



CUD

"Cows Under Discussion" or "Something to Chew On"

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Clinic News

As winter sets in most of our staff are lining up a short break. Sid and Keara are incorporating the World Cattle Medicine (Buiatrics) conference in Queensland, for Elspeth she will be graduating with her Animal Science degree, and for Izzy and Bevan it's a postponed honeymoon. For those left behind it's tidying up the outstanding Spring consults (have you done yours yet?), and already the first early calvings are popping up. Bayer are running a national calving competition for vets this year, and a week or two ago, Peter Kalb was 10th in the country. Bring it on! The end is in sight now for Heifer Teatsealing, as we close in on a projected figure of 8500 heifers (that'll be about 34,000 teats!). Although we all wish for another glorious Spring, it is great to know that so many heifers will be protected against mastitis, whatever the conditions.

On the staff side - Teresa O'Riordan is leaving us after 13 years on the front line of our Large Animal Vet team. We will all miss her enthusiasm, knowledge & dedication, as well as her Cork accent and general Irishness. I'm sure you'll all join us in wishing her well for the future. Slainte, Teresa! Ruth Andrews, our current locum, has agreed to stay on with us into 2015. We will be very pleased to have her through our busy Spring and reproduction period. Steve is now into his final month of his overseas working holiday and will be back ready to go at the beginning of September.

Tips for calving cows

It's easy when it's greasy - For all calvings and in particular the calvings where there is a dead calf involved, when we start putting arms and ropes into the uterus it can really start to dry things up so don't be shy with the lube. Not only does it make things more slippery for the exit but, if you put enough in, it also helps to give you space to manipulate heads and limbs more easily than when the uterus is clamped to the calf. You can get both lube and lube pumps from the clinic.

NO tractors for traction - There is always a temptation when the calf is not coming out to apply more traction to the pull. This is NOT a good idea. Excessive traction can not only damage the calf, but more importantly can cause serious damage to the cow such as nerve damage, torn uterus, broken pelvis, and often death as a result of these injuries. A simple rule is that if you and a friend cannot move it by pulling then more traction will likely cause damage. NEVER use tractors, quad bikes, fence strainers or tie down strops! All of these will apply far too much tension. Use a proper calving pulley or calving jack. If it will not budge there is a reason and the cow may need veterinary attention for an epidural, manipulation of the calf, caesarian section or fetotomy. If you have not made any progress after 10 minutes you should call for help from a senior staff member or the vets.

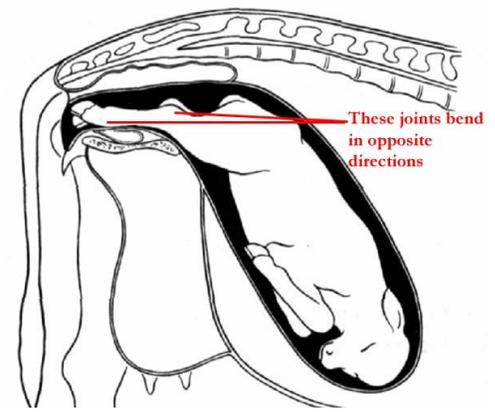
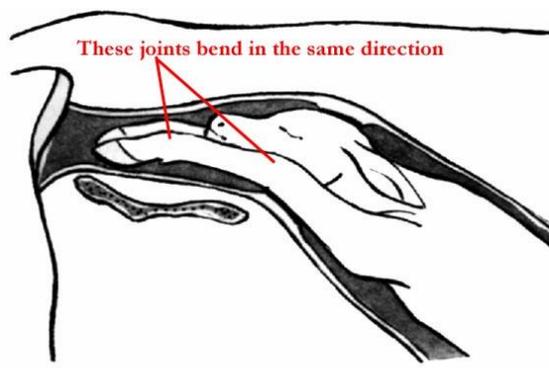
Pull, push or twist? - When heads and legs are back and preventing the calf coming out there is no one movement that will free them. It is usually a combination of pulling a foot whilst twisting (rotating) and pushing the carpus or hock. Sometimes the calf, or part of it, has to go back in before it can come out. Remember that the uterus is not a tough rubber bag, it is a living tissue that can be easily damaged, calves hooves, sharp teeth and tails can all do damage to the uterus if they are pushed up against the uterus too hard. Use your hands to cover the tip of the hooves, the teeth and to keep the tail out of the way when you are manipulating the calf.

Where there is strain there is pain - If you are a bloke ask a lady, and if you are a lady well then you already know. Giving birth is a painful process! If the cow calves all by herself there is still pain and inflammation involved, so you can imagine that if you have to help her out and have been pushing and pulling and twisting on things that there will be even more pain and inflammation. One of the biggest risks of inflammation in the structures within the pelvis is damage to the nerves that come through that area on the way to the legs. If you have to help calve a cow then she will benefit from an anti-inflammatory pain relief. KETOFEN has nil milk withhold and provides pain relief for 24hrs, get some on your RVM list and have a bottle in the shed for calving time.

Which end of the calf is this?

You should always be certain which end of the calf is coming first before attaching ropes and pulling. But you cannot always rely on which way the feet are facing (up or down) to correctly determine which end of the calf is coming first, the best way to tell is to have a good feel of the legs and see which way the joints bend. The diagrams over the page will help you work it out.

Which end of the calf is this?



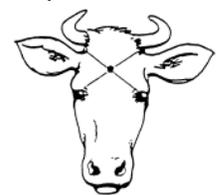
Change in Code of Dairy Cattle Welfare

As of last month blunt force trauma to the skull of a calf is no longer an acceptable method to kill a calf except in unforeseeable or unexpected situations requiring emergency destruction. **This means killing a calf by banging on the head with a hammer, pipe or anything else could lead to a prosecution.**

The only suitable methods for humane destruction are a captive bolt gun or a firearm. It is important that the animal is well restrained, that the appropriate cartridge strength is used for the captive bolt, (or that the appropriate sized gun is used for the animal if using a firearm), that the equipment is in good working order (i.e. cleaned and well maintained), and that everyone is in a safe position.

See the diagrams below for the correct site of the shot for effective euthanasia. The correct site is at the intersection of two imaginary lines each drawn from the inside corner of the eye to a point a little above and behind the opposite ear (or to the base of the opposite horn). In mature animals and bulls a site slightly to one side of the intersection should be chosen.

After the animal goes down, it should be checked for signs of life, and again 5 minutes after euthanasia. The signs you are looking for are a heartbeat, regular breathing, and a blink reflex. If any of these are present, the animal is not dead and should be euthanised again.



Method	Advantages	Disadvantage	Comment
Captive bolt pistol	- Operator safety - Availability	- Contact with the animal required - Some animal restraint required	- Regular cleaning essential - Should be followed by bleeding to ensure death occurs
Rifle/shotgun	- Distance from the animal can be maintained	- Safety concern from ricochet and total penetration	- Contact with the head of the animal must be avoided - A firearms licence is required for such weapons

Things to do in July:

- Clean and disinfect calf sheds; send us calf rearer’s email address to go on the mailing list for our Calf Link eNewsletter. Email addresses to admin@cluthavets.co.nz or smcnuitt@cluthavets.co.nz
- Organise Inductions if not done already – time is rapidly running out
- Complete Spring consultation, with RVM authorisations and planning for farm actions
- Calf scours vaccination for early-calving cows, at least two weeks before due date
- Start magnesium supplementation for early calvers
- BVD blood yearlings and in-calf heifers

This Month’s Retail News:

Calprophos - now back in stock with a return of the old (better) delivery system. Calprophos is Glucalphos with the added benefit of B12.

Cydectin Pour On 25lt - short dated and a great price, nil withholdings. First in, first served! Remember when purchasing cattle drenches in the spring to be aware of withholding times.

Dectomax Pour-on 15lt Herd Pack or 4 x 500mls Dectomax Injection - receive a “Hunters Element” 5 piece clothing pack.

Confused about the various ‘Rumensins’? - Talk to your animal health professionals about which product might be best for your farm. We have Rumensin Max, Rumenox and Nutritech minerals with Rumensin included in their mixes.

Purchases of selected Merial Ancare products – puts you in the draw to win 1 of 2 \$10,000 travel vouchers. You can also receive a Macpac 60litre travel bag on selected Merial Ancare purchases