



TOPVETS

Moosletter

August 2012

Merial Ancare — New Product Cattle Pour

Cattle Pour is a new abamectin pour on drench for cattle which will be replacing Genesis pour on as a more economical option. It comes in 5L and 10 L packs and has a NIL milk withholding.

Prices are as follows:

5L (treats 200 x 500kg cows) - \$455.98

10L (treats 400 x 500kg cows) - \$911.95

Spring Mating Profiles

Trace element profiles should ideally be completed a month prior to the planned start of mating to allow any deficiencies to be corrected in plenty of time giving your cows the best possible chance of cycling and conceiving earlier on in the mating period. Testing involves sampling a small group of animals. Give us a bell at the clinic to book in.

Smart SAMP

SmartSAMP is the new and updated version of the SAMP plan. It provides a vast amount of detailed information on all aspects of mastitis control and troubleshooting and is available to view online at www.smartsamm.co.nz.

Calf De-budding

The ideal age to be de-budding calves is between 2-6 weeks of age. This year we are offering two options for calf debudding. Firstly the full anaesthetic plus local anaesthesia, under which we can also remove extra teats, vaccinate, ear tag etc or secondly using the calf crush and local anaesthetic.

The two options are priced as follows:

Full anaesthetic: \$9.50 per calf

Local anaesthetic in calf crush \$6 per calf

(Mileage and visit fee (if under 20 calves) additional.)



Welcome to the August newsletter.

Calving is now well under way and the weather has been rather wintry.

Spring is not far away now though and our thoughts will be turning to pre-mating checks—metrichecking and blood profiling.

Calf debudding has also started so if you want to get yours done give us a bell at the clinic.

Inside

- Brief news
- Dirty Cows
- Non-cyclers
- Lameness prevention
- Early season mastitis
- The recumbent cow project
- The cost of lameness



Recumbent Cattle Project

In 2011, over 1000 dairy cows sent to slaughter went down either in the truck or while in the yards on arrival. The welfare of these cows is a concern. This has prompted the veterinarians from the Ministry of Primary Industries, in consultation with the meat processing companies and industry bodies to start a project with the aim of reducing the number of cows that go down on the way to slaughter.

The project started in April and aims to inform farmers when cows from their farm go down and raise awareness about the need to effectively prepare cows for transport.

To reduce effluent problems on trucks, farmers are advised to take stock off green feed for 4-12 hours pre-trucking. This is widely interpreted to mean to take the cows completely off feed however this is incorrect. Alternative feed and water must be supplied during this period. Dairy cows travelling to slaughter need to also be adequately supplemented with minerals especially magnesium. Dairy NZ recommends that lactating dairy cows receive 15-20g of elemental magnesium for 3-4 days before transport.

Another aspect of the project aims to develop a profile of the cows that go down to help identify the risk factors. Preliminary observations suggest cows that go down are often in average body condition for cull cows, are usually older animals and jersey and jersey x cows are often involved. It has also been found that most farmers do little to prepare their cull cows for the journey.

Transport to slaughter is stressful and cull cows need to be adequately prepared to withstand travel. The key areas for attention are 1) Adequate feeding and 2) Magnesium supplementation.



The Cost of Lameness

The following are recent UK statistics:

Lame cows are 8.4x more likely to be culled early.

Loss of milk for 305 day lactation

Medium lameness score -442.8kg

High lameness score -745.6kg

Claw lesions -360kg

Increased calving to conception interval

14-50 days longer

Increased calving to first service interval

4 days longer

Increased first service to conception

8 days longer

Overall costs of lameness per cow

Reduced fertility \$95 NZ

Reduced milk yield \$115

Culling/replacements \$110

Treatment costs \$48

Estimated Total cost per cow \$371

Treat lame cows early!

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It's amazing what a cow has to do between calving and getting back in calf

A cow has only 12 weeks after calving to get pregnant again if she is to calve at the same time next year and no later.

Uterine involution is the period where the uterus recovers and reduces to normal. This process usually takes about 4 weeks as long as no infection is present. The cow's ovaries also need to reactivate after a long dormant period during the previous pregnancy.



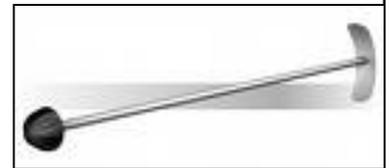
Dirty Cows—Find and Treat Them Early

Dirty cows cost \$\$\$\$. Cows affected by endometritis (a post-calving uterine infection) have reduced fertility, with lower submission and conception rates causing lost days in milk and a higher chance of being empty. Some herds may have around 10% of cows affected.

Using the metrichecking tool to collect a sample from around the cervix, we can identify affected animals rapidly and treat them on the same day.

The best time to check cows is 7-21 days post-calving. After the 4 week mark uterine involution will have occurred and infection is therefore likely to be missed. Checking cows in batches works well to allow optimal timing.

Previous emphasis has been on checking "at risk" cows (those with assisted calvings, retained membranes, twins, inductions, milk fever or dead calves) however recent research has shown that about two thirds of endometritis cases occurred in cows NOT in the "at risk" category. Therefore it is recommended to check the whole herd.



In summary:

- There are more dirty cows out there than we can pick up by only looking at the at-risk cows. Metrichecking the whole herd is best.
- The earlier we treat affected cows the better their fertility and the less negative impact on submission and conception rates.

Non-Cyclers—A heads up

Early identification of non-cyclers is important. In NZ often about 20% of the herd are not cycling by the planned start of mating. This negatively impacts the 6 week in calf rate and the calving spread.

CIDR treated non-cyclers get in calf earlier, reducing calving spread. Calving earlier the next season will also give them more time between calving and the planned start of mating to get cycling again.

Please call us at the clinic to discuss a tailored CIDR programme for your herd.

Lameness Prevention

Tips to reduce lameness

- Allow cows to walk at their own pace
- Use the backing gate sparingly
- Avoid using dogs once the cows are on the race.
- Don't overcrowd cows in the yards

When cows are pushed too fast or are overcrowded their heads will come up and they become unable to look at where they are putting their feet so they are more likely to stand on stones etc.

Remember the overall speed of the group is determined by the dominant cows which are usually up front or in the middle so pushing and hurrying cows at the back is not going to make the group go faster.



- Be aware of congestion points on the race e.g. bridges, sharp corners, steep hills, yard entrance etc.
- Consider using a stone trap at the concrete gravel junction.

Stones being kicked onto the concrete and trodden on are a major cause of lameness.

- Leave bulls in the paddock when the cows come in

This reduces the risk of them becoming lame and also protects cows from being jumped on in the race/yards helping to avoid lameness from slips etc

Early Season Mastitis—Control Activities

- Calve cows on clean pasture—not on effluent sprayed paddocks or muddy breaks, remove back fences.
- Remove the calf from the cow as soon as possible after it has had a good drink of colostrum.
- Completely milk out twice daily from the first milking.
- Teat spray after every milking.
- Ensure milk letdown, especially in heifers (oxytocin can be administered to help milk letdown)
- Manage newly calved cows as a separate colostrum mob (withhold milk for 8 milkings (cows) or 10 milkings (heifers))
- Milk leaking cows prior to calving (don't put into bulk tank.)
- RMT all quarters of all the colostrum mob before they go into the vat
- Be vigilant—detect clinical mastitis and treat early

Despite our best efforts, clinical cases are a fact of life when milking cows so:

- Identify clinical cases early and treat aggressively.
- Take sterile milk samples from the first few clinical cases (prior to starting treatment) for culture.
- The most significant early season mastitis pathogen is *Strep. uberis*. Penicillin based treatments are most suitable for these cases (unless culture suggests otherwise).
- Administer the full course of treatment at the appropriate treatment intervals. Some cases may require a longer treatment course (providing improvement is being seen), take care to adjust the WHP accordingly.
- If more than one quarter is infected or the cow is sick, use an injectable product
- Milk out infected quarters twice daily

