the Vet Advisor

The magazine of Cambridge Vets *treating all animals large and small* December 2017

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our clients and their animals!

Clinic Hours for Christmas & New Years 17/18

Duty Vets will be available through our after hours service
Ph: (07) 827 7099 or 0800 226 838 FOR EMERGENCY CALLS

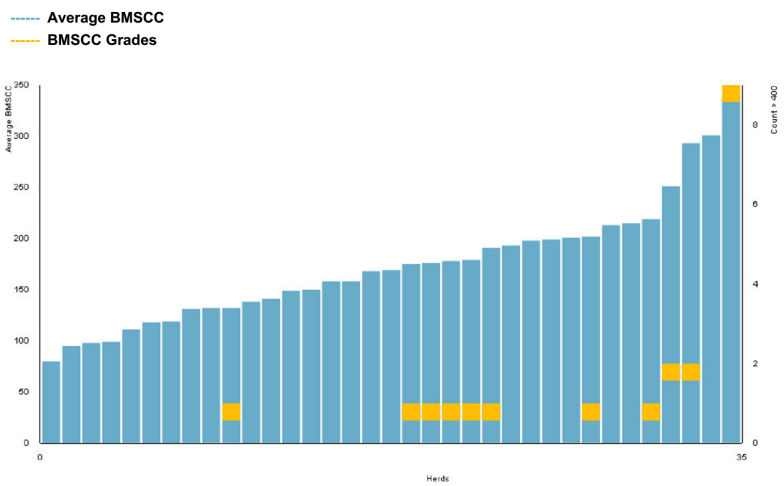
Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
23 December 2017	**24 December 2017**	**25 December 2017**	**26 December 2017**	**27 December 2017**	**28 December 2017**	**29 December 2017**
9am-12.30pm	Christmas Eve 9am-12pm	CLOSED Merry Christmas	CLOSED Boxing Day	8am-5pm	8am-5pm	8am-5pm
30 December 2017	**31 December 2017**	**1 January 2018**	**2 January 2018**	**3 January 2018**	**4 January 2018**	**5 January 2018**
9am-12.30pm	CLOSED New Years Eve	CLOSED Stat Day	CLOSED Stat Day	8am-5pm	8am-5pm	8am-5pm

Time to book in your scanning!

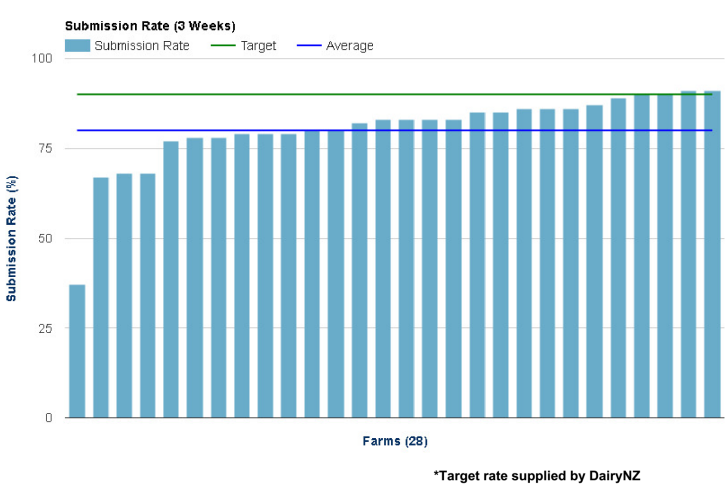
If you want to date your AI matings, it is best to scan the herd at 5-6 weeks after the end of AI (if you AI'd for 6 weeks or less). This will give you a detailed repro report through Minda or Infovet, allowing you to immediately assess the conception rate, heat detection accuracy and performance of repro programs for the early mating period (rather than waiting till next calving!). Also very useful if you have a below expected result (so you still have a bit of time to do something before the end of mating) or if you need accurate dates for drying off decisions / nutrition budgets. If you want to date just the late calvers and confirm the empties, then they should be scanned 6 weeks after the end of all matings. We can enter all the results onto tablet and upload it to minda and produce repro reports **if you have signed up to Infovet – which is STILL FREE FOR YOU! PLEASE CALL US TO GET YOU SIGNED UP IF YOU ARE NOT ALREADY.** This system also streamlines your dry cow and prescription consults, and allows us to benchmark all our farms:

We can see that for our farms, the average3 week submission rate was 80% and this was closely linked to heat detection, and the average BTSCC so far is 147,000. How do you compare?

BMSC - Bulk Milk Somatic Count Report



Submission Rate



*Target rate supplied by DairyNZ

LEPTO VACCINATIONS REMINDER

Time to vaccinate your calves for lepto! Doing it early reduces the chance of them becoming carriers, with chronic infection of the kidneys. It's a disease that you really don't want to catch! A recent Massey PhD study of Leptospirosis (by Yupiana and Moinet) has confirmed the significant role of livestock in lepto being transmitted to people, and vaccination is a crucial tool for control. However, it was also discovered that some serovars of lepto usually found in pigs and rodents (Tarassovi and ballum) were present in cattle, deer and sheep.

So remember that vaccination does not give total protection. Other strategies to implement include:

- Rodent control
- Hygiene (washing hands)
- Covering wounds
- No smoking/eating in the dairy pit
- Vaccinate all classes of stock

Meconium Aspiration Syndrome

It is often commented upon during a calving or lambing that the amniotic fluid is stained with meconium (yellow crap) and this is due to foetal stress. Whilst this is true, there are also normal reasons for it. Peristalsis (the waves of propulsion going down the guts) may develop before anal sphincter development in the foetus, which results in some coming out the other end! Also defaecated meconium may not be cleared if the foetus is not swallowing properly. Also the placenta may have some role in clearing meconium, so dysfunction may allow accumulation. There is a link between Meconium stained amniotic fluid and Meconium Aspiration Syndrome, but it is highly variable.

The meconium, if breathed in, may block airways, inactivate the surfactant that helps lungs expand and cause inflammation of lung tissue and damage the cells. You may want to keep an eye on those animals in case they develop problems with their breathing.

Mycoplasma update

MPI have confirmed another farm in the South Island with Mycoplasma (8 in total), and 2 more under investigation. These are neighbors or near to the original outbreak of the Van Leeuwen properties, so it has still been restricted to farms with direct contact in Waimate.Mycoplasma is spread primarily via direct contact from cow to cow (even over the fence) as the bacteria are found on the nose, respiratory tract, mammary gland, vagina and prepuce and transmitted in secretions such as milk, tears and semen.

Biosecurity is nonetheless vitally important to prevent transmission between farms on boots, equipment etc. Remember disinfection is a 2 step process – first scrub to remove all the organic material, then disinfect!

Both testing and culling are now ongoing as well as continued surveillance. It is important that we maintain vigilance even though it has not been found in the North Island, and report any suspicions.

Keep an eye out for the signs:

- Swollen joints and lameness in cows
- Cows still quite bright
- Mastitis that does not respond to antibiotics
- Abortion and birth of weak calves
- Arthritis in calves
- Pneumonia in calves
- Middle ear infection in calves leading to a head tilt, and conjunctivitis

Mycoplasma are bacteria that do not have cell walls, so many antibiotics do not work, and they are difficult to culture in samples. The disease is common worldwide, but no evidence of its presence was found in NZ in 2007 when 244 bulk milk vats were tested. There is no human health risk or threat to trade.

Beef bulls and Dairy Herds Vetscript sept 2017

Another Massey PhD study (by Lucy Coleman) is looking at putting high genetic merit beef bull semen over dairy cows. The first of 2 years has been assessed. For both cows and heifers, Hereford-cross calves were 2-3kg heavier at birth than angus-cross calves, and were weaned 2-3 days younger having reached target weight. However, over the heifers, the Herefords required more calving assistance (12%) than the Angus (4%) or Jerseys (0).

A PET-SAFE CHRISTMAS!

In the lead up to Christmas things can get pretty busy around the house, with large quantities of food and presents left unattended. Curious cats and dogs may investigate and eat food gifts left under the tree, food off the table or irresistible Christmas decorations!

A few things to keep in mind this season:

Gardeners... make sure supplies of Rat Bait and Snail bait are safely locked away!

The ham bone from Xmas dinner is not for canine consumption! It can contribute to several gastro-intestinal diseases.

Grapes and dried fruits (xmas pudding!), alcohol, nuts and onion & sage stuffing are toxic to pets!

Chocolate... Never leave chocolate on or under the tree if there are pets left in the home!

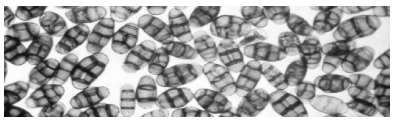
Correctly dispose of your leftovers! Rotten food produces toxins which can poison pets.

Tinsel and smaller decorations should be higher up in the tree to avoid being swallowed. Better still, a play pen, fireguard or baby gate works well to keep animals (and small people) away from these items.

Decorations, wrapping paper and candles are considered low toxicity but can cause gastro-intestinal upsets or obstructions.

Contact your vet if you are concerned your pet has eaten objects like this!

FACIAL ECZEMA



Emma Cuttance, a vet from Te Awamutu, recently did a FE study on 1000 cows across 100 NI herds. She found that 79% of cows and 33% of herds had high GGT levels (i.e. liver damage). When they tested zinc levels, 53% of cows were below protective levels, 44% were in the ballpark, and 3% were high (and potentially toxic). Cows supplemented with zinc in water were 5.5 times more likely to have blood zinc levels below protection, compared to cows being drenched. Furthermore, dose rates of zinc were low on 42/68 farms.

The next thing they checked was 160 cows in 16 Waikato farms feeding zinc oxide mixed with supplements in-shed or on a feedpad. They found that 44% of cows had low zinc levels, 46 % were at protective levels and 10% were too high (risking toxicity). The feedpad systems yielded more variable zinc blood levels, presumably due to differing DM intakes. The team also trialled applying lime to paddocks in November or March; it had NO effect on the spore count.
So we can still improve our FE protection programs:

- double-check your zinc dose rates to avoid underdosing or poisoning.
- check levels in blood and feed to see if you need to alter your program.
- zinc sulphate in the water on its own may not give adequate protection in a high challenge year / farm. Alternatives include drenching zinc oxide or mixing it with feed supplement, administering zinc bullets, or applying fungicide spray to pasture. I would add that CRV are also focusing on breeding FE resistance, and various summer crops have a lower risk of spores, such as fescue or chicory.
- monitor spore counts on your farm specifically by dropping in pasture samples. This will allow you to start and stop zinc supplementation at the correct time of risk, or to avoid high risk paddocks.

FACIAL ECZEMA – BACK TO BASICS

Facial Eczema (FE) is essentially a liver disease of ruminants (but alpacas are very susceptible), although the most obvious signs are photosensitivity and peeling skin. As the temperature and humidity climbs over summer and autumn, the fungus *Pithomyces chartarum* sporulates. It particularly likes paddocks with dead matter in the base of the pasture. As they are eaten with the pasture, these spores release the toxin sporidesmin, which damages the bile system of the liver. This has a big impact on growth, milk production and health – the obvious signs are only the tip of the iceberg!
Prevention options include avoiding grazing high risk paddocks with susceptible stock, spraying paddocks with fungicide before the spore counts rise, or using prophylactic zinc.
Regional **risk levels are published on our facebook page/website**, and in the newspapers and online media. Generally zinc is started in January for a February risk. Blood tests will check the zinc levels are protective but not toxic – excess zinc damages the pancreas, causing weight loss and even death. Consider checking soil zinc levels, as we have seen one farm with problems there. Zinc can be provided in water, by drenching, or as a long-acting bolus. Recommended dose rates can be found on our webpage. Treatment of affected animals includes offering shade, zinc cream, and vitamin supplementation (vitamin E is a good anti-oxidant).

Cambridge Vets were proud to be sponsors of Newstead Ag Day and the Group Day at Tamahere School. Well done to all the children who participated!



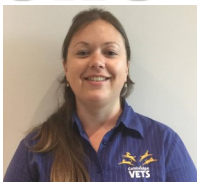




Missing probe! If you have seen the white extender for our backpack scanner, please let us know!

Latest Clinic News

We welcome back Christina Reichmuth, who is back from maternity leave to help us out on Mondays.



We would like to congratulate Julie one of our Large Animal vets and her husband Dan on the arrival of their daughter. '*Maisie Jolana*' was born at 7.10pm on the 30th August. We wish you and your family all the best!

Well done to Janine Devaney, who completed the New York Marathon in **4 hours 18 minutes.** She said it was an amazing experience and festive atmosphere.

Congratulations to Chris Crickett, who married Robyn at the beach on the 18th of November.

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