

Lost Wives

Two guys, one old and one young, are pushing their carts around at Mitre10 when they collide. The old guy says to the young guy: "Sorry about that. I'm looking for my wife, and I guess I wasn't paying attention to where I was going."

The young guy says: "That's OK. It's a coincidence. I'm looking for my wife, too. I can't find her and I'm getting a little worried."

The old guy says: "Well, maybe we can help each other. What does your wife look like?"

The young guy says: "Well, she's 27 years old, tall, red hair, blue eyes, long legs, big boobs, and she's wearing tight white shorts. What does your wife look like?"



The old guy thinks for a bit then says: "Actually, forget about her - let's just look for yours!"

Barber Shop

President George Bush and President Barack Obama ended up at the barbershop at the same time.

As they sat there, each being worked on by a different barber, not a word was spoken.

The barbers were even afraid to start a conversation, for fear it would turn to politics.

As the barbers finished their shaves, the one who had President Bush in his chair reached for the aftershave. President Bush was quick to stop him, saying: "No thanks, my wife will smell that and think I've been in a whorehouse."

The second barber turned to President Obama and said: "How about you, Mr. President?"



Obama replied, "Go ahead, my wife doesn't know what the inside of a whorehouse smells like."

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Giles' new Ute?
You will notice Giles driving around in a new Toyota soon as the old one has had a fairly tough life. Given its ability to carry a load we were tempted by this one though ...

Ethical Dilemma
A priest tells a man who hasn't been to confession for many years that he must give up smoking, drinking and sex if he wants to get into Heaven. The man says he'll try. A few weeks pass and the man visits the priest again. "How's it going?" asks the priest. "Not bad," says the man: "I've given up smoking and drinking but the other day, when my wife bent over to get something out of the freezer, I couldn't help myself and I ravished her then and there" "They don't really like that in Heaven," the priest tells him. "I didn't think they would," the man replies: "They weren't too happy about it in Countdown, either."



April 2011

I've been doing a bit of calf vaccinating lately and while the majority of calves have looked pretty good, some are dreadful. I'm not very good at estimating live weights so generally ask the farmer "what do you reckon these weigh?" or "have you weighed these calves lately?" I would have to say that the vast majority have never weighed their calves.

To give you an idea, August born calves will be around 9 months old now and in theory will be mated in another 6 months. A Jersey calf should be around 160kg at 9 months; a cross-bred calf 180 and a Friesian calf 200kg. For those massive Holstein Friesians, you probably need to add another 20-30 kgs. How many of you know whether your calves are on target? This newsletter has an article from Bas Schouten, who is nationally regarded as an expert in the health and rearing of young stock. He contends that the bovine teenager is the most neglected class of stock on the farm and he may well be right. It's worth a read.

As I write this it is cold, wet and windy outside. As well as hopefully putting a dampener on eczema, this weather may also prompt a few of you to decide to dry off a bit earlier than planned. Don't forget your Dry Cow therapy consultation forms that need to be filled out and returned before you turn up at the clinic wanting to take DCT for the herd. Many thanks to those of you who have already returned your forms; it makes everything a lot easier when we don't have to do rushed 'consults' at the front desk. You aren't doing yourself or your herd any favours by leaving this to the last minute; it's very interesting just how much useful and ultimately valuable information we get from these forms that will help you in the long term. Also, there is a reminder in here about induction consults. I know it's hard to think about that now when you are about to dry off but thanks to the Induction Code, we actually have to do these consults in most cases, by the end of June to fit into the 60 day minimum time period. Remember also that any cow you want induced will need to have been scanned at a time where we can make a reasonable estimate of calving date so if you haven't scanned yet you had better get a move on.

In May our much loved receptionist and former deaf cat owner, Lisa, gets married to 'Barts' and then a month or so later she leaves us for good to become a proper farmer. Best of luck to you both for a long and happy marriage. We will miss you Lisa for your friendliness, your fantastic spelling and just for being you - it's been fun watching you develop from a shy young girl to a stropky 'married' woman!

We already have a replacement employed and on the job learning from Lisa and the rest of the team. Nicola Duthie will be known to many of you and grew up just over the hill on Eltham Road on the farm of her parents Kevin and Olwyn. Welcome aboard Nicola. We will get Nicola to introduce herself properly in a future newsletter.

And just in case you're wondering, I'm not going to talk about The Hurricanes; it's too painful...

That will keep them warm...
John & Adrian are fitness fanatics these days - John with his cycling and Adrian with his Ironman stuff. Both spend long periods of time on their bikes regardless of the weather. With it getting colder now we think we have found the answer to keeping them warm on those cold winter mornings

Farmers Golf Day at Eltham Golf Club
Thursday 2nd June
Entries are limited so get yours in now to avoid missing out.
Men's & Ladies, Golfers & Non-Golfers
Entry Fee \$10.00
Entries to the clinic by 27th May

Clinic & Farm Supplies
Railway Street, Eltham
Ph . (06) 764 8196
www.elthamvetservice.co.nz
Trading Depot
Hollard Engineering,
Victoria Street, Kaponga
Ph. (06) 764 6686
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Office
Joan Hughes John Larkin BBS
Lisa Goldsworthy Jill Watson
Sue Morresey Frank Suter
Nicola Duthie

Yet Another Induction Reminder
Just in case you have forgotten, the window of opportunity to confirm predicted calving dates is closing fast as we get further into the year. Any cows you plan to induce next season need to be pregnancy tested at a stage where we can predict a likely calving date. That diagnosis needs to be recorded and filed for future reference when we do the induction consults around May/June. The only time where we can really accurately date a pregnancy is when the cow is somewhere between 6 and 12 weeks so for most of you that chance to confirm a late calving date is slipping by. If you are getting a lay-scanner or another veterinary practice to scan your herd please make sure that late calvers have their calving dates recorded and available for scrutiny at those consults.

Are your Somatic Cell Counts on the Rise?

This time of year, we always see increases in somatic cell counts due to decreased milk production and also due to a build up in the number of contagious mastitis organisms spreading from cow to cow throughout the season.

Why do bacteria spread and what can we do about the cell counts now?

It has been well known for many years that most of the organisms that cause clinical mastitis in the spring are environmental; Strep uberis being the most common. As the season goes on, people can get slack at or stop teat spraying, liners do not get changed often enough and the few cows with contagious mastitis infections (usually Staph aureus) are able to spread their wealth to others in the herd. By the time January and February roll around and production is dropping, not only are there more cows infected with contagious mastitis but also their lower production means increasing cell counts.

Somatic cells are white blood cells that circulate into all organs to fight infection. When there are infections to fight (bacteria or viruses), the cells increase in number and can get as high as 20 million cells per ml (as measured by SCC counters). Low SCC means that there is unlikely to be any infection present. The SAMM plan considers any cow with a SCC over 150,000 as potentially infected with some sort of bacteria even if her milk is normal on visual inspection. If enough cows in a herd have high SCCs, the bulk milk SCC can go over 400,000 which mean demerits. These can become very costly without quick intervention to lower the bulk milk SCC.

What most people do not realise is that the higher the bulk milk SCC, the more unseen losses and risks exist. Cows with high SCCs make less milk (up to 30% less milk than low SCC cows). The higher the bulk milk SCC, the more likely it will spike over 400,000 for a grade. Higher bulk milk SCC farms have a higher risk for IS grades as well because they are using more antibiotics.

As already mentioned, most of the pathogens causing high SCCs in cows at this time of the season are contagious. Depending upon herd size, a high SCC can indicate that there are some infected cows in the herd potentially posing a risk of spread to uninfected cows. Should you be concerned?

Somatic cell counts creeping over 250,000 need to be watched closely. Fencepost posts alerts for counts over 250,000. Address rising counts before you grade using herd test SCC information. If you do not herd test, you can identify high SCC cows by RMT testing each cow; or you can request a cell count only herd test which costs less than the full test. Once you find the highest SCC cows, what next?

The best thing to do is to find out what organism is causing the high SCC. Lab tests help identify the bugs causing your high SCC. The cost is often less than 3 tubes of mastitis treatment (even the cheaper stuff) so before you try to treat away a high SCC problem, find out what your enemy is.

If you have something like Staph aureus, treatment will often not be successful. Staph aureus is contagious from cow to cow during milking through the milk cluster, milkers' hands, flies, inadequate teat spraying and faulty milking equipment. The more infected cows that exist on a farm, the more it will spread. Cows infected with Staph aureus usually develop high somatic cell counts and in a smaller herd a few of these cows can have a significant impact on the bulk milk SCC. Staph aureus infection forms tiny abscesses in the udders of infected cows, bacteria are shed intermittently and are **often resistant to treatment during lactation AND the dry period as the bacteria tend to hide from the antibiotics in these abscesses.** Treatment during the dry period is usually more effective than during lactation but is dependent upon the age of the cow, length of infection and a number of other factors. It is unrealistic to cull every cow infected with Staph aureus. But the worst offenders -the highest SCCs, repeat clinical cases, should be culled. They are not adding to your bottom line.

What else can you do to control a climbing SCC?

Make sure that you teat spray all season, that enough is being used and that the teats are being adequately sprayed.

Automatic teat sprayers often do not cover teats well and many people who put them in have realised this. Even hand spraying can be inadequate if not done with care. **Teat spray use should be 20ml per cow per milking all season.**

For a 400 cow herd milking twice a day that means 16 litres of teat spray a day.

How often are liners changed? Once a season is usually not enough. After 2500 cow milkings microscopic cracks develop in the rubber which can harbour contagious bacteria even with washing. This is the time of year when many farms reach that 2500 milkings level and from here on out, liners are a great means of spreading infection from cow to cow if not changed.

Money is tight so choose your battles and fight them smartly. Attention to detail does more for milk quality than all of the drugs in your arsenal so act now if your SCC is creeping up:

- Identify the offenders
- Find out what bugs they have through culturing
- Get them out of supply and address them accordingly
- Review your treatment choices with your vet
- Teat spray diligently
- Wear gloves when milking
- Change liners every 2500 uses

Ignoring a high bulk count is simply delaying the inevitable.



VACCINATIONS OVERDUE

Calf vaccinations (two shots a month apart of Lepto and BVD vaccine) should now be complete.

Lepto vaccinations for in-calf heifers and the herd are now due. Please give the girls a call at the clinic to book in your visit.

Farmer Seminars

This year we are running two winter seminars

LAMENESS on Wednesday the 25th May.

This covers costs of lameness, what is normal, how to trim overgrown toes, causes of lameness and how to treat them, cowslips, leg restraint, knife sharpening and farm problem areas.

A practical session on hoof trimming is included.

This course is aimed at farmers who would like to learn to do their own lame cows.

SPRING FIRST AID on Wednesday the 29th June

This covers calvings, retained cleanings, prolapses, downer cows, sick cows and calf care. Practical sessions on calving cows and general procedures like injections, milk sampling and calf drenching are included. This course is aimed at new entrants to farming or people who would like to brush up their skills.

Both seminars will be held at the clinic and will start at around 9.30 and go until 3-3.30. The cost is \$175 including GST and includes lunch and a comprehensive folder of notes. If you are interested, please ring the girls at reception to put your name down.



Liver Fluke

While not a major issue in our area, certainly this side of the saddle, we do get occasional reports of liver damage due to fluke on killing sheets from cull and beef cows that have spent time on the Mangamingi side of the saddle. How significant this is in cattle is debatable; often these cows are in excellent condition and fluke is probably an incidental finding. On occasions liver fluke can cause significant problems in cattle and even more so in sheep; we do see cases of ill-thrift in sheep that has definitely been caused by fluke.

How to treat for fluke and when depends on a number of factors so here is a basic refresher on liver fluke:

Farms at risk are those with areas that remain wet all year i.e. marshy areas, swamps, slow running streams. Some of these areas are up under the mountain. These wet places provide an ideal environment for the particular snails, which transmit the fluke. Often, simply fencing off these areas on a farm can eliminate the problem.

Risk period - Multiplication and transmission of fluke only occurs at over 10 deg C and snail populations drop in winter slowing the overall development. This means most infections occur in late summer and autumn giving rise to disease in autumn and winter.

Cows Liver fluke mainly affects younger stock as cows develop a certain amount of resistance with age. Infection in young cattle impairs growth leading to lowered fertility. In cattle infection can also cause decreased feed conversion efficiency and milk production.

Sheep Develop no resistance to liver fluke. The effects of accumulated damage is usually seen in the winter following the main infection period and during times of climatic stress, pregnancy and, often, feed shortages.

Control This is directed towards the snails. Wet areas can be drained or fenced where practical. However most often control is directed at the flukes in the animal by drenching.

Drenching

Sheep: Treat 1-3 times (depending on severity) over autumn/winter to remove adult fluke and prevent winter disease.

Cattle: Products licensed for use in lactating animals are limited. Therefore treatment is normally done in the dry period.

Products available

Dairy Cows	Ivomec Injection Plus	-	500 kg cow: 10ml at \$7.06
	Kills adult fluke, internal parasites and mites; 14 day Milk and 28 days Meat WHP		
	Genesis Ultra Pour on	-	500 kg cow: 50 mls at \$10.20
	Kills all stages of liver fluke + internal + lice; 91 day Milk and 91 days Meat WHP		
	Arrest C	-	500 kg cow 50 mls at \$14.70
	Kills adult fluke and internal parasites; Milk 35 days & Meat 14 Day WHP		

Young Stock and Beef Cows *As above plus:*

Combat Nitromec Injection	-	\$2.73 per 100 kg (500kg = \$13.63)	Kills all stages of fluke + internal + lice
			56 days Meat WHP, not for use in animals producing/soon to produce (ie. pregnant) milk for human consumption

Sheep

Genesis Ultra Hi Mineral 20L	-	60 kg ewe \$0.45
42 day activity claim against Haemonchus; Meat 56 day WHP		
Arrest Hi Mineral	-	60 kg ewe \$0.13; 30 kg lamb \$0.07

As you can see, with respect to cattle, treatment is not cheap so speak to us before deciding whether you need to treat your herd or not.

