



# VETS ON ALABAMA DAIRY NEWS

November / December 2014

## Theileria – “Breaking News”

Unfortunately we have now had a case of theileriosis diagnosed in a dairy cow in Marlborough.

At this stage we don't know how widespread the disease is, but as we have a resident tick population in parts of the region we can expect the disease to spread and for more cases to occur.

Please be vigilant in examining your stock (including calves) for ticks and let us know if you have a problem.

It is also important that you are on the lookout for clinically affected animals showing signs of anaemia – weakness, pale or yellow mucous membranes, depression, not eating, weight loss, poor production. **A blood test is available to confirm a diagnosis. For more information:**

See our Oct 2013 newsletter - <http://vetsonalabama.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Dairy-News-October-2013.pdf>

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## Planning – Calf Health & Young Stock Rearing

Weaning and mating target weights are now well documented in the industry. Ensuring replacement heifers achieve adequate growth targets from weaning onwards has been shown to increase survival rate in the dairy herd, increase production and reproductive efficiency. Poorly grown heifers that calve to small or to light consistently fail to thrive in the main herd and are often culled early.

Target weights for your young stock should be relative to the weight that they will grow to as mature cows: 30% of mature live weight at six months of age, and 40% at nine months; 60% of mature live weight at 15 months (mating); 90% of mature live weight at 22 months.

### Benefits of achieving live weight targets

- Production - At a \$4 payout, each additional kg of LW at 22 months (between 80-90% of mature live weight) will return around \$1 in the first lactation.
- Reproduction - Achieving the 15 month live weight target will help minimise the incidence of non-cycling heifers at mating.



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Weighing programmes are becoming increasingly widespread and calves going away to grazing more commonly have growth targets agreed between the grazier and stock owner at the start.

Experience with weighing and rearing schemes does show up some consistent findings as to where the main challenges are. For example it is very common for growth rates to drop off to 0.3kg/day in the first summer, particularly if there is a prolonged dry, which leaves the stock behind and they struggle to EVER make up this ground. The MINDA Weights programme is an excellent tool to use to demonstrate young stock performance.



*One way to focus on ensuring adequate growth is to create a calf and heifer health planner for your stock. This covers off all aspects of health, vaccinations, drench, and trace elements and weigh requirements for the year so that nothing is missed. Please one of our dairy vets about this as they will be able to assist.*

## Drenching Calves

Worms reduce voluntary feed intake and feed utilisation and are one of the most common causes of poor performance in calves.

Anthelmintic treatment in calves can be a confusing topic. Considering such things as method of application (oral, injection, pour on), when to drench, how often to drench, single or combination product, refugia, faecal egg counts, resistance and larval challenge means that every situation is different. Getting the appropriate advice about your particular situation will be beneficial in the long run from both a production and financial perspective.

### Calf Drenching- Best Practice

Replacement heifer calves will be due a drench soon enough. The exact timings of drenches will depend on product and risk, and we would be happy to discuss a drench programme for your specific situation in more detail. However, there are some general guidelines:

The first drench for calves should preferably be an oral combination drench. When calves are small they are easily drenched orally, a combination of white drench and levamisole gives a broad spectrum of activity against ostertagia and cooperia. Drench interval should be about 3-4 weeks. We recommend '**ARREST C**' for this stage. A new product **MATRIX C** (a triple combination) is now available and can be given from 80kg live weight.

When calves are ALL over 120kg we can consider switching to another oral combination product of '**SWITCH C**' (double) or continue with '**MATRIX C**' (triple combination). Care must be taken when drenching that the correct dose for weight is given-particularly with Switch C as smaller calves (below 120kg) should not be treated with this product.

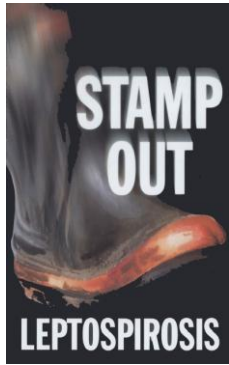
As the season progresses and calves get bigger you can elect for a pour on or injection, or continue with oral dosing. We suggest '**ECLIPSE C**' as a pour on option in older calves. Remember combination products are required up to



15mths of age because of the threat of cooperia which is not treated by the longer acting 'mectin' types. Dose interval and regime depends on stocking rates and grazing history –often dung samples for faecal egg counts will help establish risk and determine the best approach. We would be happy to discuss this with you.

## Leptospirosis Vaccination

Lepto vaccination of dairy calf replacements needs to be done ASAP. Recent research indicates that earlier calf vaccination reduces the chance of stock shedding the bacterium later in life.



Leptospirosis is a serious disease transmissible to humans and OSH regulations require herd and young stock vaccination. Infection in humans is often a long and debilitating illness and relapses are common. The disease is spread through bodily fluids and urine, so anyone dealing with milking cattle is at a higher risk; therefore it is very important that **YOUR HERD** is properly vaccinated.

We can organise, vaccinate AND then certify your herd as lepto vaccinated for you so you don't have to remember to vaccinate different classes of stock at different times. We can set up the programme and organise the vaccinations and then give you a certificate for your records. We will be holding a meeting in early December to discuss young stock health and vaccination. Details are at the bottom of this page.

### Cows

As with calves, we can arrange and perform your herd lepto vaccination so you don't have to worry about it. We will be talking to you about this in the coming months.

## Sufficient Bull Power



Knowing that enough bulls are available when cows are likely to be on heat is important for ensuring good reproduction performance. At least one bull for every 30 cows still needing to get in calf is required when the bulls are run with the herd after AB.

You will also need additional bulls to allow for regular bull rotations during the mating period and to replace bulls that become inactive or unhealthy.

When bulls go lame, they need to be looked at quickly. Severe infections or abscesses in the foot will rapidly affect fertility. Initially this will be because of an inability to mount or foot soreness resulting in a lack of interest. Then subsequent to the infection, an interruption to the formation and development of sperm will reduce fertility. Sperm production can take up to six weeks to recover.

If your bulls go lame and they do not improve rapidly, consider replacements early to reduce the high risk of fertility impairment.

Please also remember that all bulls should be BVD negative and should be vaccinated for BVD and leptospirosis.

### ***End Of Year Social Get Together & Animal Health Plan***

Please keep Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 11am – 1pm in mind. Vets On Alabama and RD1 are running an end of year social get together at the Slip Inn, Havelock Marina, which will include a section on animal health planning. **We will also have an update on Thielaria to ensure everyone is informed on what to look for.** More Details To Follow.

## Pregnancy Testing

One of the key performance indicators (KPI's) for reproductive performance is **6 week in calf rate**.

All the effort put into preparing animals for successful mating needs to be quantified. It also provides valuable information for next year's calving management decisions. Early scanning gives us the ability to age with accuracy. Ageing accuracy falls as the foetus grows in size. After 70 days ageing is very difficult and therefore less accurate.

If AI is completed by **30<sup>th</sup> November** then scanning for 6 week in calf rate should be performed approx. 15<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> January. Accuracy will also be improved if ear tags are easily readable and the AI dates are available.

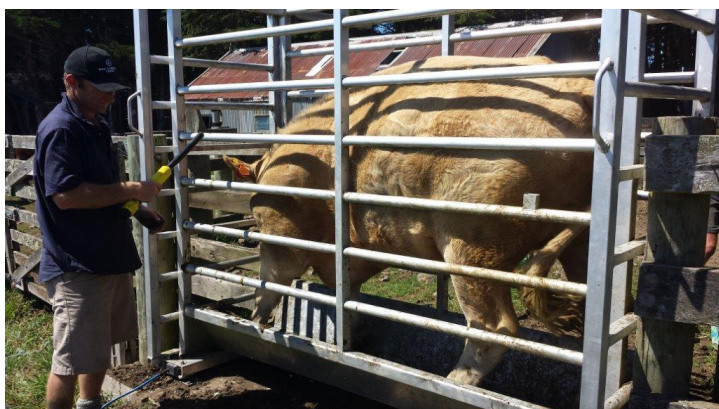
**It is important to rescan 50 days after mating is finished with manual palpitation of animals scanning empty.**

**Remember that average foetal loss rates are 1 per 100 cows per month.**

*Some farmers have already pencilled in their early scanning date with us. We will be calling farmers prior to Christmas to pencil in early scanning for January, however if you would like to book your date in before hand, please give us a call. This is so that we can ensure that we can have a co-ordinated approach to early scanning in 2015.*

## The Importance of Weighing.

We are still aware of farmers that have limited knowledge when it comes to the weight of their young stock. It is really important that you have well grown young stock entering the herd. Weighing is an essential part of ensuring that you know the correct weight of your young stock.



**Vets on Alabama offer a calf and heifer weighing service – Please call the clinic to enquire about this service.**

### **Some Points to Remember about young stock:**

- It costs \$1433.00 from birth date to cups on.
- 23% of 2009 born calves did not calve a second time in 2012.
- 73% of 22 month olds in NZ are below their live weight target by more than 5%.
- The eye is a very inaccurate measure.
- Weighing allows you to manage lighter ones well.

*Data: LIC*



# You'll make the Cut

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Kiwi ½ COB Ham 4.5-5.5kg or  
Kiwi Banquet Ham 2.8-3.5kg\*



THIS FESTIVE SEASON WHEN YOU PURCHASE SELECTED MERIAL ANCARE PRODUCTS, YOU'LL RECEIVE A 100% NZ KIWI HAM.

PROMO STARTS 01 NOV-20 DEC 2014.  
FROM PARTICIPATING VETERINARY CLINICS.



QUALIFYING PRODUCTS: ARREST® 2x 20L, ARREST® Hi-Mineral 2x 20L, ECLIPSE® Pour-On 1x 2.5L, 5L, or 10L, ECLIPSE® E Herdpack 4x 500mL, EPRINEX® 1x 5L or 20L, EXODUS® 1% Injection 4x 500mL, EXODUS® Se 1x 20L, EXODUS® Pour-On 2x 5L or 1x 20L, EXODUS® Long Acting Injection 4x 500mL, FIRST® Drench Hi-Mineral 1x 20L, GENESIS® Hi-Mineral 2x 20L, GENESIS® Injection 4x 500mL, GENESIS® Injection B12 + Se 4x 500mL, GENESIS® Pour-On 1x 5L or 10L, GENESIS® Ultra Oral Hi-Mineral 1x 20L, GENESIS® Ultra Pour-On 1x 5L, IVER MATRIX® Tape Hi-Mineral 1x 10L or 20L, IVERMECTIN® Plus 4x 500mL, MATRIX® C 1x 10L or 20L, MATRIX® Mini Dose 1x 10L or 20L, MATRIX® 1x 20L, MATRIX® Hi-Mineral 1x 20L or 50L, MATRIX® Tape Hi-Mineral 1x 10L or 20L, SWITCH® 1x 20L, SWITCH® Hi-Mineral 1x 20L or 50L, SWITCH® C 1x 10L or 20L, TRIMOX® 1x 20L.



PROUDLY AVAILABLE FROM YOUR LOCAL VETERINARY CLINIC.

\*While stocks last.

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