

JUNE 2019

DAIRY MOOSLETTER

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As much as June is historically portrayed as 'holiday time', our vets are super busy, as are many of you now shifting breaks and feeding out daily.

We are in the middle of teat sealing heifers on our trailer. We have had some modifications done since last year which is making the job a bit more user friendly. We have scissor gates which allow us to load the trailer off a loading ramp. This is working well. In amongst teat sealing Sian has managed to get all the autumn calves disbudded as well.

For WelFarm clients we are about to start our pre-calving body condition score so expect to hear from us to book this in.

If you haven't caught up with Charlotte's exciting news, she and Cody welcomed a gorgeous baby boy 'Hunter' on May 22nd.

To help us over the calving period, we are very lucky to have an experienced vet assist us. Chris Beggan, hails from Belfast, studied in Scotland and has been working in Wales. Once our season has finished, Chris will join the EquivetsNZ Masterton branch as a permanent member of staff. We welcome him to our team.

We have also appointed a new Practice Manager. Dave Barton has a wealth of knowledge in the veterinary industry and we are very excited to have him join us.



SOUTHERN RANGITIKEI VETERINARY SERVICES
CALF REARING SEMINAR

Wednesday 3rd July 2019
10am - 12pm
SRVS Seminar Room
233 State Highway 1
BULLS

\$80 per person*
*discount for multiples per farm

This half day seminar will give participants an in-depth understanding of all aspects of calf rearing including husbandry, health, disease and Best Practice.

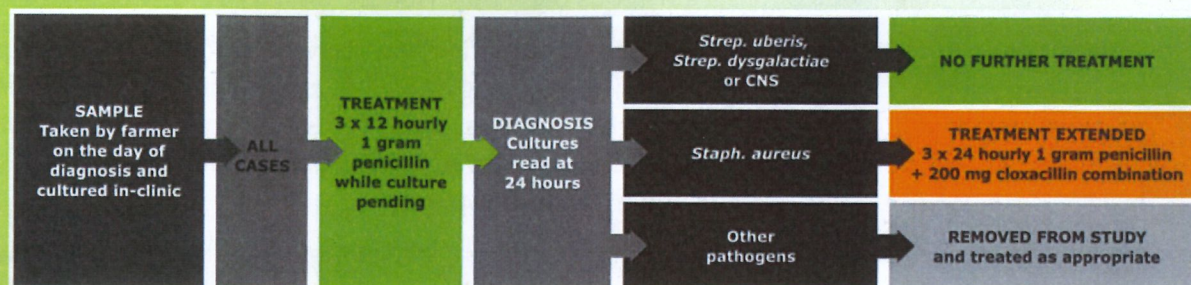
RSVP: Monday 1st July (06) 3222 333. michelle@srvs.co.nz

A NEW APPROACH TO CLINICAL MASTITIS

Mastitis continues to be one of the biggest animal health expenses on dairy farms. Not only does the treatment and control of disease cost a pretty penny, there are also flow on losses through reduced production (sometimes lifelong), wastage of young cows from the milking herd and the risk of somatic cell count grades. Broadly we classify the control/treatment of mastitis into two categories: during lactation and during the dry period. Here I want to specifically talk about treatment during lactation.

When we talk about the treatment of clinical mastitis we have classically given an arbitrary date of 'around Christmas' where suddenly the causative bug is no longer environmental (*Strep*) and is now likely contagious (*Staph*), so we advise you to switch antibiotics. There is some method to this way of thinking but in truth we are really guessing and on many occasions we are likely getting it wrong. With a push towards the more prudent use of antibiotics we are having to rethink some of these classic recommendations. A recent study completed by Virbac looked at using milk cultures to direct treatment choices rather than simply stage of lactation and the findings were quite positive. Not only was the antibiotic use more sustainable, the cost of treatment was actually less and the cure rate was higher.

Hopefully you are all familiar with the traffic light system for antibiotics by now. Our only 'green' mastitis treatments are those containing penicillin alone, namely 'Intracillin® 1000 Milking Cow' and 'Penethaject® RTU'. On the system these are the only ones we are meant to recommend for first line treatment, so where appropriate these should be the treatments being used, which often isn't the case. The study followed the protocol below:

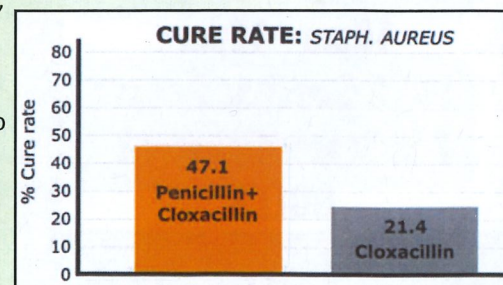
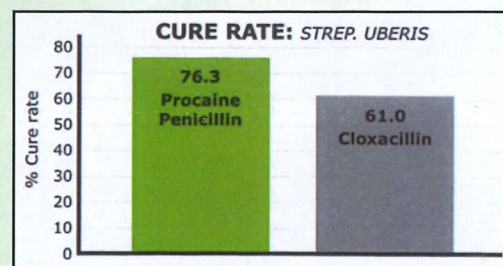


The initial treatment was Intracillin® which after culture results was either deemed appropriate and finished, or extended with a penicillin cloxacillin combination: Penclox® (an orange or second line antibiotic choice). Alongside this study the classic stage of lactation protocol was used for deciding treatment choice and either a course of Penicillin or a course of Cloxacillin was administered (for comparison all of these cases were also cultured). The arbitrary date in this case was 1 week into lactation.

In most cases the cost of culture was more than offset by less hours out of the vat and interestingly the cure rates were actually better with the culture protocol vs the classic treatment choice. This wasn't surprising when *Strep. uberis* was cultured there is more and more resistance to Cloxacillin being found with this bug. However it was unexpected when we look at those cases that cultured *Staph. aureus*.

Staph. aureus is notoriously hard to kill as it can hide within the immune cells of the animal and evade the antibiotic. This often represents an apparent cure at the time, but re-culturing the quarter sometime later will often regrow the bug and repeat clinical cases plus a persistently high somatic cell count will result. For this reason culling is always a consideration in these cases. We often consider the Staph bugs to be less responsive to penicillin's and this is why we recommend a cloxacillin type treatment, though interestingly this trial showed that the addition of penicillin to the treatment regime could be responsible for significantly increased cure rates (47.1% vs 21.4%).

Not only did this trial reveal that culturing mastitis cases lead to more sustainable antibiotic use, generally cheaper treatment costs and surprisingly increased cure rates. The knowledge of what bugs are common on your property and when, is also invaluable for milk quality decisions going forward e.g. Dry Cow Therapy options, culling decisions and what areas of control (environmental or contagious) need to be focused on. If you wish to consider this new approach to clinical mastitis treatment then have a talk to your vet at your annual RVM consult



REMINDERS

WORKS CERTIFICATES

Any animal that is lame, injured or deformed needs to be examined and certified by a veterinarian before being transported and the vet cert must accompany the animal onto the truck. Please remember that when we are certifying animals:

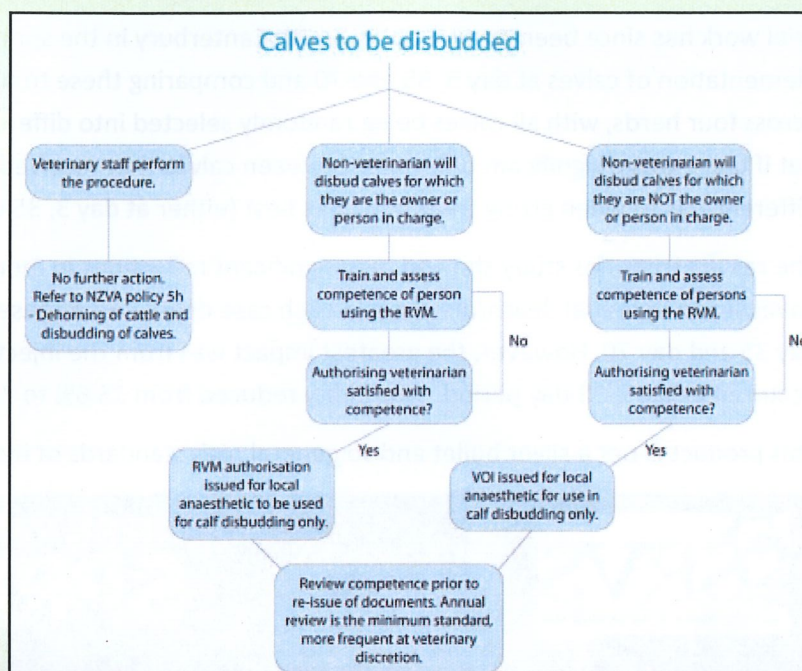
- They must go to the closest works and we need to stipulate the name of the works on the certificate so we need to know where they are going when we write the certificate
- Wounds must be healed and must not be discharging (no pus no blood)
- Cancer eyes need to be less than 2cm to be able to be certified
- Cattle with ingrown horns or horns longer than their ears must be dehorned before being sent
- A certificate only lasts for a maximum of 7 days and some conditions a much shorter time.

NEW LEGISLATION COMING INTO EFFECT SOON

As of 1 October 2019, it will be a legal requirement that all cattle being disbudded/dehorned will need 'an appropriately placed and effective local anaesthetic that is authorised by a veterinarian for the purpose of the procedure'. This is true for all methods of horn tissue removal including hot iron cautery, scoop dehorning, amputation dehorning, and caustic paste (which the NZVA advises is not an appropriate method).

In addition to this, anyone disbudding/dehorning must:

- be experienced with, or have received training in, the correct use of the method being used; and;
- be able to recognise early signs of significant distress, injury, or ill-health so that the person can take prompt remedial action or seek advice.



SRVS vets will be training our farmers up to administer local anaesthetics if they wish to continue doing their own debudding—but it will require a training session and, initially an annual review at your cost. Obviously you need to have some calves to debud to train you so if you are interested get in touch with us.

OTHER ENFORCABLE REGULATIONS THAT NOW CARRY FINES/CONVICTIONS

Cattle with ingrown horns—Ingrown horns are painful. An ingrown horn is when either the tip or the side of the horn pierces, inflames or causes abrasion to any part of the body. If you allow horns to become ingrown, you can be fined \$500.

Use of traction in calving—You are prohibited from calving a cow using a moving vehicle, or any instrument that doesn't allow for the immediate release of tension. If you calve a cow this way, you could face a criminal conviction and a fine of up to \$3,000 for an individual, or \$15,000 for the business.

Castrating sheep and cattle—you must not castrate cattle and sheep over 6 months old, without using local anaesthetic. You must not castrate cattle and sheep at any age with a high tension band, without using local anaesthetic. Failure to comply with this regulation could result in a criminal conviction and a fine of up to \$3,000 for an individual, or \$15,000 for the business. A high tension band is one that is mechanically tightened during application (doesn't include a rubber ring).

MULTIMIN[®] AND YOUR CALVES

Trace element supplementation is commonly talked about in mature dairy cows as being essential for maximising growth, production, reproduction and general good health. As most of you know we regularly test copper and selenium levels of mixed aged cows at dry off time and supplement accordingly. This is a must do if you are wanting to achieve your production and reproduction goals for the season.

No work on supplementing calves with trace minerals had been done in New Zealand, although some work in the United States has confirmed a significant difference in calves, with treated calves having less diarrhoea and pneumonia than other groups. However, there was no difference in weight gain between calves receiving trace minerals and calves receiving nothing. This study was then backed up by more work that showed that these calves were actually having much stronger immune responses to diseases, which can explain why they were seeing a noticeable difference in treated and untreated calves.

All this trial work was carried out with the label dose of 1ml/50kg of MULTIMIN[®].

Trial work has since been carried out in South Canterbury in the spring of 2017, studying the effects of trace element supplementation of calves at day 3, 35 and 70 and comparing these to untreated calves. The study involved 971 calves spread across four herds, with all calves being randomly selected into different treatment groups. The study was designed to find out if there was a significant difference between calves that received treatment and ones that did not, and if there was a difference as to when giving treatment was best (either at day 3, 35 or 70).

The results from this study showed very significant reductions in morbidity and mortality for all disease categories (scours, navel ill and neonatal death/disease). In each case death and disease was approximately halved in the weeks after birth, day 35 and day 70. However, the greatest impact was from the injection at birth, as the highest morbidity and mortality occurred in the 3-35 day period. Morbidity reduced from 15.6% to 7.5% and mortality reduced from 10.4% to 4.4%.

This product is not a silver bullet and so general high standards of hygiene and calf rearing procedures are still the priority.





SOUTHERN RANGITIKEI VETERINARY SERVICES
SPRING FIRST AID
SEMINAR

Wednesday 10th July 2019
10am - 3pm
SRVS Seminar Room
233 State Highway 1
BULLS

\$180 per person*
* discounted for multiples per farm



This seminar will give participants an understanding of spring animal health issues and how to deal with them.

Topics include metabolic conditions, recognising the sick cow, prolapses, calf disease basics and correct technique for administration of medicines

RSVP: Monday 8th July (06) 3222 333. michelle@srvs.co.nz Lunch and refreshments provided.

GUARD®

Over the last few years we have had significant growth in the use of Optiguard®. Optiguard® is a naturally occurring mineral product which is highly effective when added to livestock rations. It is an aluminosilicate that has a high negative charge and a large internal surface area, with pore sizes in the lattice work that allow toxins to enter and be trapped, whilst others are excluded. Young aluminosilicates like Optiguard® tend to be more effective in the lattice work and are therefore better able to absorb toxins. Optiguard® prevents scours and optimises the health of your young livestock. It is biogro certified as an organic

Optiguard® to your calf-meal mix, or place it directly into feed troughs to allow calves to self-manage their intake. Optiguard® can also be mixed with milk. Simply stir to reconstitute.

Optiguard® retails for \$23 + GST for a 20kg bag. If you are wanting more we can have it delivered on farm to you at a cost of \$35 + GST.

Contact Natalie, our retail manager, if you wish to order Optiguard® and have it delivered on farm (natalie@srvs.co.nz).

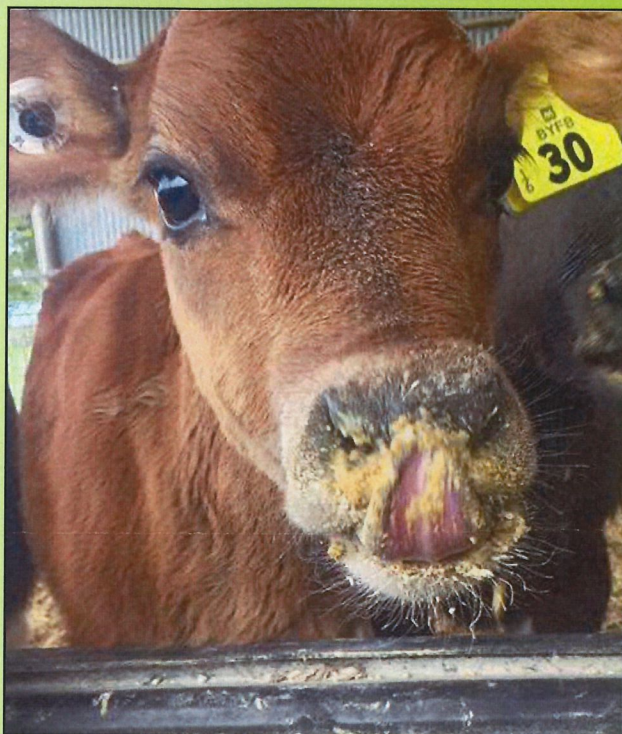


Photo credit: Renae Flett

Why use OptiGuard?

- Calves love the taste
- Prevents scours
- Enhances resistance to disease
- Improves digestion processes
- Calves grow to weight quickly and wean earlier
- Biogro certified input for organics

What is OptiGuard?

OptiGuard is a premium quality 100% natural, finely milled BPM zeolite that is mined and processed locally in the Taupo Volcanic Zone. Natural BPM zeolites have a unique three-dimensional porous structure, allowing them to absorb and release water reversibly. This extensive internal network of pores gives OptiGuard an amazing capacity to absorb toxins and bacterial toxins.

OptiGuard has been specially formulated with a very finely milled particle size. The small particle size of OptiGuard ensures a

How to use OptiGuard?

- Easy to feed, OptiGuard can be mixed into colostrum and milk. Simply stir to reconstitute.
- OptiGuard can also be added to your calf-meal mix, or placed directly into feed troughs to allow calves to self-manage their intake.
- Addition rates from 10gm per calf, per day – or ad-lib as necessary. Calves will self-manage their intake. You cannot over-feed OptiGuard.
- Please ensure calves have access to plenty of fresh water.

BVD FREE IN NEW ZEALAND!

Rumblings in the background before the M. Bovis diagnosis in July of 2017, the National BVD Steering Committee was working on presenting the National BVD Control case to our industry leaders (e.g. DairyNZ, Federated Farmers and Beef & Lamb). Sadly as you can imagine, M. Bovis (an exotic disease) took precedence at this time and the BVD case was put on the back burner. They did however secure funding through the Sustainable Farming Fund grant to continue their research. This meant developing the business case for BVD eradication and 'BVD Free New Zealand' was established. This case is due to be presented to industry leaders in July next year.

Bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD) is estimated to cost New Zealand's 25,000 beef farmers and 12,000 dairy farmers more than \$150 million per year in direct production losses. Even if you already have a robust control programme put in place, BVD is still costing you in the way of routine screening tests and biosecurity measures. So a national control programme will still be of benefit. A number of European countries have already demonstrated that eradicating BVD is both possible and cost effective. At this stage it isn't possible to speculate on what a control programme would look like in NZ, or whether it will even happen but it is definitely a positive step forward.

If there is one benefit of the M.Bovis situation, it is that you have all started thinking about biosecurity. You've all started asking questions of the people who are selling you cattle, and think twice about who drives onto your farm. Compared to M.Bovis, which is actually unlikely to cross fences, or be transmitted via fomites (e.g. trucks, equipment); BVD is very contagious and exposure from your neighbours or co-mingling cattle at sale yards is entirely possible and even likely. Sadly until the disease is uncommon in this country you will always need to be vigilant about protecting your herd and this means regular screening tests, biosecurity measures and vaccination where appropriate.

On dairy farms, monitoring and control of BVD is relatively simple. Whole milking mob screening can take place without the farmer even needing to take a sample and because calves are removed from their mothers, PI animals (if looked for) can be found before they ever come into contact with reproductive age cattle (where BVD infection can be the most devastating). Which often means vaccination isn't even necessary in the adult cows. So I am always surprised when a dairy farm hasn't put into place, or hasn't even thought about, BVD control measures on their farm. I am hoping this is mostly

due to lack of understanding rather than cost, as research in this area has shown time and time again that the cost of monitoring and control is far less than the cost of disease itself. If you haven't got any measures in place, or are wondering if what you're currently doing is the most effective/economic option then please talk to your vet at the time of your RVM about a BVD management plan. Even if eradication is in our future it isn't going to happen overnight and BVD will continue to cause losses if you aren't protecting your herd.

