



Happy New Year and welcome to the next instalment of the young stock newsletter for the 20/21 season. This is a short newsletter covering important topics relevant to rearing young stock after they are weaned.

Hopefully one of your new year resolutions is to invest in growing your young stock to their full potential! This newsletter is focused on weighing, but other things that should be on your mind at this time of year are trace elements, parasite management, 7 in 1 vaccination and preparing for winter. If you have any questions regarding these or other topics then don't hesitate to get in touch with someone at Clutha Vets.

Weighing Heifers

Heifer growth should ideally be measured by live weight as this is the only objective measure to gauge the performance of your heifers. Best practice is to weigh heifers every 4-8 weeks, with a minimum of every 12 weeks. It is best to weigh heifers frequently to allow prompt action to fix any problems as they arise. It can be hard to get them back on track if they fall behind their targets early.

Key times to weigh your heifers

- Arrival or exit of a property
- At 12 months of age to check they are on track to achieve puberty before mating at 15 months
- At the start of mating to review your heifer management
- 20 months to check they are on track to meet 22 month live weight and body condition score targets (5.5 at calving)

Targets (30, 60, 90!)

Well grown heifers will produce more milk during their first lactation and survive longer in the herd. To achieve this the mob should hit the following key live weight targets—

- 30% of mature live weight at 6 months
- 60% of mature live weight at 15 months (mating)
- 90% of mature live weight at 22 months (pre-calving)

Weight Targets	Friesian	Kiwi Cross	Jersey
6 months	150 kg	135kg	120kg
15 months	300kg	270kg	240kg
22 months	450kg	405kg	360kg

Minda weighing is an excellent weighing programme that can generate target weights using the breeding value of each individual animal. It analyses weighing data for you to help identify where action is needed. Using a programme like this helps maximise the information gained from each weighing session.

Weighing Service

We offer a heifer weighing service to our clients. We see well grown young stock as a very important investment in the future of your milking herd therefore this can be done along with other animal health procedures like BVD screening or trace element testing. Please get in contact if you are interested.

Drench checking

How effective is your young stock parasite management program?

One simple way to check is to bring 10 samples of faeces in for a drench check faecal egg count. Collecting samples is easy—simply hold the mob in the corner of a yard or paddock for a couple of minutes and then collect 10 fresh samples from the ground into separate plastic bags. We have collection kits available to pick up from the clinics.

Next month we will talk more about parasite management, so keep an eye out.

