



CUD

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

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Clinic News: Teatsealing heifers has kept us busy over the last 3 weeks, and we have made full use of our new trailer. This has allowed us to get to heifers in the most unlikely and exotic places. For the most part, the weather has been kind to us. Carol Adams has joined the team as a Technician, and will be helping out through calf debudding and Metrich checking. We will also be welcoming a new large animal vet late in July, as long as visa applications go to plan. Murray Gillies hails from Prince Edward Island, Canada, and will be spending time working out of both Milton and Balclutha.

Calf Rearing Night

Clutha Vets Jillian Clark and Teresa O’Riordan, along with technical advisor Kim Kelly from Intervet Schering-Plough, presented some great practical advice on maximising calf performance - your genetic future. A huge number of local women rearing calves came to share their stories and swap ideas; it was a great night out. The keys to successful calf rearing are colostrum management, environmental hygiene and sound nutrition. If you would like to discuss your system book in for a calf rearing shed & system check to ensure everything is raring to go come calving. System adjustments needn’t cost a fortune and the damage done to a calf pre-weaning can seldom be recovered. Full copies of the speakers’ notes are available at the clinic.

- Colostrum is the starting block to disease prevention – rich in antibodies (fights infection) and high in solids, proteins, fats, vitamins & minerals.
- A newborn calf needs 10-15% of their bodyweight in colostrum in the first 12 hours of life *BUT do not exceed 5% of their bodyweight in any one feed.*
- Colostrum timing is crucial: ability of calf to absorb colostrum into its blood stream decreases 6 hours after birth reducing to little or no absorption by 24hrs.
- The best colostrum comes from the first milking after calving from healthy, good condition cows.
- For effective, early rumen development offer suitable concentrate muesli + milk from day 1. Milk + forages is not as effective.
- Calves should be growing 0.8-1.0kg/day and consuming 1.0-1.5kg meal/day when weaning onto pasture.

Are your calves getting sufficient colostrum?

Calving is just around the corner and we would like to remind dairy farmers that the adequate absorption of colostrum may be monitored indirectly by the measurement of GGT in serum soon after birth. GGT is absorbed, along with antibody from the colostrum, in the first 24-48 hours after birth. Concentrations may be very high initially, declining rapidly to reach normal adult values about 28-30 days following birth. Note that if calves have sufficient colostrum but are kept in unhygienic conditions, they are still susceptible to infection. GGT concentrations are indirect and are not a measure of the quality of the colostrum. To do this IgG can be measured on either serum or colostrum/milk. We suggest that where groups of calves are being sold, serum GGT concentrations are measured. This will maximise the possibilities of farmers obtaining healthy calves and minimise setbacks due to scours and other infections. Farmers buying calves should ask if the calves have had sufficient colostrum, which can be proved by prior testing. Farmers selling calves may be able to obtain a better price if they can prove that the calves have ingested sufficient colostrum.

Hypothermia

- Hypothermia is a fall in core body temperature and is a killer. The key to treating cold calves is energy & warmth. (Normal calf body temperature = 38.8°C).
- Mild hypothermia = 37.7°C. Clinical signs: vigorous shivering which can stop newborn calves getting to their feet and suckling; increased heart rate and breathing; cold nose and pale hooves; erratic behaviour; clumsiness and confusion.
- Severe hypothermia = 34.5°C. Clinical signs: As the body core cools shivering stops; calf becomes rigid on the ground and feet may paddle; heart rate and breathing slows and calf becomes unconscious.
- Treatment steps: **NOTE ENERGY MUST BE PROVIDED BEFORE REHEATING!!**
 - 1) prevent calf chilling further
 - 2) provide energy – 2L fresh colostrum +/- 20% dextrose
 - 300-500mL 20% dextrose by intra-peritoneal injection [approx cost \$7.00 - \$10.00 per calf]
(*dextrose has been used successfully to revive hypothermic lambs – the same principles apply in calves however its given in a different site – please contact the clinic for instructions*)
 - 3) prevent/treat infection through navel (iodine spray, long acting penicillin 3-5ml/calf HEIFER REPLACEMENTS ONLY)
 - 4) warm the calf (heat lamps, heat pads, hot water bottles best – doesn't need to be super high tech, just clean, dry, sheltered and warm).

Vet Transport Certificates

In April's CUD a reminder was given about the suitability of cows for transport to the works, and it was mentioned that in questionable cases a vet certificate may, or may not, be written to declare the animal fit for transport.

Recently there have been a few cases around the country of certificates being written for cows, but non-compliance with the specific instructions on those certificates. Such stipulations may include specific slaughter premises to which the cattle beast is to be sent, and a date by which this must be carried out. Non-compliance with instructions that are written on the certificate means that if animal welfare is compromised, you may be liable for this even though a certificate has been written.

A certified animal must be transported on the lower deck of the truck, and the farmer or stock agent should let the transport company and the works know that it is coming.

Vet Stands

How well does your vet stand measure up? A bit of thought and planning can help veterinary procedures go more smoothly (and quickly!) Now is a good time to look at some of these tidy up jobs.



1. Non slip – free draining
2. Long enough to allow access to at least 4 or 5 cows at the same time
3. wide enough to allow 2 people to walk around the back of each other comfortably
4. height - preferably just above cow standing height
5. somewhere to keep treatments etc off the ground e.g. shelf/basket on rail at back of stand
6. positioning - consider effect on cows coming onto platform; between uprights (free access for scanning etc as platform moves round).
7. Is the access to cows affected by back rail or red stop cord in the way?

BVD – Know Your Status

Knowing the BVD status of each different age group of your stock allows you to assess the level of risk involving that age group. This allows you to make informed decisions about vaccination of stock. It also allows you to eradicate BVD virus from that age group before it causes significant problems.

How much do you know about your herd?

1. What is the Bulk Milk Antibody status of the herd? (High/Mod/Low).
2. Is the herd free of BVD virus? (Bulk Milk PCR negative).
3. Did all your cows contribute to that test? (e.g. carry-overs, bought-in cows).
4. What is the Antibody status of your Rising 2 year old heifers? (Pooled blood test on 15 R2 heifers).
5. Are your R2 heifers free of BVD virus?
6. What is the Antibody status of your Rising 1 year old heifers? (Pooled blood test on 15 R1 heifers, at least 10 months of age).
7. Are your R1 heifers free of BVD virus?
8. Do you always check that any bulls to be used on your cows/heifers have been blood tested and vaccinated against BVD virus?

These are questions that you should be able to answer *every year* in order to eliminate the serious effects of this disease, particularly when infected animals are introduced to naïve (antibody negative) animals.

If this seems too daunting for now, then there are a couple of simple steps you can take to get the ball rolling:

1. Sign up with us to the LIC Bulk Milk Monitoring Package (cost approx \$320).
2. Book in 15 yearling heifers for blood testing.
3. Make sure all bulls are blood tested free of BVD, and vaccinated against BVD, with 2 shots 3-4 weeks apart (and annual booster).

Planning to Induce?

If you are planning to induce any cows this year, you will by now:

1. Have had an induction consultation with a vet
2. Have prepared a list of cows for induction, and provided us with a copy (must include cow no., age and expected calving date).
3. Know roughly what date each induction mob is to be injected.

If you have not had your initial consultation, please phone the clinic as soon as possible to arrange a time to suit. We could also do your PAR Consultation at the same time and get that out of the way for you as well.

Copper Toxicity

We are concerned about a growing number of farms where liver copper levels appear to be on the high side. Chronic copper toxicity has also been diagnosed on a number of farms in the North Island over the past few weeks. Cows are reported as ‘going down’ or dying suddenly with few clinical signs. On some farms there are large numbers of animals affected. The initial differential diagnoses are metabolic problems, nitrate toxicity, hypomagnesaemia or clostridial disease. In most cases cattle have been fed palm kernel, tapioca and other supplements, sometimes with copper and mineral supplementation as well. Problems are occurring once a stressor such as drying off or feed reduction takes place.

What do you need to do?

1. Investigate any sudden deaths or unexplained ‘downer’ cows. We can take appropriate samples from live, or freshly dead, cattle.
2. Check and review the diet and any supplements fed to cattle.
3. Regular monitoring of liver copper levels through the year. Liver biopsies can be done on cows with no adverse effects. We normally test 5 cows (2 x 1st calvers & 3 mixed age cows) mid September, mid season (January), and late season (April/May).

Winter Farmer Meetings

As mentioned in our last CUD we will be holding Winter Meetings for Dairy Farmers. We hadn't settled on a definite date at that stage but have now confirmed **Tuesday 26th July**. We will host a midday meeting at the Waihola Tavern at 11.30am for our Milton based clients and an evening meeting at 7.30pm at the S O Town & Country Club, Balclutha. Speakers Sid Taylor and Jason Darwen will endeavour to entertain, educate & enlighten you on issues relevant to the time of year. Light lunch will be provided at Waihola and supper will follow the evening meeting at Balclutha. All welcome. Please phone Balclutha 418 1280 or Milton 417 8032 by Wednesday 20th July to register.

This Month's Retail News:

- **Eprinex Pour on** – buy 3 x 5 litres and receive 1 x 5litre extra free, plus deferred payment options. Limited stock – limited time. Treats 400 cows @ 500kg - cost per cow \$5.22 nett incl.GST
- **Combat Topline** – buy 5 litres and get 2.5 litres extra free
- **Deferred payment** on all Merial Ancare Pour Ons /injection
- **Teat Ex teat spray**. Free 20 litre samples for all new users. Talk to your vet. Great product – Great price
- **Calf milk powder** Milligans 20kg – Special tonne price – very limited stock – going fast
- **Early Bird Specials** available from Nutritech. Clutha Vet Trace 5 now blended with Rumensin
- **Cydectin pour on 17 litre bonus packs** – nil meat nil milk – will treat 340 cows at 500kg \$4.85 per cow net incl. GST.

Grandpa and the Australian Taxation Office

The ATO decides to audit Grandpa, and summons him to their office. The auditor was not surprised when Grandpa showed up with his lawyer. The auditor said, “Well, sir, you have an extravagant lifestyle and no full-time employment, which you explain by saying that you win money gambling. I'm not sure the ATO finds that believable.”

“I'm a great gambler, and I can prove it,” says Grandpa. “How about a demonstration?”

The auditor thinks for a moment and said, “Okay. Go ahead.”

Grandpa says, “I'll bet you a thousand dollars that I can bite my own eye.”

The auditor thinks a moment and says, “It's a bet.”

Grandpa removes his glass eye and bites it. The auditor's jaw drops.

Grandpa says, “Now, I'll bet you two thousand dollars that I can bite my other eye.”

Now the auditor can tell Grandpa isn't blind, so he takes the bet. Grandpa removes his dentures and bites his good eye.

The stunned auditor now realises he has wagered and lost three grand, with Grandpa's lawyer as a witness.

He starts to get nervous. “Want to go double or nothing?” Grandpa asks. “I'll bet you six thousand dollars that I can stand on one side of your desk, and pee into that wastebasket on the other side, and never get a drop anywhere in between.”

The auditor, twice burned, is cautious now, but he looks carefully and decides there's no way this old guy could possibly manage that stunt, so he agrees again.

Grandpa stands beside the desk and unzips his pants, but although he strains mightily, he can't make the stream reach the wastebasket on the other side, so he pretty much urinates all over the auditor's desk.

The auditor leaps with joy, realising that he has just turned a major loss into a huge win. But Grandpa's own lawyer moans and puts his head in his hands.

“Are you okay?” the auditor asks.

“Not really,” says the lawyer. “This morning, when Grandpa told me he'd been summoned for an audit, he bet me twenty-five thousand dollars that he could come in here and piss all over your desk and that you'd be happy about it!”