloat drum, no matter how well you have washed it out).

Dogs only have one stomach (monogastric) and cows have four (ruminant) meaning that food is digested very differently, and that is why ionophores are toxic to monogastric animals. Dogs, pigs and horses can become very sick, very quickly if exposed.

Animals that have ingested ionophores generally present with muscle weakness and a staggy gait (i.e. they collapse). Your dog may also appear to be having breathing difficulties. Diarrhoea may be present too.

The ionophore acts at a muscular level changing calcium and magnesium concentrations and leads to muscle death. The muscle weakness starts in the legs and progressively gets worse becoming fatal if it affects the heart and respiratory muscles; once it reaches this stage death can occur very quickly.

There is no specific antidote for ionophore toxicity; treatment includes trying to remove the rest of the ionophore from the stomach of the animal, administering products to absorb the toxin and supportive care such as intravenous fluids. Animals which recover may take weeks to return to their normal self and may have ongoing muscle weakness including heart failure from the weakened heart muscles.

If you are using any products that contain ionophores ensure that your animals do not have access to these products. Even washing out the container they have been in doesn't necessarily remove all the residue. If your dog starts showing any signs of muscle weakness and you suspect they may have been exposed to ionophores or a similar product, please contact us immediately.

The safest course of action of course, is to prevent your dog having free access to the whole farm including the calf sheds and rubbish dumps where left over products are often tossed. For their own good, keep them at home unless you need them.



Calf Scour Reminders

It's been a much better start to the season with regard to calf scours compared to last year where it was so wet calves couldn't get outside for the first 2 months. But we are still seeing enough to keep us occupied and September is traditionally "calf scour month" so there will almost certainly be more cases to come.

With that in mind I can't help but notice a few of you take big shortcuts when it comes to dealing with scouring calves. While it's tempting to think that addition of a tablet, powder or injection will sort your problem out there are a few basics that really should be non-negotiable when dealing with calf scours and calf rearing in general:

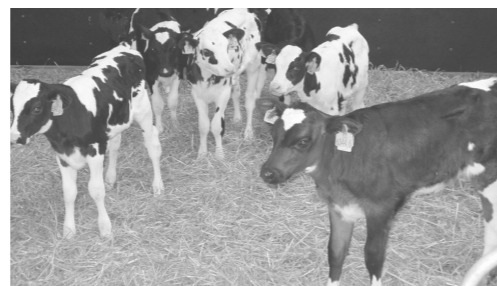
- Isolate scouring calves from healthy ones

I have seen articles in the past suggesting taking infected calves out of pens will cause problems with socialisation later on. Personally I would rather you isolated infected calves whenever possible not only to make individual care & treatment easier for the poor person who has to nurse them but also to lessen the chance of spread to more calves. In a big pen this becomes even more important. I'm sure they will all get to know each other later on.

- Don't add newborn calves to an infected mob (it happens)
- Treat scouring calves with electrolytes to replace lost fluids & salts

- If it's nutritional scours often removal of milk for one feed and replacement with electrolytes will be enough.
- If it's an infectious cause you can't withdraw milk for too long because of the lost energy that results. If the calf is really sick withdraw milk & feed electrolytes only. Then either add electrolytes to subsequent milk feeds (making sure fresh water is always available) or alternate during the day between milk/milk replacer and electrolytes.
- Try and find out what the cause is. If we can identify the cause then we can use the correct treatment to sort the issue out quickly.

- Always make fresh water available to all calves.** We are constantly amazed to find calves with no access to fresh water. A dehydrated calf will actively seek water (if it's able to stand) so make sure it's always available



Every Cow Counts

For many of you, mating may be starting to come to the forefront of your mind. To help mating go well this season, you need to make every cow count. Maximising pre-mating cycling, 3-week submission rate, and heat detection accuracy this mating will help you get more of your cows in calf early.

Why do I need to hit target?

Hitting the pre-mating heat target (at least 85% of the herd cycling by mating start date) means, on average, that you'll have better mating results. Looking at herds that had pre-mating heats and non-cycler cow treatments recorded (2013 to 2017 spring matings), herds that were on target had a 5% higher 6-week in-calf rate than those who weren't. They also treated about 2/3 fewer non-cycler cows. This means that putting in the work to maximise your herd's pre-mating cycling rates will help you to have a lower cost per pregnancy, higher farm profitability, a tighter calving pattern and more AB calves next season. For more pre-mating cycling information, check out chapter 17 of the InCalf book.

Maximising pre-mating cycling rates

When taking a long-term view on reproduction, maximising pre-mating cycling requires a whole lifecycle/whole season focus. Seeing as we're not far off mating this season though, here's a couple of things you can do right now to help maximise pre-mating cycling rates:

- Keep on top of cow health issues* – health issues, such as mastitis or endometritis, have been shown to increase the time it takes for a cow to resume cycling after calving. Reducing and proactively managing cow health issues could help increase the number of cows you have cycling pre-mating
- Preferentially manage young/lighter cows* – preferentially feeding, running in a separate mob, and/or putting these cows on once-a-day may help increase the number of these girls that will cycle before mating starts



Why do pre-mating heats?

Doing pre-mating heats has many benefits - the big one being that it allows you to be pro-active in your non-cycler management. Depending how far out from mating you are, having pre-mating heat information will give you more options than just hormonal intervention for dealing with your non-cyclers and getting your girls cycling ahead of mating. For information on doing pre-mating heats check out page 148 of the InCalf book.

Timing does matter

If you plan to use hormonal intervention for your non-cyclers, the earlier you treat (before vs after mating start date) the better your reproduction results and bottom line are likely to be. Based on the last 5 season's data, herds that treated their non-cyclers before mating start date treated more cows, but their better 6-week in-calf and not-in-calf rates means they earned around \$8,900 more the next season. Treating earlier doesn't have to mean treating more cows though. It's likely there will be cows in your non-cycler group that aren't worth treating (old cows, poor producers), so being selective in who you treat will help to keep treatment numbers down.

Importance of heat detection accuracy

Most of us know that missing a heat is costly, but so is inventing heats (mating cows that are not on heat). Invented heats not only waste semen and increase your cost per pregnancy, but if you mate a cow that is already pregnant, there is a 20-50% chance she will lose her pregnancy (Sturman et al. 2000). Invented heats result in a short return (cow mated again within 1-17 days), so reducing your short returns will result in you reducing your invented heats. If you are worried that trying to reduce your short returns will mean a lower in-calf rate, herds with fewer invented heats (less than 20% short returns on the Return Interval Analysis) have, on average, a 3% higher 6-week in-calf rate.

Create a heat detection plan

To help ensure heats are not invented or missed, get the team together and nail down your heat detection plan. This is especially important if you're going to extend your AB mating length this year. Before mating starts, create a heat detection plan that includes assigning who does what and when, a heat detection roster (if needed), and procedures for

- drafting cows on heat (so cycling cows don't slip through the net),
- selecting which of the drafted cows you'll mate,
- heat detection aid maintenance, and
- heat detection aid reapplication after a cow has been inseminated.

Pre-mating heats are the perfect time to dust-off your heat detection skills and assess new staff members' skills, plus there is usually a Heat Detection workshop somewhere nearby that you can attend to pick up the latest heat detection tips and hints.

A Dairy NZ workshop, 11am to 1.30pm, at the Stratford War Memorial Hall, on 18th September includes a section on heat detection. Contact Sarah Payne on 027 704 5562 to book.

The Bloated Lamb

It's getting close to school pet days. This year, with calf competitions cancelled there will likely be a large increase in pet lambs being reared for the big day. With that increase in numbers we will, unfortunately, probably see an increase in sudden deaths just before the big day due to bloating.

As the name suggests, signs include a swollen belly and a dull lamb. It will be reluctant to drink, probably lie down a lot and most likely show signs of being in pain. The pressure of the bloated abomasum can cause heart/lung failure and, if not caught in time, the lamb either suffocates or the abomasum ruptures causing the lamb to die. That's the worst case. Sometimes given a bit of time things settle down and the lamb is fine again until the next time it makes a guts of itself at feeding.

The best way to prevent bloat in lambs is to "yoghurtise" the milk

- Yoghurt contains: Probiotics - to prevent pathogens multiplying by providing competition to 'bad bacteria'
Prebiotics - to stimulate the growth of 'good bacteria'
- If you're just rearing one or two lambs:
Add one tablespoon of plain natural acidophilus yoghurt per 100ml of milk and mix well.
- If feeding a large number of lambs:
 - * Mix a plain natural yoghurt sachet with 10 litres of warm milk. Keep warm, around 37°C, eg. in a hot water cupboard or using hot water bottles until the mixture thickens. This mix can be kept in the fridge for up to 7 days if sterile containers are used. Add this yoghurt mix to the milk at a 1:7 ratio i.e. one-part yoghurt to seven parts milk.
 - * Feed the milk and yoghurt mixture **cold**. Warm milk entering the stomach provides bacteria with an ideal environment for fermentation. Warm milk with yoghurt will not effectively prevent abomasal bloat.

Example feeding program:

- Day 1 and 2 - warm ewe or cow colostrum
- Days 3 to 5 - warm milk replacer
- Days 5 to 7 - introduce milk/yoghurt mixture, with a gradual transition from warm to cold feeding
- Start the lamb on soft teats then, once feeding well, move to harder teats to control milk flow - old, corroded teats or teats that are overly soft can allow the milk to flow too quickly.
- Use a compartment feeder if feeding multiple lambs together.
- Adjust feed volumes slowly.

Treating abomasal bloat:

- Dissolve about a tablespoon of baking soda in 10ml of water and feed orally.
- Dosing with paraffin or cooking oil may help break up the gas.
- Administer antibiotics - give 5ml of procaine penicillin (white penicillin) orally.
- If it needs to come into us we may attempt to deflate and de-rotate the abomasum by piercing the abomasum with a needle under local anaesthetic.
- Prevention is the best medicine!!

Healthy lambs can be weaned off milk from four weeks of age, provided they weigh at least 9kg.



The Bloated Calf



Bloat is a condition commonly suffered by mature cattle, in which their rumen distends for various reasons. However, in calves less than a month old it is the abomasum that is generally associated with bloat.

What is abomasal bloat?

The pre-weaned calf relies primarily on digestion of milk in the abomasum (the 4th stomach) and small intestines. In the very young calf the first three stomachs (reticulum, rumen and omasum) are not sufficiently developed and the calf is considered to be a 'simple stomached' (monogastric) animal at this early age. The abomasum has an acidic environment which helps in the formation of the milk clot before its passage to the small intestines for absorption of nutrients.

Acute bloat syndrome is characterised by sudden distension of the abomasum to give the calf a bloated appearance on one or both sides. It typically affects calves less than three weeks of age

that have previously appeared healthy.

In mild cases, calves may show only slight abdominal distension with a fluid or gas splashing sound, have inconsistent mild diarrhoea and mild depression. In severe cases, calves are usually off their milk, are dehydrated, show signs of discomfort such as kicking their abdomen or lying flat-out and have a severely distended abdomen. They may or may not have diarrhoea. Death can occur within 6 to 48 hours if the bloat progresses and is not relieved. This condition tends to occur sporadically in dairy calves and some herds have multiple cases at once.

What causes abomasal bloat?

The cause of abomasal bloat has not been fully defined but is almost certainly related to milk-feeding nutrition. Several risk factors have been identified and these include feeding large volumes of milk in a single daily feeding, fortified milk-feeding programmes, bacterial infections, lack of water, irregular feeding times and inadequate colostrum intake.

It is thought that the excessive gas production is due to the fermentation of high-energy liquid feeds such as those used in accelerated growth programmes or electrolyte feeds with inadequate water. The fermentation process occurs as a result of bacterial over-growth and production of enzymes in the abomasum.

Anything that slows down the rate of abomasal emptying can result in an accumulation of excess gas.

Abomasal bloat can also be seen in conjunction with abomasal ulceration causing a mechanical obstruction of the abomasum and facilitating the accumulation of gas. In this case oral dosing with Calegastro will help.

How is abomasal bloat treated?

Prompt attention is required to relieve the abomasal distension by either trocar/large needle or passage of a stomach tube to release the gas. Placing the calf in a 'dog-sitting' position with the front legs elevated, whilst passing a stomach tube, can aid in the relief of gas. Antibiotics are often indicated especially where bacterial infections are suspected. Dosing with a small amount of paraffin oil can also help. If we attend the calf we will generally give it a gut relaxant for pain relief as well.

If you are able to relieve the gas and the calf relaxes then the best thing you can do is skip the next milk feed and give it electrolytes instead to allow everything to settle down.

Preventing Footrot

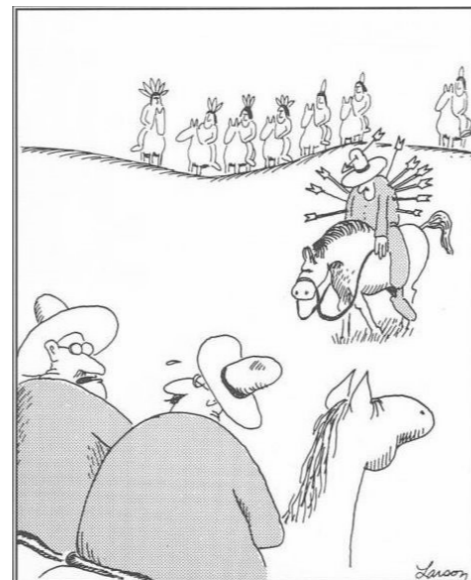
If you get a cluster of Footrot cases in your herd there will be a place on the farm, often on a race, where broken concrete or sharp stones are hidden under shitty mud or water. Stones or broken concrete used as infill around leaking troughs is another likely place, so are hollows at the bottom of under-passes.



Boggy river crossings used to be trouble spots but most of those have been bridged now. Because the cows can't see the sharp bits they can't avoid them, so they get nicks and cuts on their feet.

The Footrot bug flourishes in damp acid conditions so these places can quickly become heavily infected and then so do the wounds on the cows' feet.

Of course the long-term cure is to drain and repair the boggy place, but in the short term a good dose of lime to change the pH will work. Throw on ordinary agricultural lime so that it looks like a heavy frost and repeat every 2 weeks or until the bog hole dries up completely.



"Now stay calm. ... Let's hear what they said to Bill."

Spring and autumn are two important times for treatment of grazing animals.

During periods of stress, such as calving, the cow's immune system is lowered allowing parasites to take advantage. This alongside a seasonal peak in pasture larval numbers means that parasites are an important consideration. New Zealand research has shown that heifers treated with EPRINEX[®] conceived 12.9 days earlier than their untreated herd mates. In a separate trial adult cows showed an increase of 9 days earlier conception. This improved reproductive performance is especially important as it means more days in milk and an improved calving pattern, setting them up well for next season. We know from other research that treating dairy cows can result in 0.03kgMS/day of increased milk production.

There are a number of reasons behind these improvements:

Treated animals do not have to divert as much energy into fighting off parasites

Treated animals increased their grazing time meaning greater energy intake

Treated animals increased body condition score as a result of increased intake

A New Zealand survey has shown that the majority of adult dairy cows have abomasal lesions associated with Ostertagia. These lesions affect the ability of the abomasum to absorb nutrients.

To get your heifers and cows off to a productive start to the season, treat for parasites this spring for improved conception rates and improved milk production.

