



# CUD

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

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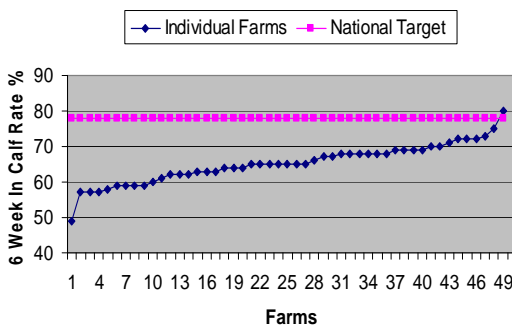
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**March 2011**

## Clinic News

February has been a busy month with many an early morning start pregnancy testing cows. There has been some stiff competition for the best breakfast post scanning with some strong contenders thus far. Just remember it's never too late to enter! Grass growth has been phenomenal compared to last year, which should have a good flow-on effect to cow condition at drying off and calving. Beware the odd case of “out-of-season” Milk Fever that may arise due to the good growth, especially where nitrogen and potassium have been applied generously. Conditions are also ideal for our wriggly friends, so extended drenching intervals should be avoided.

**6 Week In Calf Rates for the First 49 Farms Preg Tested by Clutha Vets**



Most farms have by now had their first scan. To date, estimated 6 Week In-Calf Rates (taken from each farm's Fertility Focus Report) appear to be slightly down on last year. As you can see from the graph most farmers are achieving 6WICRs between 60% and 75%, with the average being 65% for the 45 farms included in this analysis. One farm achieved 80% which is an exceptional result. This will lead to: the need for few, if any, inductions, a very tight calving next season which will flow into more days in milk, and more milk in the vat. The national 6 Week In-Calf Rate target of 78% is therefore an achievable goal with some real financial, welfare and management benefits.

Reproductive performance is affected by a number of factors; therefore planning to mitigate these factors is an important step in improving your herd's reproductive and overall performance. If you are unhappy with your 6 Week In-Calf Rate for this season, or you would like to improve your herd's reproductive performance, then now is the time to start putting a plan into action. We have a number of vets trained in the DairyNZ initiative “InCalf” as well as people with nutritional backgrounds who can offer advice in this area. Please don't hesitate to give us a call.

## Managing Your Heifer Replacements.

Your heifer replacements are the future of your herd and getting them to reach target mating weights is extremely important if you want them to have a long productive life in the herd. Heifer calves can often be forgotten at this time of the year, left to graze some rank paddock at the back of the farm. Growing heifers requires a comprehensive drenching, selenium and copper supplementation programme, not to mention the all important ad lib high quality feed. Some recent research has cast doubt on the efficacy of some of the pour-on drenches and so we have some new recommendations in terms of what drench you should be using. As each farm is different we would recommend you discuss your drenching programme with one of the large animal team next time you are at the clinic.

## The 2011 Dairy Productions Systems Limited (DPSL) Course

Clutha Vets are once again hosting the DPSL course which is a programme designed to provide farmers, vets and consultants with the skills needed to get top performance from healthy cows in any farm system. Bryan McKay and Sue Macky's tutorial series is about filling in the gaps, understanding cow signs and managing cows for the best productivity and feed conversion efficiency, as well as maximising animal welfare. Get the basics right and understand the implications your decisions (and the cows' responses) have on all outcomes.

This course does not promote any specific type of farm system and is equally applicable to all grass or zero-grazing systems, as it focuses on the cow. Practical classroom and on farm sessions will cover:

- Basic nutrition & rumen function
- Advanced cow management & feeding (including supplementation)
- Energy deficiency diseases
- Cow signs; cow comfort; normal & abnormal behaviour
- Milk production; manipulation; bulk milk tank data
- What, when, how & why to make changes
- Managing replacements

The programme consists of 10 full days over a 12 month period. It was run last year and has been a great success, with several farmers joining following a farm visit on one of the course days. If you are interested and would like to know more, please contact the clinic at 03 418 1280.

## Malignant Catarrhal Fever (MCF)

We see the odd case of MCF in cattle, usually between one and three years of age. It is an acute, rapid onset disease, and almost invariably fatal. In Australasia the virus responsible for this disease is maintained in the sheep population and development of the disease normally requires contact with sheep. The most common form of the disease ("head and eye" form) presents as high fever, severe pussy discharge from nose and eyes, corneal opacity (cloudy eyes), +/- diarrhoea and maybe nervous/aggressive. The condition is not treatable and affected animals should be destroyed. However, MCF is one of the main differential diagnoses for Foot & Mouth Disease, so all cases should be examined by a vet to confirm diagnosis.

## Lameness Seminar

Lame cows cost time and money and are a pain in the proverbial!

On Wednesday 23rd March we are offering a seminar at the clinic on **The Treatment and Prevention of Lameness** in the dairy herd. Our seminar, which is equally beneficial to new entrants to the industry as well as experienced herd people, will help you identify a lame cow, assess and treat a lame foot, show you how to care for your hoof knife, how to identify the risk factors on your farm and how to prevent lameness on your farm. If you are interested give the clinic a ring as soon as possible as places are strictly limited – 03 4181280.



### **This Month's Retail News:**

- Any big sporting events you don't want to miss this year - Cricket? Rugby? Netball? Purchase any Merial Ancare drench or pour on and you're in the draw to win 1 of 3 Samsung HD 46" LCD TVs! Watch your favourite Sports and Movies in Full High Definition and watch your stock grow. Plus get a Stormbuster Jacket or a short-sleeved Oilskin Vest on selected Merial Ancare Purchases. **Genesis, Eprinex and Eclipse Pour Ons** all included while stocks last.
- The best deal in Pour On is back! Buy 5ltrs of **Topline Pour On** and get 2.5ltrs FREE! This is not a misprint – buy 5ltrs & get 2.5ltrs free. This works out at a great \$2.39 per 500kg! Huge savings.
- Win a Quad Bike with **Dectomax Pour On** and **Dectomax Injection**. Every purchase puts you in the draw to win PLUS some great deals and giveaways.