Setting Your Herd Up for Success

If significant BCS gain is required over the dry period be realistic about what you need to feed your cows. As little body condition can be gained in the last month of gestation, feed maximally in the month of June to try and maximise this gain.

A cow putting on 1 BCS in the month of June will require ~7kgDM/day above maintenance and pregnancy requirements compared to a cow already at target.

- For every BCS below a 5 at point of calving, cows will tend to produce 12-20kg of MS less for the season.
- For every BCS below a 5 at point of calving, cows will tend to take an additional 10 days to resume cycling.
- Cows which do not have a pre-mate heat will have 10% lower conception rates when finally mated.
- The target BCS for an individual cow at point of calving is 5.0-5.5. This is an extremely good looking cow. Her pin bones are no longer visible (at all!!), the rump is filled in, the hips are rounded, the spine is not visible (at all!!), the short ribs are rounded and the long ribs are not visible (at all!!).
- It is thought that a large proportion of cows in New Zealand calve below target BCS.

Important Dates

- **Tuesday 10th June, Ladies Night 2014.** Papakaio Community Centre at 6.30 pm. “The Insider’s Guide to Surviving Spring!” Please make sure you RSVP to ensure your place and workshop selections.
- **Friday 13th June, 5th Annual ‘Battle of the Bridges’** Veterinary Centre Golf Day and family BBQ. Golf to be held at the Waimate Golf Club, Browns Rd, Waimate at 11 am, and BBQ to follow golf at 4.30 pm onwards. Enter your team now!
- **Tues, Wed and Thurs 8th, 9th and 10th of July.** Our popular ‘Spring Calving Seminars’ for farm staff will be held at the Veterinary Centre Oamaru on Tuesday 8th July and Wednesday 9th July at 7pm. Veterinary Centre Waimate will host their seminar on Thursday 10th July at 7pm (venue to be confirmed.)
- **Winter Seminar “Back to Basics”** Glenavy Hall 3pm Wednesday 9th July. This seminar will be a number of short presentations on practical and preventative strategies for your dairy farm, with up to date treatment options. It which will be aimed at Farm Managers and Herd Managers.

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**“the leading light in animal health”**

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Veterinary Centre Omarama
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Veterinary Centre Ranfurly
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Calf Health and Management

We are more and more aware of the impact our heifers will have on the future success of our herd. Getting valuable replacements heifers off on the right foot in the pre-weaning period is a crucial step in bringing in top quality, well grown heifers as two year olds.

The Veterinary Centre can offer a full range of calf health and management advice.

Dairy veterinarian and veteran calf rearer Nicola Neal can assist with the set up and design of your calf shed systems and management. Nicola completed a Masters paper in ‘Calf Health, Disease and Management’ last year and is keen to apply some practical on-farm knowledge, along with the latest scientific advice. This service is tailored to suit the individual farm and could include on farm training of calf rearers, developing quality assurance systems when you can’t be there to supervise, developing calf health plans and making the most of your facilities. Don’t wait for a problem to develop in the third week of calving when you haven’t got time to deal with it, call now to book a time to review your calf shed systems.

Salmonella outbreak in a dairy herd

Salmonella is a gut bacteria which causes scouring, ill-thrift, and production losses in dairy cattle. Cases of salmonellosis are usually sporadic in dairy herds, with only one or two cows affected, and often occur at times of stress such as around calving. However, outbreak situations can occur, resulting in many sick cows, deaths, and significant economic losses.

This was the case recently in a herd in the Waimate district. With several cases of sick cows grumbling away over the previous month, including two sudden deaths, things escalated quickly as more cows became affected daily.

The sick cows presented typical of salmonellosis; off-milk, dehydrated, with a fever and a profuse watery scour (occasionally containing blood clots and intestinal lining). Cows improved with treatment with antibiotics, anti-inflammatories, oral fluids and electrolytes. Several samples were collected for testing, including faeces for Salmonella culture.

Before a diagnosis was confirmed the decision was made to vaccinate the whole herd with Salvecin+B in the hope it would slow the escalating situation. No further cases were identified approximately a week following vaccination. In total, 2 cows died, 26 were treated and 4 subsequently aborted.

The cause was confirmed to be Salmonella typhimurium, the most common cause of cases in New Zealand. Vaccination is likely to be cost-effective in an outbreak situation, such as many acute cases in adult cows, abortion storms, and when well-established in a calf shed. However, it is unlikely to be appropriate for sporadic cases. Vaccination requires a sensitiser followed by a booster 4-6 weeks later, with yearly booster thereafter. Early treatment in salmonellosis is most important in ensuring quick recovery and reduced spreading. It is also important to remember Salmonella can infect many species including humans. Therefore, in cases of suspected disease, it is important to take appropriate hygiene measures such as disinfecting clothing and equipment, and avoiding milk directly from the vat.

Rumensin Max

Rumensin Max is now in a new formulation. With a 2ml/cow/day dose, Rumensin Max aids in the control of ketosis in cows, increases the production of milk protein in pasture fed cows and aids in the reduction of bloat. Contact one of your Blue Cross vets for more information.
Calf Health and Management

previous month, including two sudden outbreaks in the Waimate district. With several cases sporadic in dairy herds, with only one or two cases occurring each year. Dairy veterinarian and veteran calf rearer is keen to apply some practical systems and management. Nicola completed a Masters paper in 'Calf Health, Disease and Management' last year and is keen to apply some practical advice.

The Veterinary Centre can offer a full range of calf health and management advice. Supervise, developing calf health plans tailored to suit the individual farm and facilities.

- Quality, well grown heifers as two year olds is a crucial step in bringing in top range performance.
- The right foot in the pre-weaning period is important in ensuring quick recovery.
- Oral fluids and anti-inflammatories in treatment with antibiotics, (occasionally containing blood clots in salmonellosis; off-milk, dehydrated, milk directly from the vat.)

Effect of nitrate are usually seen 1-2 hours after ingestion, before shifting stock. This will allow nitrate levels to reduce in the plant and better enable detoxification in the rumen. Effects of nitrate are usually seen 1-2 hours after introduction onto new break. Animals may appear sluggish with increased respiratory effort. Rapid treatment by our vets will result in quick recovery.

Nitrate Poisoning on Crops

Brassicas, oats, Italian ryegrass and fodder beet have all been incriminated in nitrate poisoning but the most notorious is rape. Nitrate is absorbed from soil via the roots and into the stem. In optimal growing conditions nitrate is converted to amino acids and proteins within the leaf. Therefore any conditions which limit this process occurring may cause nitrate build up in the root and stem. Examples are overcast, low light conditions, cold weather - particularly frosts and leaf damage from hail, herbicides, disease or break outs. Nitrogen fertilisers will obviously lead to an increase in nitrate uptake, but extended dry periods can also cause nitrogen to accumulate in the soil; these are rapidly absorbed once a drought is broken.

When ingested at low levels nitrate is converted to nitrite in the rumen (10 times more toxic than nitrate), this is then converted to harmless ammonia. If large quantities are ingested rapidly, nitrite may be absorbed into the blood faster than it can be detoxified. Regular monitoring of crop nitrate levels can help avoid disasters occurring. If nitrate risk is moderate, ensure that stock are never shifted onto the crop hungry. Feed other supplement first. If crop is frozen/frosted, wait 1-2 hours after the thaw has occurred before shifting stock. This will allow nitrate levels to reduce in the plant and better enable detoxification in the rumen.

Effects of nitrate are usually seen 1-2 hours after introduction onto new break. Animals may appear sluggish with increased respiratory effort. Rapid treatment by our vets will result in quick recovery.

Calculated Minerals For Cows (CMC’s)

The Veterinary Centre ‘standard blend’ mix of CMC’s comes in a 25kg bag and with a dose rate of 2.5gm/cow/day, is 2.2c/cow/day. There are 10,000 doses per bag. It contains copper, zinc, cobalt, iodine and selenium. CMC’s are an ideal way to supplement cows during the dry period, as they can be dispensed through a Peta dispenser.

For farmers who have had high liver copperers diagnosed, or are feeding diets high in copper ie Palm Kernel, we also have a ‘Palm Kernel Mix’ that has no added copper. Contact one of your Blue Cross veterinarians to discuss this further if needed.
Tips for Teatsealing heifers through your shed

- Train the heifers to the shed at least once but preferably 2 or 3 times prior to sealing.
- Molasses or grain fed in the shed will help relax animals.
- If in a Rotary you may need some one in the centre to get the heifers to move towards the back of the bail.
- If in a herring bone, if part of a row is lined up and is happy don’t argue with heifers to get a full row.
- Scrub the teats until the small “button” covering the teat orifice comes off – this will make finding the orifice easier and ensure it is clean.
- Be patient and quiet – it is quite possible to do 80 an hour with calm heifers and people, but it becomes a battle if people get frustrated.
- Consider splitting the large mobs in two so it does not become a marathon.
- We can provide you with assistance if you require it. We will need to know in advance to manage our staffing so please book in early.

Honours Board for BMS MCC for the 2013/14 season

The average BMS MCC for the season, to April the 15th 2014, have been worked through – and 16 farms have BMSCC’s 90,000 and below. Well done.

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<tr>
<th>Farmer</th>
<th>Farm</th>
<th>Average BMSCC (000)</th>
<th>BMSCC Rank</th>
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<td>Quintin Paul</td>
<td>Wains Crossing Farm</td>
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<td>Uretane Road Farm</td>
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<td>J.L.O Enterprises 2008 Ltd</td>
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<td>Willowbridge Dairies</td>
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<td>Lisburn-Teschemaker Shed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamish &amp; Rachel McFarlane</td>
<td>Marcel Boshoff</td>
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Welcome to Naomi Barrett

Naomi has recently come across to the other side of the world from the UK where she has spent the last 3 years working in mixed practice in Lincolnshire and Kent. A graduate of Cambridge University, she enjoys the diversity and challenges presented by working with all animal species. Surgery is a particular interest, but she is very much looking forward to learning more about New Zealand dairy medicine and pasture based systems. Outside of work she enjoys keeping active and is currently waiting for enough snow to fall to allow a trip to the ski fields!