



CUD

“Cows Under Discussion” or “Something to Chew On”

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Happy New Year to you all! With a combination of the revised payout announcement, and the good weather in early January, things have hopefully got off to a flying start for you (a bit like McCullum against the Bangladeshis!). Most of the vets have managed a bit of time off, as we gear up for the pregnancy testing onslaught. Any time from now on is good for measuring your pregnancy rate from the first few weeks of mating.

Clinic News

Hamish Moore, fresh out of vet school, and full of enthusiasm and new ideas, joins our permanent staff this month. He hails from a Marlborough sheep & beef farm, but is looking forward to getting stuck into all clinical areas of the practice, including dairy cow work. Please welcome him when he comes up your tanker track for the first time – you may even be able to convince him to play for your local footie club – he is a utility back, as yet uncommitted to a team!

After struggling to keep working through long-term wrist and ankle injuries, Tash has decided to pursue other aspects of veterinary work in 2008. She may be around to help out with a bit of scanning, but after that, the world becomes her oyster. As with many of you, we have especially appreciated her clinical skills and the early lead she gave to our mastitis problem-solving drive.

We will be sorry to see her leave, thank her for all she has done in the last four years here, and wish her well for the future – where ever that may be.

Mastitis Matters

In our shed visits to investigate mastitis problems, one of the things frequently encountered is incorrect use of teatspray. Last month we touched on the importance of teat spraying every cow, after every milking, all season, for mastitis control. However other issues have also arisen.

Teatsprays are designed to control bacteria, and so by definition they are “inhibitory substances” (they inhibit the action of bacteria). Using teatspray “off label” (eg before milking, or at a higher concentration) could potentially lead to an IS grade (this came up at a recent IS Grade Audit we attended on a farm).

Also, to work effectively, teatspray should always be handled in the manner described on the label – this includes the concentration, addition of emollient, frequency of making up and mixing. The iodine component of most sprays is the most awkward. If it is left uncovered for more than three days (max), the iodine vaporizes off - resulting in a spray too weak to do anything. Iodine is also oily in nature, and will not combine well with water if it is just tipped into the reservoir drum. It should be thoroughly mixed in a bucket with at least half the total of quantity of water, before being tipped into the reservoir and the rest of the water being added, to make up the volume.

Reproduction – when should the bulls come out?

The Induction Code specifies that inductions may only be carried out “as part of a planned reproductive management programme that will move the farm towards a reduced or nil induction position” (the industry target is for less than 2% of cows nationally induced, by 2010). In the five years grace that farmers have been given, between the introduction of the Code and the cessation of inductions, what have you actually *done differently* to reduce the number of inductions on your farm? The Code is due for review in 2009, and if there is evidence that its conditions are not being met, the Code will likely be withdrawn and that will be the end of any inductions.

With cow prices (even for empties) at record levels, why not use this year as your chance to really shorten mating, and get rid of late calving cows altogether? For eight weeks of natural calving, with a single four week induction group, you could mate for 12 weeks (4 rounds) only; taking a big step in the right direction. For PSM 1st November, this means bulls out 24th January 2008.

Young stock- Your Future: What is the best drench for my calves?

The products of choice for drenching dairy calves are “combination” drenches – they contain two of the three drench families (clear, white and –mectin). There are two reasons for this. First, they are more likely to kill all of the different types of worm (including worms resistant to one of the drench families) that may be in the calves. Second, they are most likely to prevent the development of drench resistance in worms.

Various straight pour-on mectin type products are commonly used. However, NZ survey results show that because of drench resistance, they are not going to be fully effective on more than 9 out of 10 farms. Hence calf growth rates are being compromised.

There are two choices of combination products for calves:

- Oral, white-clear combinations (Scanda, Arrest C or Oxfen C Plus) can be used at a younger age when calves are easier to handle.
- Pour-on, clear-mectin combinations (Eclipse or Alpha). There is no doubt that these are the products of choice in cattle up to about 15 months of age. On the vast majority of farms they will provide superior results to that of the various mectin pour-ons used alone.

Continuing Education

Clutha Vets is pleased to be hosting Neil Chesterton (regarded as one of the gurus of lameness in New Zealand) in Balclutha on 13th February. During the day, he will hold a practical, hands on session for a small group of farmers. That evening he will present an evening seminar open to all Clutha Vets clients. Mark the date in your diary now, more details will follow shortly.

Taking the pain out of lameness – Improving your facilities for treating lame cows

Decent working facilities make even the most unpleasant task easier, and allow you to do a better job. Nowhere is this more apparent than when dealing with lame cows. Taking the time (and spending a little money) to get well set up, will pay off rapidly - in safety, time taken to do the job, quality of the job done, and enjoyment of doing it.

Squeeze gaps (between two vertical bars with the rails cut out), behind the cow's hind legs, make a huge difference to getting from one side of the cow to the other. They are better than small gates, and much better than having to climb over the bars! If your method of lifting a back leg is to tie it out behind the cow, they also provide a choice of two vertical anchor points (rather than the usual one), making it much easier to cope with different sized cows. Have a look at your race – how much work with the grinder and welder would it take to put a couple of squeeze gaps in?

A farm boy was walking down Centre Rd earlier this week, with a pretty girl. Hand in hand, they passed a paddock where a bull was riding a cow.

The farm boy looks at the girl and said, "Hey, I'd sure like to be doing something like that..."

"Go ahead," she replied, "it's your cow!"

This Month's Retail News

- Ancare **pour-ons** (Genesis, Eclipse) come with a five piece Maxwell and Williams bakeware set.
- Vetdectin (moxidectin) **pour-on**. Nil milk withhold, nil meat withhold. 5ltr for \$506 (net, incl GST). Short dated.
- Scanda **mineralized oral combination drench**. A 10ltr drum gives you a 1 in 6 chance to win a Black and Decker power tool.
- Alert **tail paint spray cans**. Limited stock and colours. 25% members discount.
- Buy two 20kg bags of Pedigree **Meaty Bites**, and get a free plastic storage bin.