



Phantom Cow Syndrome –

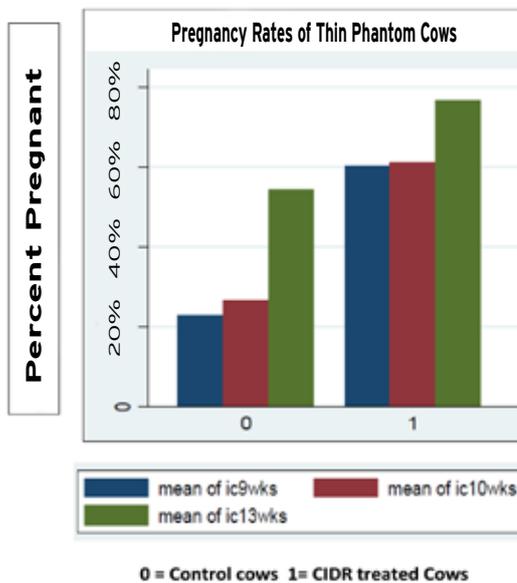
A cause of cow wastage and financial loss

Two seasons ago our practice conducted a large scale study involving 4200 cows over 14 farms.

Non-returning cows that had been mated in the first 2 weeks were scanned 5-6 weeks after the last insemination. On average just on 10% of these cows were found not to be pregnant. These non-pregnant cows are referred to as "Phantoms". Within this study it was found that untreated

Phantom cows which were BCS 4.0 or less had a 75% chance of being empty after a 10 week mating. If these Phantom cows were detected early and treated their empty rate at 10 weeks was reduced to 40%.

If you have a herd history of large condition loss post-calving, metritis, high non-cycler rate, high NEFA at calving, low BCS at mating, metritis and BVD you have a higher than average risk. Consider identifying cows from the first 2 weeks of AI and scanning these in early December. Please contact your Prime vet for further details.



Commentary on Mating

With the loss of induction as a management tool for condensing calving spreads it has become more important than ever to get cows in calf early. Recommended mating lengths of 10 weeks are considered maximum to retain a healthy calving spread. This would ensure all cows are calved by the 10th of October, if the PSM was the 23rd of October. In this scenario a 10 week mating period would have bull removal occurring on the 1st of January.

The reality in a 10 week mating period is that cows have just over 3 cycles to get back in calf. The average cow has a 50% chance of getting in calf at each cycle. If given every opportunity she would have a 12.5% chance of being empty after 3 cycles. However if she was to miss the first round of AI she will have a 25% chance of being empty!

If your 3 week submission rate is tracking below the >90% target, review your heat detection practices immediately and look to get non-cyclers examined and treated. Ideally all eligible non-cyclers (calved >30 days) should be mated inside of 3 weeks. This involves hormonal treatment by day 11 of mating at the latest.

All eligible cows not mated after day 24 of mating should also be examined and treated accordingly.

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Coccidiosis

Recently we have seen a number of cases of coccidia. Coccidiosis is caused by a parasitic bug. Coccidiosis results in a bloody scour which is seen in calves greater than 3 weeks of age up to a few months old. Affected calves often continuously strain to defaecate. The percentage of a mob affected can be very high as can the mortality rate. Calves which survive a severe infection will have significant checks in growth. Full recoveries can take over a month.

Coccidia are resilient bugs. Most calf meals contain coccidiostats (these are not protective until calves are eating over a kg/day). Treatment can be done with either Baycox C which is a single oral drench or daily with Deccox powder mixed in milk for a period of a week.



Condensing the Calving Spread with Short

Gestation Semen

The use of short gestation semen can be used to help condense the calving spread. LIC offer two different short gestation options -

- 1) Fully recorded (high BW) short gestation length bulls, which will impart a 6 day shorter gestation. (CRV SGL bulls will impart 4 day shorter gestation).
- 2) Very low BW SGL bulls which will impart a 10.5 day short gestation (progeny should not be retained).

SGL semen could potentially be used after the first 3-4 weeks of AI with standard semen, for a further 7-21 days or at the conclusion of the bull mating period - i.e. after day 60-70 of mating for a further 10-20 days.

Just a reminder of our free delivery service. Orders made before 10am - delivery that day. Orders phoned in after 10am - delivery the following day.



Christmas Promotion



With qualifying purchases of Arrest C, Matrix C, Eclipse, Eprinex, Genesis & Cydectin, you receive a tasty Kiwi Ham on the bone or Crozier Turkey. (While stocks last).

OR FORGET THE HAM OR TURKEY AND DEDUCT \$30 OFF THE PURCHASE PRICE

Timely Reminders & handy hints for November

- Pink eye in calves - We are coming up to the Pink Eye season in calves. A single dose of Piliguard vaccine given 3-6 weeks before the risk period will significantly reduce the risk of an outbreak.
- Covexin 10 - If you have unexplained deaths in young stock every year despite using 5 in 1 vaccine, you should consider using Covexin 10 in 1 vaccine, which provides additional protection against two other major clostridial diseases - Clostridium sordelli and Clostridium perfringens type A.
- Last week we saw a case of several acute deaths in calves which had been worm drenched through the milk. This is a very timely reminder, not to add worm drench, especially levamisole or abamectin, to milk. Each season we see 2-3 cases of either levamisole toxicity or abamectin toxicity in calves under 100 kg.
- Poa aquatic (also known as Glyceria maxima) is a grass that proliferates in wet areas of paddocks and drains. Under the right environmental conditions it can accumulate cyanide - which can be fatal if ingested. Sudden death in a wet paddock could be potentially due to cyanide. If you have suspicions contact your vet for identification of the grass.
- Polioencephalomalacia (P.E.) - This nervous condition of calves is now the most common disease of calves that we see over the summer months. Polioencephalomalacia (PE or CCN) is considered to be associated with a change of diet from a fibrous stalky diet to a lush, rapidly growing grass diet. High sulphur intakes have also been incriminated. P.E. is a vitamin B1 deficiency. Clinically, calves with P.E. show nervous signs. They may appear blind, staggy and develop muscle tremors, before becoming recumbent, with severe convulsions and die. We traditionally see P.E. cases from late November, peaking late Dec/early Jan.



Individual calves, if treated early enough with injectable Vitamin B1, respond well and make a full recovery. In the face of an 'outbreak', it is well worth considering the prophylactic use of an oral drench of Vitamin B1, for the entire mob of calves.



Grow Right

We strongly recommend that all heifer calves are weighed at weaning and the weights are electronically stored (e.g. in MINDA). This data will then allow you to:

1. Document the weight of calves that go to a grazier.
2. Allow you to easily monitor growth rates at mob level
3. Monitor individual calves
4. Allow for preferential treatment to get all heifers to target weights.

Age in months	3	6	9	15	22
Calendar month	October	January	April	October	May
Percentage of mature weight	20%	30%	40%	60%	90%

Table 1: Table of percentage mature live weight at different ages:

The Cost Of A Missed Heat Detection

For the average producing farm in our area which AI's for six weeks and mates for a total of 10 weeks the cumulative

cost of missing one heat in the first round is as follows:

■ 10 days lost milk x (1.4kgMS/day x

\$6.50kgMS) = \$91

■ \$1,300 net cost of empty cow x 12.5% higher chance of being empty = \$162
■ 30% reduction in chance of producing a heifer replacement = \$26

■ Less the cost of extra feed above maintenance (10 days x 30c/kgDM x 6kgDM = \$18

Total opportunity cost = ~\$260/missed heat.

■ A missed heat in the second round increases cost to approximately \$460 due to higher empty rates (25%) and no heifer replacements!!



Bull Management

'Rule of thumb' is to have 1 sound bull to 30 non-pregnant cows. Ideally there should be two teams of bulls and these should be changed every second day. A bull is capable of mating up to 3 cows a day before semen quality drops. The daily work rate in most herds will be the same after the 3rd week as it is in the 5th week as the number of cows coming on heat on a daily basis will be similar. Like-wise the work rate will be similar between the 6th week and the 8th week.

Therefore in a 700 cow herd which is doing 4 weeks of AI, they will need (based on 3 weeks of mating):

- 700 cows x 82% submission rate x 52% conception rate = 300 pregnant,
- this leaves 400 non pregnant, which requires 13 sound bulls in the herd at all times

In a 700 cow herd which is doing 6 weeks of AI, they will need:

- 700 cows with 65% 6 Week-In-Calf Rate = 455 pregnant
- This leaves 245 non-pregnant, which requires 8 sound bulls in the herd at all times.

Bull numbers in general can be reduced by about 40% at the end of each cycle.

Copper in calves

We are continuing to see cases of spontaneous humeral fractures in heifers and even in some three year olds whose year mates suffered from this condition last year. While we do not fully understand this condition, the majority of affected farms in a nation-wide survey had low copper levels. In many of the cases we have investigated here this season the liver levels of copper were lower than the testing laboratory could detect. While the nation-wide survey did not find all cases to have low levels when the fractures occurred it is possible they were low at a critical time of skeleton development pre puberty. We have become very good at supplementing adult dairy cattle with copper but put far less effort into ensuring copper supplementation of calves than we did 10 years ago. Copper bullets are a safe and effective way to supplement copper to young calves. While the nation-wide survey could not identify any specific predisposing factors apart from age and previous drought (possibly associated with a check in growth) it will be wise to ensure adequate copper supplementation and growth rates right up until puberty. With EID and electronic scales it is now very easy to monitor the growth rates of individual calves and take action before "they look small" which is too late.

Thank you

It has been a very busy spring for farmers and vets alike. We would just like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all the farmers who are ready with stock drafted etc when the vet arrives. We do our best to advise farmers if the vet is running late. If you are running late, have 'while you are here jobs' for the vet, or not intending to draft out cows to be treated, could we ask you to just let the clinic know so we can work out the logistics of times for vets and their subsequent visits. Many thanks...

Uddernews



Spike in mastitis cases

We will start to see a spike in the number of cases of mastitis. This happens every year and is presumably due to both cows cycling, and the inevitable disruption to milking routines associated with heat detection and AI. Be vigilant for over milking and slipping cups and keep on teatspraying.

Most of you are in the enviable position of having BMSCCs less than 150,000. This means that when you do get a new case the BMSCC will obviously spike. We suggest you have a BMSCC threshold that once it is exceeded the herd is stripped. Some of you may be a position to split the herd based on your

latest herd test results; this will have the effect of isolating your uninfected cows from the infected cows. If this is not practical on your farm and you are lucky enough to have automatic drafting (e.g. ProTrack) then having leg

bands on the high SCC cows so they don't get milked when they arrive but are drafted to be milked last will have the effect of isolating them from their uninfected herd mates and add very little time to your milkings.

BVD Bulletin



With mating well under way it is an important time to consider the BVD status of your herd as BVD has a negative effects on reproduction. This year the majority of our herds are on the LIC bulk milk monitor package for BVD. As we start getting positive results coming through we are often asked how we go about identifying and removing PI animals from a herd. PI animals are usually the poorest producing cows in a herd. This means you can usually find them by identifying the bottom 20% of producers and either blood testing them or having them tested for BVD at herd testing. The whole process is usually easy to perform. If you wish to discuss BVD control in your herd don't hesitate to contact one of our vets.

Product of the month

Eclipse is a double combination pour-on for parasite control



**Eclipse pour-on
2.5 litre is
\$669 (GST incl)**

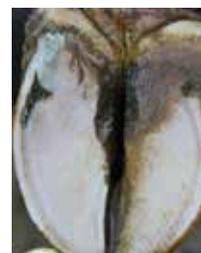
Effect of lameness on reproduction

Lame cows continue to be among the three main problems we are seeing on our clients farms together with mastitis and infertility. Lame cows are clearly visible but often not treated promptly.

At this time of year with peak milk production and AB well under way the economic effect of lame cows can be huge due to lost milk production, lost body weight and and the fact that lame cows are less likely to cycle on time.

Lame cows are half as likely to conceive and take on average 40 days longer to conception, compared to their healthy herd mates.

If you need help with lameness contact Luke or Ryan at The Veterinary Centre.



*"the leading
light in animal
health"*

**Veterinary Centre Oamaru
Veterinary Centre Waimate
Veterinary Centre Palmerston
Veterinary Centre Glenavy
Veterinary Centre Kurow
Veterinary Centre Omarama
Veterinary Centre Ranfurly**

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