



CUD

“Cows Under Discussion” or “Something to Chew



December 2017

Clinic News

The hot dry weather has been a treat for us and for getting the tractor work done, but is already putting pressure on feed in many areas. Maybe those huge quantities of silage and baylage we saw being made in the autumn will come into their own now. The sun has been great for cow reproduction as well, with fewer cows needing treatment for non-cycling. We're looking forward to confirming those pregnancies in the New Year, and are geared up for pregnancy testing in January. Already!

Before then, though, we've got Christmas to look forward to. Everyone here at your vet club would like to thank all of you for your support through 2017, and we wish you and your cows happiness and success in 2018!

Repro interventions

As we near the end of the AI period, there are often a small number of cows remaining to be mated – usually late calvers. If you do nothing, they will probably come up for the bull sometime before the middle of January. But if you wish to maximise the number of cows in calf, and increase the rate of genetic improvement of the herd, so some veterinary attention now to get them in calf to AI is warranted. Wouldn't it be great to sit back on Christmas morning, knowing that every cow had already been mated at least once?

Lameness

Not all lameness can be cured with a hoof knife. We were recently presented with a cow that had gone suddenly and severely lame, with a swollen fetlock, but no evidence of problems in the hoof. After conventional treatments were unsuccessful, we took an X-ray, that showed a small bone chip, right on the joint at the bottom of the cannon bone. In this location, even a chip this size can have a major impact on the joint, the surrounding tissues and the cow's ability to walk. But it would never have been found scratching around in the hoof with a knife!

If you are interested in learning more about causes and treatment of more regular cattle lameness, sign up for our hands-on workshop on 12 December.



Cull Cows

As the pressure comes on the feed, and milk production starts to fall, it makes sense to see if there are any cows you do not wish to milk next season that can leave the farm. From now on, we start to get a few more requests for veterinary certificates, stating that the animal is fit for transport to slaughter. We are happy to provide these, but there are quite strict (and getting ever stricter!) conditions that must be met.

First, the cow may only go to the nearest slaughter plant. This is regardless of which company you normally, or prefer to, supply. Second, the certificates can be issued for a few days at the most. Third, the animal must arrive at the works in time to be slaughtered the same day as it arrives, in effect meaning it needs to leave your farm by mid-morning at the latest.

Then there are the reasons it requires a cert – the rule of thumb we work on here, is that there must be no

risk of it arriving at the works in a worse condition than it leaves the farm – more lame, bleeding from fresh wounds, discharging pus, or, worst of all, down in the truck and trampled on.

The best way for all this to work is to ring us ahead of time to talk about the case – maybe even send some photos from your phone. Then, once she is booked in to the nearest works, and transport organised for early in the morning, give us a call to get her certed just a day or two before she is due to leave. Good vet certs are one way of protecting market access – the last thing we want is the MacDonald's meat buyer turning up at the plant on the day a load of unsuitable cull cows arrive!

BVD in South Otago

About 80% of our dairy farm clients have done some form of BVD testing in their herd this season. Out of these, six farms have identified a PI in the milking herd. One was a new herd put together from a range of sources each of which were said to have been "BVD free". In another case, a cow bought in to an established herd was not blood tested on arrival. In three cases naïve heifers were exposed to BVD during mating, creating PI calves that eventually made it into the milking herd. In the final case we are still working to find the PI and work out where she came from.

The thing is, although the prevalence of BVD is dropping amongst dairy cows both nationally and locally, outbreaks do still occur. The best way to pick up an outbreak is via a bulk milk test. If you have not had a bulk milk test this season, it's not too late.

Christmas Hours

BALCLUTHA & MILTON

Friday 22 December - Normal hours

Saturday 23 - Tuesday 26 December - CLOSED

Wednesday 27 - Friday 29 December - Normal hours

Saturday 30 December - Tuesday 2 January - CLOSED

Wednesday 3 January onwards - Normal hours

CLYDEVALE

Friday 22 December - Normal hours

Saturday 23 - Tuesday 26 December - CLOSED

Wednesday 27 - Friday 29 December - **9am - 3pm**

Saturday 30 December - Tuesday 2 January - CLOSED

Wednesday 3 - Friday 5 January - **9am - 3pm**

Monday 8 January onwards - Normal hours

HENLEY

Friday 22 December - **CLOSING 1pm**

Saturday 23 - Tuesday 26 December - CLOSED

Wednesday 27 - Friday 29 December - **9am - 1 pm**

Saturday 30 December - Tuesday 2 January - CLOSED

Wednesday 3 January onwards - Normal hours

Please note - Depot times will differ from above

24 HOUR / 7 DAY EMERGENCY SERVICE - Balclutha 03 418 1280 or Milton 03 417 8032



Things to do in December:

- Deal with the last cows waiting to be mated
- Take bulls out from the yearlings to avoid late calving heifers next spring
- Fertility testing for bulls
- Leptovac+ Consult, on farm with your staff and we'll bring you a box of choccies
- Get calf Lepto vaccinations underway
- Book pregnancy testing
- Relax, and enjoy Christmas!

BALCLUTHA 03 418 1280

MILTON 03 417 8032

CLYDEVALE 03 415 9121

NEW WEBSITE UNDER CONSTRUCTION