



VETS ON ALABAMA DAIRY NEWS

October 2013

The beginning of October has been busy with calvings, synchrony work, debudding and treatment for endometritis.

October is all about getting your mating right. The 6 week in calf rate is a measure for successful mating and should be a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) on any dairy farm. Your 6 week in calf rate is driven by submission and conception rates. The ability now to influence conception rates has been and gone, but you can still influence your submission rates. You need to make sure that you use every available method to detect cows that are in season.

If you have cows that are slow to come in season, you can wait until the end of the first cycle of mating or you can intervene that has been shown to be far more economic and financially beneficial.

Leptospirosis Vaccination Of Young Calves – Earlier, Easier, Effective

Leptospirosis remains a serious threat to the health and livelihoods of farmers. While the control of Lepto in NZ dairy cattle has improved markedly thanks to widespread vaccination, evidence remains that there is still room for improvement.

Last year 113 cases of leptospirosis were reported in humans – Farmers and farm workers have a 3-4% chance of contracting leptospirosis in their working lifetime, which is a risk of 100 times greater than the average person in NZ. It is estimated that the numbers of unreported or undiagnosed cases are actually 40 – 50 times higher.

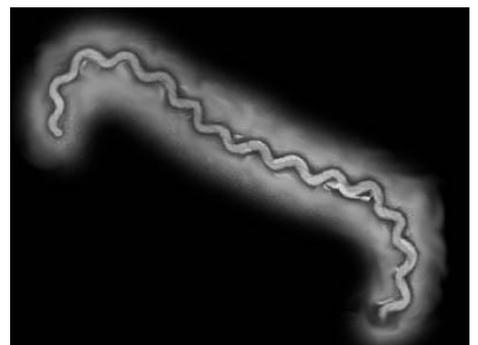
Failure to take all practical steps to prevent leptospirosis among employees, contractors or workplace visitors may be considered a breach of the Health & Safety and Employment for which prosecutions may result.

Latest research proves that calves are at risk of infection well before 6 months of age. If they do become infected they can become chronic shedders of leptospirosis in their urine for months or years, presenting a health risk to people working with these animals at any time when they are handled. Once an animal has the infection, vaccination is too late to be of any use and will not cure an infection.

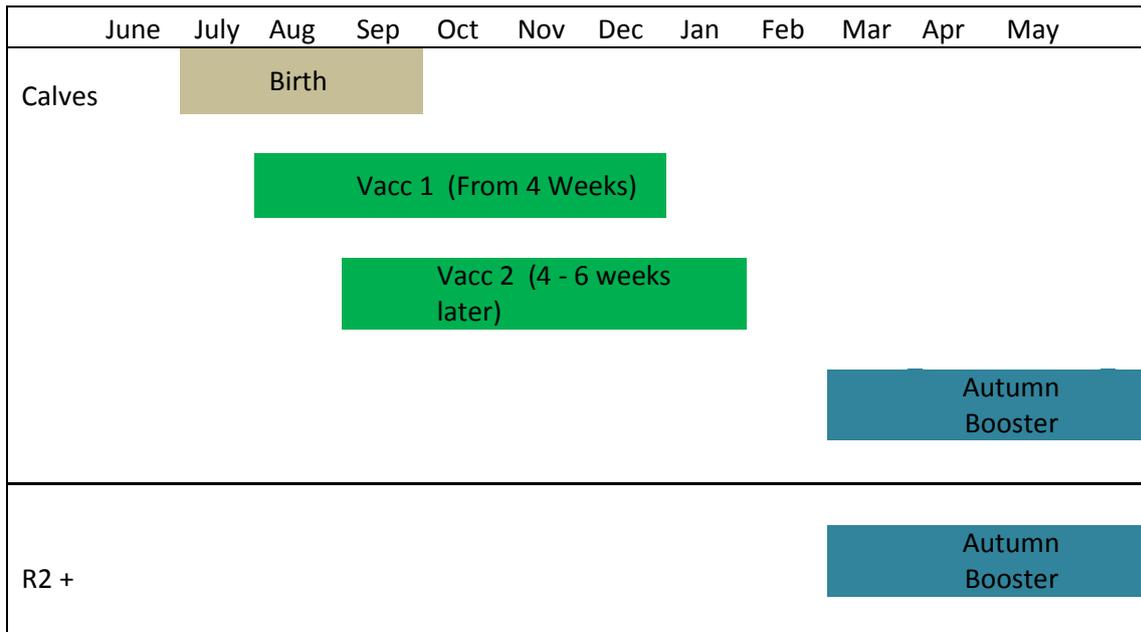
Calves should be vaccinated at a young age, before they have a chance to become infected. It is recommended that all calves be vaccinated 10 weeks from the planned start of calving, assuming a 6 week calving spread. Vaccinate calves in batches if your calving spread is longer. Both Leptosshield® and Ultravac® 7in1 are registered and can be used from 4 weeks of age, which has proved to be very effective. Calves need two doses initially 4 -6 weeks apart.

In This Issue:

- **This Month – All about mating**
- **Early calf vaccination for Leptospirosis protection.**
- **Theileria and anaemia in cattle**
- **BVD – Is my farm at risk?**



Spring Born Calves



It is important to ensure that calves receiving their second vaccination are given before 12 weeks of age to take full advantage of the early vaccination benefits. A third vaccination around six months of age is a good idea to manage the potential risk to maternally derived antibody interference.

Vaccination of calves with Ultravac® 7in1 will provide protection against leptospirosis and the 5 main clostridial diseases in one simple vaccination.

For further information about vaccination of your calves this spring, please call the vet clinic on **578 6965**.

VACCINATE EARLY
STOP LEPTOSPIROSIS BEFORE IT STARTS

Understanding the risk of Theileria infection

DairyNZ

Theileria orientalis (Ikeda) is a microscopic blood-borne parasite that can cause anaemia in cattle and, in more severe cases, lead to death. *Theileria* is transmitted primarily by the cattle tick, only infect cattle, and is not a risk to human health, or a food safety issue. *Five key factors for assessing the risk of Theileria infection in your herd:*

1. Is *Theileria* in your area? Northland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, King Country, Taranaki, Whanganui and Wairarapa (and one case in Rangiora) are all regions with confirmed cases. However, *Theileria* could be more widespread as signs can be missed or not show up in affected cattle.
2. Are there ticks present? All cattle in areas where ticks are present are considered at risk of being infected, particularly the North Island. However, having ticks does not necessarily mean your herd is infected. Ticks are small and difficult to see, and very few are needed to transmit *Theileria*. The disease can also be spread by tick larvae, nymphs or adults on other animals such as birds, rabbits and deer.

3. Has there been cattle movement on-off your farm? Have cattle from Theileria-infected areas been introduced to your farm, or brought back from off-farm grazing, or new cattle or service bulls brought in from infected areas? Cattle that may not have been exposed to Theileria being moved to a place where Theileria are present also increases your risk.
4. Are young stock at risk of infection? Young calves up to about six or seven months of age are susceptible. Their immune systems are still developing and they are also coping with changes such as weaning and being transported to other farms.
5. Are cattle undergoing changes like calving or are they sick? Cattle in late pregnancy, calving and early lactation, calves being weaned and potentially service bulls when they begin mating, are more at risk. Sick and poor condition cattle are also more susceptible to infection.

How can I lessen the severity of the infection?

- . Talk to your veterinarian about the risks of Theileria infection in your herd, in your area and about preventive measures.
- . Monitor the health and condition of your animals, and if you have any concerns seek the advice of your veterinarian.
- . Inspect cattle for the presence of ticks. Tick treatments can be useful to reduce the tick load and the severity of the disease. Use according to label instructions or on advice of your veterinarian.
- . When buying in new stock, determine their health status – ask for records of veterinary and other treatments.
- . Quarantine new stock including service bulls, from the rest of the herd for at least seven days. Inspect the cattle for ticks during this time and treat for ticks as necessary.
- . Cattle (young and mature) in good condition and on good feed will be less susceptible to infection. Careful attention to nutrition, worm control, overall health management and trace element supplementation (if required) will minimise your risk of disease.
- . Minimise stress on stock at times when risk of disease is high, e.g. weaning calves, cows in late pregnancy, early lactation and potentially at mating.

Further advice is available :

- . From your veterinarian
- . Call 0800 4 DairyNZ (0800 4 324 7969) or go to: www.dairynz.co.nz/theileria for all fact sheets

Cattle Tick



BVD - Is my farm at risk?

Find out how easily BVD could hit your herd. Complete this quick risk assessment – and discuss the results with either Nick or Keith as to how to mitigate the risk.

1. Do any untested or pregnant animals ever come onto the property (e.g. grazing stock, cows, heifers, calves, bulls, freezer beasts?)

YES NO

2. Are any heifers, cows or carry-over cows away from the home farm during pregnancy?

YES NO

3. Is contact possible between your cows and cattle from other farms, such as a neighbour's?

YES NO

4. Do you vaccinate for BVD?

YES NO

If you answered yes to questions 1, 2 or 3, your herd is at risk. Implementing a well managed vaccination programme in consultation with your vet is the key to staying in control.

For more information on how BVD can affect your herd visit: www.bvd.co.nz



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**SHED A LITTLE
LIGHT ON IT**

WHETHER YOU NEED A HAND ON IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY AND PRODUCTION, PARASITES PROTECTION OR JUST SOME HELP SEEING IN THE DARK, VISIT YOUR LOCAL VETERINARY CLINIC TO SHED A LITTLE LIGHT ON IT!

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PROUDLY AVAILABLE FROM YOUR LOCAL VETERINARY CLINIC

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