

Welcome to our Spring Newsletter of 2025! THE MATING EDITION

Important Notes:



Tail Paint

Tail paint needs to go on the cows soon, so we can give them 4 weeks of monitoring before mating. We can't fix what we can't measure; it is really important to have a grasp on how well your cows are cycling before the start of mating. That way, if alarm bells are ringing, there is time to make and implement a plan.



5 in 1 Vaccinations

Cambridge Vets offer free 5 in1 vaccinations for Ag. Day calves and lambs.

All you need to do is let our staff know what School your children attend.



School Ag. Day

School Ag. Days, Group Days and the bigger A & P shows all take place during October each year. Our website has some great information and advice, particularly for lamb rearing.

See: [Lifestyle Blocks - Cambridge Vets](#)

Heat Detection Accuracy

I watched a great Webinar on Mating recently. Here are my take home points:

For 1 in 4 herds, heat detection is a limiting factor. Ryan Luckman recently trialed a Heat Check system of **assessing heat detection accuracy in real time with a scanner**. Cows classified as on heat one morning can be scanned (at drafting for AI) to determine the size of follicle on the ovary. If >90% of cows have a suitably large follicle, heat detection is accurate. If a significant number of cows have smaller follicles or a CL, they have been picked despite not being on heat.

Common Issues for heat detection:

- Incorrect placement of heat aid
- Tailpoint too thick
- Tailpoint too far down the tail
- Tailpoint too far forward
- Not putting up short returns
- Putting heat aids in the hollow
- Not using 2 heat aids

Last year's performance can be assessed using the Fertility Focus Report and return intervals via Infovet discussed with your vet. We can train up any new staff or do a refresher course.

For starters:

- Tailpoint should be applied as a 5-6cm x 20 cm stripe
- The hair fibres should be visible
- It should be applied directionally from the back to the front
- Bulling beacons / kamars should be stuck top of pressure point between the hip bones
- Scratchies should be on the high point behind the hip bones



Reproductive Efficiency

Reproductive Efficiency, as measured by higher 6 week in-calf rate and lower empty rate, has many knock-on benefits:

- Emissions reduction (per kg MS)
- Increased discretionary culling
- Improved herd quality (and value)
- Lower replacement rate
- Increased option for culling for disease
- Greater milk production

Your vet can go over your Fonterra Insights Report with you to look at the herd performance, benchmarking with other herds, and identifying opportunities for improved profitability.

Recently, there have been a **few optional tweaks to the traditional treatment program for “non-cyclers”**, or NDO cows not detected in oestrus.

- a. The Pre-Sync option of administering PG 3 days before the device insert is designed for the 1 in 4 NDO cows which have a CL, to reset the follicle wave so there are less “stale” follicles at ovulation. This lifts conception rate by about 5%, but there are some practical considerations to doing this which should be discussed with your vet.
- b. The higher PG dose at device removal, or administering it on 2 consecutive days, lifts conception rate by 3-4%
- c. eCG can be added to PG at device removal to improve follicle quality and ovulation rate, with a resultant increase in pregnancy at 28d of 6-7%

Genetic Gain

Breeding replacements from your highest BW cows lifts production efficiency by genetic gain. This is particularly important in respect to the carbon footprint of farming, which is increasingly being measured and monetized beyond direct production gains. LIC have several reports which are worth discussing with your vet regarding genetic gains:

- a. Detailed Analysis Fertility Focus Report (this requires results from an early scanning)
- b. Conception Rate Report (early scanning needed, looks at the CR of different semen)
- c. Quartiles Report (needs 3+ herd tests annually, looks at the impact of genetics on production)
- d. Genetic Gain Tool (what dams give replacements in quartiles 1 to 4)

Heifer Synchrony

Heifer Synchrony and a single day of AI allows a faster genetic gain for your herd.

Some recent trials have shown better results with a 5 day insertion for heifers, with 2 shots of PG at removal, and 1 PG at 3 days before insertion.



Gold standard heat detection

Use 2 heat detection aids:

1. Tail Paint

Preparation - Remove any loose hair or dirt from the tail area and ensure the skin is clean and dry.

Application - Use a brush or applicator to apply a strip of tail paint no more than 20cm long and 5-6cm wide and thick enough to cover the skin (but still allowing hair fibres to be visible).

Placement - Apply the paint strip along the spine, starting at the tail head and moving towards the cow's front. i.e. strokes should be back to front. **If the hair fibres are not visible it is too thick!**

Repainting - Reapply tail paint to cows after they've been in heat to track their cycling and touch up weekly

2. Heat Mount detector

Preparation - Prepare the area two days prior to application. Remove loose hair and dirt (these disturb the oils in the coat and prevent glue from sticking).

Application - Use glue or self-adhesive as recommended by the manufacturer

Placement - Pressure-activated heat mount detectors - The patch is mounted on the backbone with the top of the patch between the hip bones. Adjust for the size of cow and aim for position that will receive maximum pressure from the brisket of the mounting animal

Placement - Scratch-off patch heat mount detectors - The patches are mounted across the backbone, at the highest point closer to the tail

Use the tail paint and heat mount detector information along with the previously recorded heat or mating date to make a decision on whether to submit for AI or not



Preparing for Mating - The Pie

Metri-checking

Cows should be metriched 2-6 weeks after calving, preferably in an early and a late mob for improved detection. Treating endometritis improves cycling and conception rate.

Cows treated earlier had an incredible 9.6% improvement in 6 week in-calf rate, and conceived 8 days before their herd-mates that were metri-checked and treated later (4 weeks prior to PSM).

BCS

Getting your vet to condition score your herd will give you useful information to see if you are keeping them on target. Heifers should be weighed regularly to target 60% of mature liveweight at mating. How is the feed budget going into mating? Now is not a good time to allow a feed pinch!

Staff training / planning meeting

Book in a time to go over the signs of heat with staff, and who is responsible for what. Some cows may only sniff or bellow or display bulling strings, rather than the full riding behaviour. Heat detection needs to be done from above the cow, consider using a mirror or trolley. Is the identification system and drafting mechanism working well enough?

Health / trace elements /Rumination Data

The herd's overall health will have a bearing on repro. How is the cell count? How is the herd trace element status – blood tests will confirm the program and check for ketosis, collars will give useful rumination and activity metrics.

Tail Paint

This should be applied a month before PSM so we have an insight into how many cows are cycling. Wearable tec will generate a running report for you.

Anti-inflammatories

Given to cows with lameness or mastitis have been shown to improve their survival due to improved conception rates. Even more important, of course is prevention:

Mastitis – The shed should have been checked before calving. Now ensure teat spray is still being applied carefully and mastitis is being detected promptly.

Lameness – Hopefully the raceways are all in good condition, so just ensure the cows are brought in to the shed at their own pace so they can place their feet carefully. They should have ample room in the yard to avoid twisting around each other. Lamé cows should be drafted have their feet lifted promptly; trim out any hoof defects and apply a block!



Review, ID opportunities, Planning AI

Your tec is your best friend at this time of the year. Have you got good facilities for them to do their job well? Remember to have a timely semen discussion with your rep!?

Preparing for mating continued...

Heifer Synchrony

Doing a single AI day on heifers will give you more AB calves and faster genetic gain for your herd. A synchrony program will see them in calf 11 days earlier on average too, giving more milk and more time to recover.

Why Wait

This program will bring cows forward by a week. Cows cycling 7-14 days before PSM get a PG shot at -2 days, cows cycling the week before get injected on day 7. This does mean the tail paint colour needs to be changed on day -14 and day -7 before PSM to identify when they cycled.

Bulls

Have you ordered enough bulls to allow for the number of open cows after AI, potential lameness etc? Have they been tested and vaccinated for BVD? Have you got a plan to keep them off the concrete to reduce lameness.

Plan for non-cyclers

The important thing with non-cyclers is to monitor the heats before mating so you know where you are, and to have a plan so they are addressed early. Most non-cyclers are lighter in condition or later calving. Condition scoring may dovetail with heat monitoring; lower BCS non-cyclers may benefit from TLC, OADS milking and feed supplementation.

Non-cycler treatment a week before PSM will improve their 6 week in-calf rate (74% in one study), bring them forward (10-21 days extra milk), and reduce their risk of being non-cyclers next season by 12%.

BVD

This virus can have massive effect on repro, and cause PI calves to be born next year. Have you tested the herds status of BVD from a bulk milk sample? We can organize this great value test so you have time to be reassured or to find any Persistently Infected carriers before mating.

SERESTO: An offer not to be missed.....

A single Seresto collar provides up to 8 months of continuous protection against fleas and ticks for both cats and dogs. The active ingredients spread through the pet's skin to kill fleas and ticks through contact, preventing them from needing to bite your pet. It provides fast relief from painful bites by killing adult fleas in under two hours and preventing further flea development. The collar is water-resistant, meaning it continues to work effectively even after your pet gets wet. Seresto is an odourless, easy-to-apply collar that provides a simple, effective method for long-term flea and tick control. In addition to fleas and ticks, the Seresto collar for dogs also treats and controls chewing lice infestations.

Perfect for your working dogs!

Not only does it offer convenience - with this discount it works out to be half the cost per month compared to other flea products on the market!

*Available From 1st September until the 31st October 2025

Your customers can buy a
Seresto™ flea & tick collar
and receive

Mates Rates

**\$20
OFF!***

*For a limited time. T&Cs apply.



Welcome



A warm welcome to Danielle, a new face for our front counter. Danielle will be working Fridays and Saturdays. "Danielle is a life-long animal lover who has been in Cambridge since 2012. She grew up on a farm for a few years, and now has two great kids and a couple of dogs to keep life interesting.

Facebook

Did you know that Cambridge Vets are on Facebook? We have a page for both the Companion Animal and the Production Animal Departments. Follow our pages for topical news, offers and clinic Newsletters:



[Cambridge Vets Page](#)

[Cambridge Vets Farm Services Page](#)



Congratulations



Congratulations Cecilia! Our esteemed colleague has had her Master's research published in the venerable New Zealand Veterinary Journal. If you want to know anything about Neospora, she is an absolute wealth of knowledge. Her article discusses how very young calves can be tested for Neospora to reduce the

prevalence of a herd: **"Use of adjusted cut-off values for Neospora caninum antibody ELISA in calves after colostrum intake: on-farm evaluation as part of a neosporosis eradication programme"**.

Link below: [@](#)

[Use of adjusted cut-off values for Neospora caninum antibody ELISA in calves after colostrum intake: on-farm evaluation as part of a neosporosis eradication programme](#)



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Meeting more than
the needs of your herd



With every pack of Prolaject purchased, Elanco will put two meals* on the table of those doing it tough this winter in our communities.

For every pack of Prolaject purchased between 1st July and 30th September 2025, Elanco will donate \$5.00 to 'Meet The Need' - up to \$50,000.

Visit www.farmanimal.elanco.co.nz for full terms and conditions

