



## Closing the stable door before the horse has bolted

MATING, the results are in. We can finally sit back, chew the cud and assess last spring's results. The most common question Cambridge Vets are asked currently is 'what is the region's performance?' As a general rule the season was difficult for most and has resulted in empty rates lifting from last season. However the more valuable questions are, what is happening on *your* own farm and what were the major contributors to your results? Asking these questions allows us to focus on what we can improve for next season instead of settling for the status quo. For instance, it could be that half your lame cows were empty and the rest of the herd was great, or it could be poor performance in a certain mob such as heifers or late calvers. Therefore it is essential to have good quality information (recording diseases and treatments, body condition scoring, accurate feed budgeting etc) which allows us to answer these questions and more so as to develop solutions and investment options that can proactively achieve good results in an adverse season.

Below is a case study for a farm which identified a high non cycling rate at the start of mating this season which also had an issue with late calving cows. The goals were to tighten calving spread for non-cyclers giving more days in milk and improved fertility the subsequent season due to more time to recover after calving. The long term goal here is to meet industry targets and have minimal/no intervention. All cows were managed in the same way and we have had a good success across all treated cows.

	Cycling Cows (Includes late cyclers)	Non-Cycling Calved 40d+ - treated	Late calving Cycling	Late calving Non-cycling - treated	Late calving Non-cycling control
Number	50%	17%	8%	14%	17%
Average Calving Date 2022	5-Aug-22	30-Jul-22	22-Sep-22	28-Aug-22	22-Aug-22
Average Expected Calving 2023	8-Aug-23	23-Jul-23	27-Aug-23	13-Aug-23	15-Aug-23
Calving to conception interval	NA	NA	56 days	68 days	75 days
Conceived to repro program AI	NA	60%	NA	27%	NA
Conceived first 3 weeks	31%	60%	14%	31%	16%
Empty Rate	11%	13%	39%	6%	11%

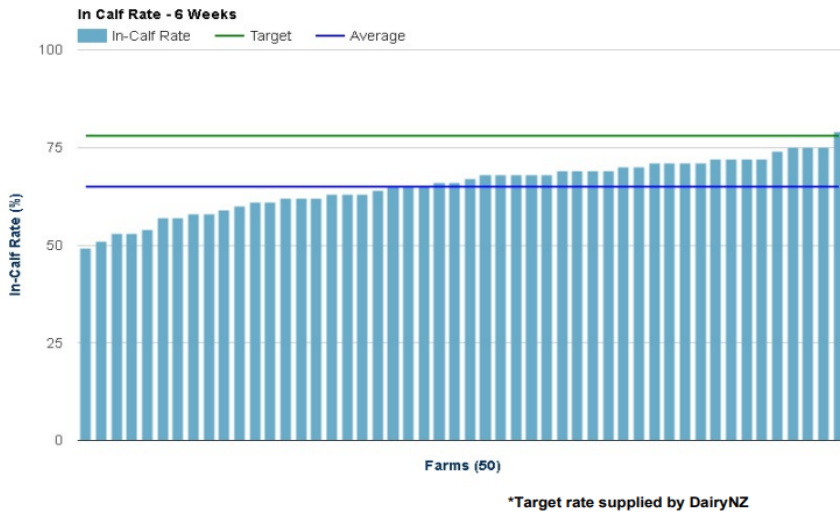
- Non-cycling cows treated early had a much better than expected conception to the program with 60% of cows expected to calve in the first week of calving. This results in the average pregnant cow in this gaining an extra 15 days in milk compared to cycling cows.
  - Additionally final empty rate for non-cycling cows was only 2% lower than cycling cows
- Late calving non-cycling cows – treated cows will calve down earlier than untreated cows and late calving cycling cows.
  - Additionally treated cows had a significantly improved empty rate over the control group If you would like to discuss a repro program for the next season, get in touch with your vet. The best time to start is now when we can plan for cow condition, trace element supplementation, feed budgeting and disease management.

*\*Note: this is a retrospective analysis of what happened on one farm this season and mobs were not standardised for BCS/age/etc the cows treated were the first to row up and the control mob was the latter half. Results were excellent with a good ROI however caution and vet should be utilised when assessing a repro plan for your herds.*

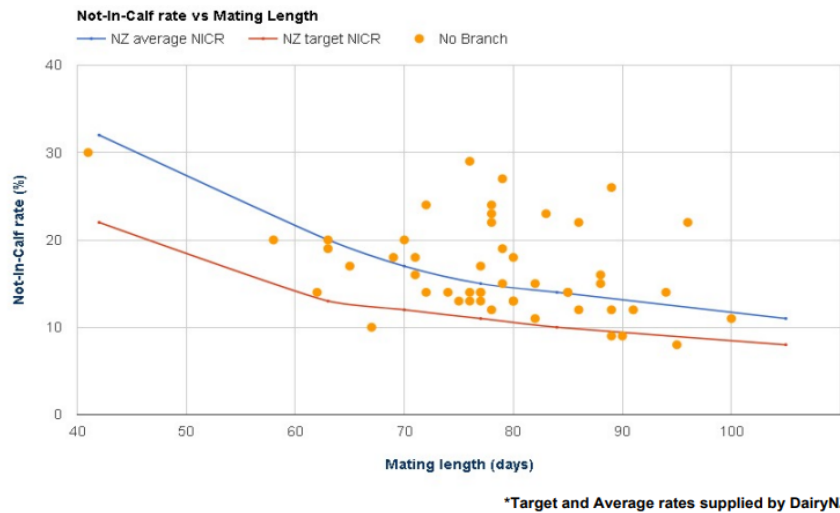


# Reproduction

A quick analysis of our Infovet farm repro achievement confirms that on average, the 6 week in-calf rate was 2% lower this year (65%) and the farm empty rate 1% higher than last season (16.4 vs 15.4% average).



It certainly felt like a tough spring. With low sunshine hours, grass volume and quality, cows seemed to struggle both to cycle and to conceive. This led to poorer submission rates (76% at 3 weeks compared to 81% the previous season) and affected 6 week in-calf rates. Good bull management generally ameliorated the end result on many farms, but we still saw some high empty rates.



On the flip side, summer paddocks are looking pretty green, the milk production is maintaining a wide shoulder to compensate for the lower spring production, and the FE risk seems to be lower than previous years.

## WORMS and Sheep

Barber's Pole in Lambs is rearing its head again, and we have seen several mobs with dead lambs, anaemic lambs, thin lambs and daggy lambs. Submitting faecal samples to assess worm burden is wise, as well as checking the animals for body condition, dags and colour (the mucous membranes in the eyes and mouth should be a rosy pink, not a paper white).

An example of drench with extended efficacy against Barber's Pole include Clomax.



Both of these health issues have been challenging us this year over a wet summer. Don't feel you're on your own! Give us a ring for practical help and preventative planning.

## WAIPADC: Rural Ward

As the rural ward member for the Cambridge Community Board, I represent and advocate for you as rural people. So for all items related to the Waipa District Council, whether it be dog bylaws, rates, roading, water, amenities and service I would love to hear your feedback and ideas.

A quick thanks to Cambridge Vets for including this message, to help me in helping you.



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# ANTIBIOGRAM RVM AHP DCTC

Although for many herds, lactation may get extended, we need to start thinking about drying off already. Ensure you have the time and data required to formulate a dry off strategy with your vet. This is also a good opportunity to do a full milk quality review as part of the process.

## Regulation update:

Herd test data or some form of cell count information is now required for selecting and prescribing dry cow therapy, so if you don't herd test then we may need to RMT. Also it is a requirement for the vet to have visited the herd within the previous six months. An udder health plan must be implemented if blanket DCT is justified for welfare or infection prevalence.

RVM authorization needs to be done annually (every 4 months for red light antibiotics) and we often combine these 2 jobs. We need to be able to justify the authorization of red lights in particular. For both DCT and RVM authorization, it is important that the staff administering the treatments are trained and competent. We are happy to implement staff training for you if needed, and this is particularly valid for intramammary products.

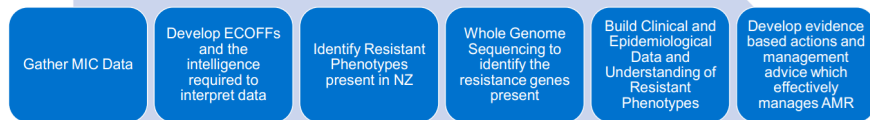
As part of the custodianship responsibility for antimicrobials, it is a good idea to do milk cultures and sensitivity testing. Fonterra recognize the AntibioGram, which (once ordered through your vet) analyses your bulk milk for streps and staphs, and checks their resistance against a host of antibiotics. This is useful because it means not only are you monitoring your herd responsibly, but if there is any resistance then you can choose treatments logically.

**MRSA** The antibiogram is a particularly good tool for detecting / monitoring for MRSA (methicillin resistant staph aureus), which has now been confirmed in some NZ farms. This scary bacterium has been found in milk, cows, and pigs overseas, but also being carried by vets and farmers overseas. It has the mecA or mecC gene which reduces the binding of many (B lactam) antibiotics, rendering them ineffective. It is an Am-phenoxenosis, which means it can transmit within and between species, including from people to cows and vice versa.

It is probably worth having a conversation with your vet about MRSA, to minimize the chance of it getting in. General advice would be:

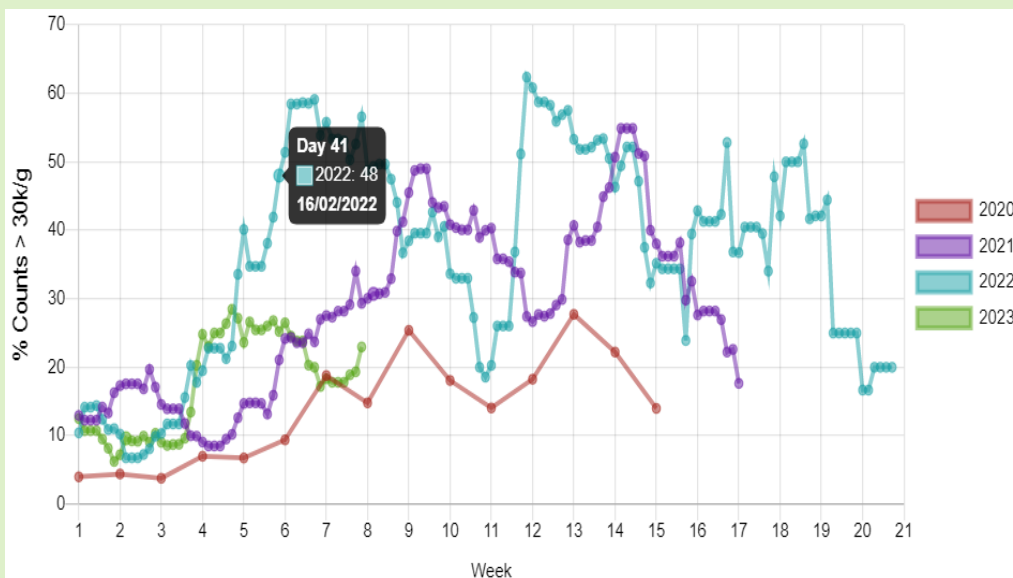
- Minimize antimicrobial use
- Minimize introduction via animals (biosecurity)
- Reducing human transmission (hygiene such as wearing milking gloves, not drinking raw milk, minimizing visitors)
- Pigs may be a risk factor for transmission to cows
- Monitoring (antibiogram)

## The DAIRYANTIBIOGRAM mission



Finally, please remember to have your herd health data available for when we do the Animal Wellbeing Plan for your herd, such as lameness rates, clinical mastitis cases, and mortality. Hopefully soon you will be able to enter this straight into the Dairy Diary and it will be downloaded into our program, but not yet...

# Facial Eczema



%Elevated Spore Counts (>30,000/g)

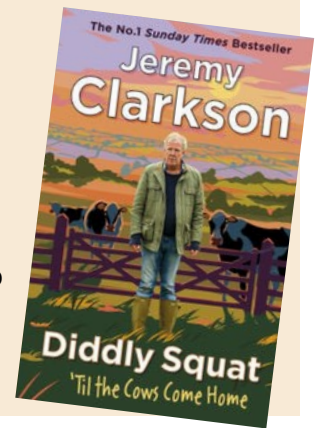
The spore count has been lower this year than the last 2 summers, but there is still plenty of time for it to cause a big fat late problem potentially into May. It is best not to become complacent, as the liver damage caused by sporidesmin can have such massive impact economically and for welfare, with milk yield, growth, production and future production all affected. Consider getting some blood samples done to check zinc levels are adequate – water supplementation in particular can be very inconsistent – or if there has been any liver damage.

Pasture samples can be submitted to the clinic to assess paddock risk, and bolusing of stock can be timed accordingly. We are happy to help bolusing if you want a hand.



# Book Review **DIDDLY SQUAT 'til the cows come home**

I recently got another book by Jeremy Clarkson, but rather than being columns about cars, this one contains essays about his farm. I have received recommendations to watch Clarkson's Farm, but the book was a good insight into why he recently received a national farming award. The chapters are his classic style of personal life hook leading into a rant against authority and finishing with a more insightful conclusion, but now framed by his stories of the challenges on his farm. Cows that escape, sheep that commit suicide, driving tractors, opening a farm shop, and more. Ultimately, people either love or loathe Jeremy, and he does seem to enjoy exaggerating his own deficiencies, but this is a very accessible read with some lovely defence of the farming community. I found it quite charming to see him falling in love with the countryside, the animals, the rural characters and the agricultural ethos. As this is a sequel, I will definitely be looking out for the first book.



## Welcome

Introducing Taylor Scott, our new Farm Tec. Many of you may have spoken to her as our after-hours phone lady, but she has now rolled up her sleeves and put on her gumboots to join us on the clinical side. Taylor will be helping us with farm jobs such as teat-sealing and dehorning, as well as clinic lab work such as performing spore counts on pasture samples and plating milk cultures.



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