



CUD

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

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February 2013

Clinic News – Congratulations to Hamish & Sarah who are to be married on Saturday 9 February. I'm sure you'll all join us in wishing them well for their lives together. Yes, Hamish is taking time off for the honeymoon right in the middle of the busy scanning period.....

January seemed to be a good month, with plenty of sunshine and the rain always just about coming in time. I appreciate that we cover a wide area and some of you may not have had it so good. The last week or so has been more changeable and the wintry blast was a bit of a shock to the system. Our workload has been dominated by pregnancy testing, although there have still been some interesting/challenging clinical cases to deal with.

Many of you will have noticed the activity at the Clydevale Store. Work has now been completed and we really do have a top notch facility. Call in anytime and join Gary for a coffee.

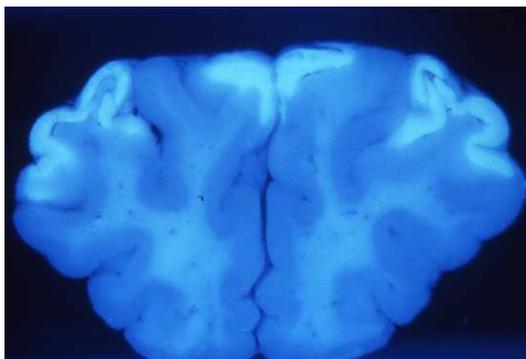
A couple of us were lucky enough to get away to the Wellington Sevens. This was a fantastic occasion with a memorable final, and some even more memorable costumes. I truly think I have seen everything now.

Polioencephalomalacia (PEM)

Polioencephalomalacia is a rather fancy name that describes the changes to the brain that result from a thiamine deficiency. All animals require thiamine for brain function, among other things, but ruminants are unique in that they use the microbes in the rumen to produce thiamine rather than having to rely solely on it being in their diet.

PEM can occur when there is a disruption to the production of thiamine, or a breakdown of the thiamine by chemicals called thiaminases, before it can be absorbed. PEM typically affects well-grown calves about 6-12 months of age but can occur in older animals. Often it will only be the one animal affected, but outbreaks have been reported.

The clinical signs will vary from sudden death to depression and head pressing as if the animals have a headache. Nervous signs do develop with the muscles becoming stiff and the head raised (star gazing) see *right*. Convulsions and recumbency occur as the disease progresses but even in these latter stages treatment with intravenous thiamine and anti-inflammatories can be very effective. Interestingly, on post mortem the affected areas of the brain glow under UV light see *below*.



The main differentials for this disease are lead poisoning (access to old paint on fences and sheds, old batteries etc.); tetanus (vaccinate!); water deprivation (check your troughs are clean). With prevention being better than cure pasture management for calves becomes rather important. Moving calves more frequently so that their diet becomes more consistent rather than having the stalky to lush change will reduce the risk of PEM as well as improve your heifer growth rates.

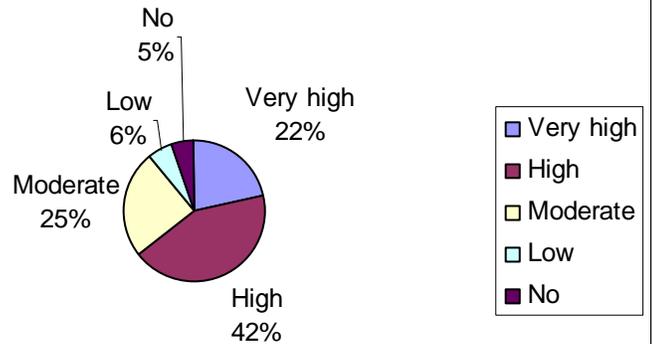
BVD – Bovine Viral Diarrhoea

Calves can have their first vaccination with Bovilis BVD vaccine from four months of age. Vaccination can protect them from the virus as young stock, and if the annual booster is given four weeks prior to the start of mating it will protect their fetus in the early stages of pregnancy when at most risk of slipping, becoming a persistently infected (PI) animal, or of developing deformities.

For interest, the following is a chart of the results of the latest bulk milk BVD antibody (exposure) test done through LIC in spring 2012, for herds serviced by Clutha Vets, in which testing was carried out. The percentage of herds that fell into the categories of no exposure, low, moderate, high or very high is represented.

Of those herds that were in the combined high and very high groups (which were the majority of herds) 21% had a positive bulk milk PCR (virus) test. In most cases this has been followed up and been found to be due to one or more PI animals within the milking herd.

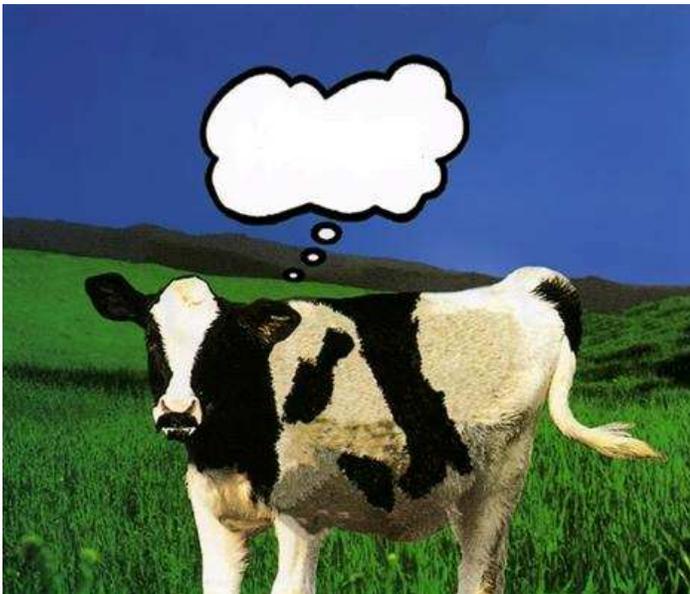
Bulk milk BVD exposure level of herds tested spring 2012



This Month's Retail News:

- **Dectomax Injection** – Receive an electric knife sharpener or a high quality sheath knife with every 2 starter packs.
- **Cydectin Pour-on** - Receive an extra 10% free.
- **Merial Ancare Cattle Drenches** - Shimano Fishing Rod Packs available on selected Merial Ancare Cattle Drenches, plus go in the draw for the 'Ultimate Fishing Package' (exclusive to Clutha Vets), and the chance to win a deep sea fishing trip to Tonga (national draw).
- **Coopers Cattle Drench** – Purchase of Alliance and Converge over the next month or so go in the draw for various prizes – a farm bike, water pump, Gallagher weigh scale, chainsaw etc.
- **Meaty Bites Working Dog 20kg** – Currently on special at \$60.70 nett incl. GST.

Moosic



Congratulations to Rob and Jayne Neeley of Moneymore, Milton, who were the first to identify last month's album as 'Get a Grip' by Aerosmith. They will be enjoying a box of beer from the Milton clinic. We had a number of correct entries and we've decided that it might be fairer to have a draw since you may not all receive your CUD at the same time.

This month's Moosic competition is to name the Album and Singer behind this cover (if you look closely you may see a small clue). We will be looking for absolute correct spelling including any accents. All correct entries will go into a draw after the 20th.

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