



# CUD

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

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**My lawn is now on a nine day round, which means the grass must, at last, have started to grow properly. The roads are busy with silage trucks, and there are plenty of (too) long shut up paddocks around the district. If you have doubts about the feed value of the silage, especially if you are buying someone else's grass/stack/bales, we are happy to organise testing for you.**

Clinic News : Bruce and the CVA board have recently been reviewing the management structure and processes for the practice. As a result you may have seen our recent ad for a Business Manager. This will be a new position, with the aim of taking some of the admin work away from vets (giving us more time to do clinical and consultative work), and putting it in the hands of an expert in that field.



From all of us here in the dairy team at Clutha Vets, we wish you a very Merry Christmas, plenty of early pregnancies, and a long lactation curve in 2008. And remember, dairy farmers are not the only ones whose businesses operate 365 days a year; this year Jillian and John get the pleasure of providing your on-call service over the Christmas holiday period, while Suzanne and Jason have drawn the short straw for New Year.



## **Mastitis Matters**

Most farmers have had at least one herd test by now. This is an excellent time to review your dry cow therapy decisions from last season. How many cases of mastitis did you get in the dry period? Had these animals received DCT? Did cows calve with mastitis, or did it appear during the colostrum period? Do you see a link between DCT usage and clinical mastitis in the spring? Or DCT and ICSCC at first herd test? Any cow with high SCC at the end of last season, who received DCT, but still has a high SCC this season, should be high on your culling list.

Teat spraying every cow twice a day all season is one of the key planks in the SAMM plan. Don't stop now, just because the highest risk period is over. And remember, even the fanciest, most expensive spray will only do its job if it makes it onto the teats, in an adequate quantity! Tomorrow morning, watch the person doing your teat spraying (or watch your automatic sprayer even more carefully). Are they going slowly enough to ensure adequate coverage? Show them the paper-towel wrap around test.

## **Reproduction**

Lameness is the single biggest issue we have to deal with in bulls. As with cows, it is not usually caused in paddocks – it happens when they are on races or in the yard. It can be managed by leaving the bulls in the paddock, when the cows are brought in for milking, or at the very least cutting them off the yard and putting them straight back onto the exit race. Males are creatures of habit – they quickly learn this routine!

If you have a large number of CIDR or synchro cows due to return after the AI period, considering re-booking the tech for a couple of days. The normal number of bulls may not be able to service all of the returning cows, or they may risk damaging themselves with the extra workload. It may also mean more AI calves for you next season, which would be not a bad thing, if this season's prices hold.

## **Young stock- Your Future**

It's time to think, or talk to a vet, about – copper, selenium, B12, pulpy kidney, leptospirosis, and worm drenching. Enough said?

### **Health issue – Pink eye (or “Infectious bovine keratoconjunctivitis”?)**

Pink eye is a reasonably common, and very painful, infectious disease of calves and adult cattle in New Zealand. It is caused by a bacteria that becomes established on the cornea (the glassy front bit of the eyeball), after it has received some physical damage (eg strong sunlight; scratches, from dust or sticking heads into a bale feeder of straw). Squinting and tear staining are usually the first signs seen; as the eye becomes more painful and the cornea becomes cloudy & ulcerated, the animal will avoid light (if not already blind) and may go off food. After about a week, blood vessels start to invade the cloudy tissue, or in severe cases, the eyeball may rupture, resulting in permanent blindness. Once the disease is established it may spread rapidly between animals, often by flies.

Clinical cases should be isolated from healthy animals to prevent spread, and the cause of the initial damage identified and removed. For welfare reasons alone, affected animals should be treated with a specific, nil milk withhold antibiotic eye ointment. This will also limit losses (growth of young animals, milk production and mating performance in adults) and the hassles of dealing with blind animals.

A new, single-shot vaccine is also available. Immunised animals generate antibodies against the most common pinkeye bug in both their blood and tears. Vaccination can help prevent the losses and hassles caused by pinkeye. Speak to a vet if you would like to know more.

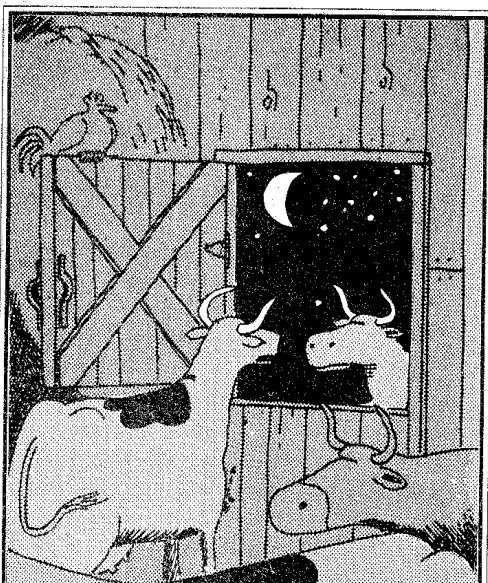
### **Taking the pain out of lameness – Improving your facilities for treating lame cows**

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.

Front feet (and especially the inside claw) are always awkward to treat properly, especially when tied to a gate that lifts off its lugs easily! The Veehof company ([www.veehof.co.nz](http://www.veehof.co.nz)) that imports our WOPA machines have great little foot rests that make the job much easier. They slip into a bracket welded at an angle onto the upright at the front of the bail. They come with a ratchet winch for lifting the foot and securing it in place, and are well worth the investment.

### **Lameness expert to visit South Otago**

Clutha Vets is pleased to be hosting Neil Chesterton (regarded as one of the gurus of lameness in New Zealand) in Balclutha on 13<sup>th</sup> Feb next year. 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 nearer the time.



“I’m sorry, but we haven’t any room ...  
... You’ll have to sleep in the house.”

### **This Month’s Retail News**

- **Oxfen C Plus** – a new oral combination (white and clear) drench with selenium, for calves. A robust weapon against developing drench resistance in parasites.
- **NRM Power Calf milk powder** 20kg, \$82.96.
- All Ancare purchases (**Arrest, Genesis and Eclipse**) go in the draw for the 2008 “Take a Mate Fishing” trip to Stewart Island. The pour-ons also entitle you to a subsidized Christmas ham, and a five piece Maxwell and Williams bakeware set.
- **Dectomax pour-on** 2.5ltr, \$425. Buy at this great price now, for use in the autumn.
- **Dectomax injection**. Buy 2 x 500ml, get another 200ml free.
- **Eukanuba** premium large breed **dog food** 20kg \$10 off, and a 1 in 5 chance for a leather Jackeroo hat.