

# CUD

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



September 2018

## Clinic News

September and October are our busiest months, with all the routine calf debudding, metrichecking and pre-mating trace element testing flooding in, and the spring emergencies getting squeezed in amongst them. At this time of year, we really appreciate your flexibility when we need to prioritise our work to get to the animals who need our help most urgently.

This week we farewell our locum Sam Bowker, as he heads off to a lucky Waikato practice for a few weeks before his return to the UK, but we welcome Samantha Howarth. Samantha is a South African graduate, but makes her way to us via a few years England, and will be based in Balclutha as a mixed practitioner (cats, dogs, horses and everything else, as well as cows).

## Why synchronise your heifers?

Synchronising yearling heifers for AI is a great option for many NZ dairy farm systems. It allows for use of fixed time artificial insemination (FTAI) eliminating the need for heat detection. Using AI on the heifers increases the number of AB calves available for selection as replacements, and creates faster genetic gain in the herd.

Other benefits of heifer synchrony are

- More heifers calve early, so more days in milk and farm income next season
- Earlier calving provides more time for them to commence cycling before next mating
- Ease of management with more compact calving

The programmes can be very successful, but rely on the heifers being well grown and in good body condition. A successful programme also requires good communication between you, your vet, grazier, semen provider and AI tech. Call us today to discuss a heifer synchrony programme and we'll tell you everything you need to know!

## Protecting your heifers and heifer pregnancies from BVD

It is rapidly coming around to the time of the year, when all of this season's calves are out and we need to be thinking about getting the next generation established inside their Mums - both cows and heifers.

An issue with heifers that are away from the dairy platform and therefore at risk from other farmers' animals or bulls visiting from over the fence, is how do we protect the heifers' pregnancies from BVD, and the formation of PI's (Persistently Infected animals) that spread virus?

We need to vaccinate the heifers with Bovillis BVD vaccine. This will not only give the heifer protection if she comes in contact with the virus, but will also protect the calf inside the heifer from becoming a PI. Full protection requires two vaccinations a month apart... so we need to be giving the first vaccination NOW, to protect the heifers from the start of mating.

Vaccination is especially important if you are planning on keeping replacements born from these heifers. When we trace back PI's from our BVD Bulk Milk monitoring, we often find they are heifers born from heifers that were mated at the runoff with inadequate protection.

### Cancer eye (squamous cell carcinoma)

Picking up on the early signs and stages of cancer eye is crucial for a successful treatment. If left too late, removal of the eye is unjustified and you may not even be able to get the cow off to the works.

Usually the first sign you see of cancer eye is a very watery eye, or discharge coming from the eye. It is always worth therefore to have a look, and differentiate the problem from other causes of discharge from the eye such as pink eye.

At this stage the cancer may be a small plaque or bump on the third eye lid or on the eye itself. If the cancer is isolated to the third eyelid alone, removal of the third eyelid is simple and quick procedure. If the lesion has spread further but is still confined to the eye itself, surgery to remove the whole eye can be performed with good success, as long as the cancer has not spread to other tissues around the eye.

Leaving the eye and taking a “wait and see” approach may result in the cancer spreading into tissues such as the lymph nodes and bone. If this occurs, removal of the eye will not help and the cow will not be allowed to go to the works. Therefore, if you are unsure if the issue is pink eye, cancer eye or something else, it is worth getting the problem checked by a vet who can help you make a decision on what needs to be done.



### Milk Fever

Are you having problems with milk fever cows? Are you using boxes and boxes of metabolic bags, but they still keep coming?

We are very fortunate that Sid Taylor, our highly qualified ruminant nutritionist, really enjoys solving and sorting out calving transition issues. He will often see areas that with a few small operational tweaks can make your problems disappear.

Even if you think “well, we are nearly finished calving” a visit from Sid now may help prevent the same issues next year!

### Calves

Where's the item on calves in this newsletter? There isn't one here, because it's in CalfLink of course! Check it on Facebook - Clutha Vets Calf Link.

### Things to do in September:

- Book groups in for metrichecking from 2 weeks post-calving
- Book calves in for debudding from 2 weeks and before 6 weeks of age
- Milking Management visit if you have concerns with your BMSCC
- Energy watch check for ketosis and trace element checks for cows
- ReproReady or InCalf discussion about: Metrichecking, BCS, BVD vaccination, bull fertility testing etc
- Check the yearlings post winter, and make a plan for their mating
- Tailpaint on by the end of the month

### Retail Specials & News

A few exciting things getting lined up for Spring .....

- **Boehringer Ingelheim Cattle Pour-ons** - get a **LED Lensor Headlight** on selected products
- Go in the draw to **WIN A FAMILY SPA** with any **Zoetis** product
- Last chance for **Coffee Machines** or **Cake Mixers** on selected **BOSS Pour-on**
- OR **Hoodies & Clothing Packs** on **Boss Pour-ons**
- Get a **Whittakers Chocolate Bar** on 6-packs of **Calform Phosphorous**