

So you hate your job?



Or...



Unconditional Love

A woman turns to her husband in bed and asks: "Do you only love me because my father died and left me a fortune?"



"That's crazy. Of course not," her husband says: "I'd love you no matter who left you the money."

Post-Calving Pour-on Options:

GENESIS

5.5L \$692.00
(till 30.9.2010)
Normally \$791.00



COMBAT TOPLINE

5L \$645.00
2.5L \$352.00

SHEEP FARMERS

Scabine, lamb vaccine, lamb drench & docking requirements available now

Receive a
**Quality stainless steel
Judge Vista
saucepan**

With qualifying Merial Ancare
lamb drenches
plus be in to win lunch hosted by
Al Brown (**Hunger for the Wild**)
for you and a friend



Thank Heavens for Sheep

*O, I wish I were a dairy cocky. Indeed she'd be the life
I'd find the best worker in the county and marry her for my wife
I'd woo her and court her time allowing just a bit
Before returning to the shed at 4 for lifetime full of shit
And what a life it would really be as the years they slowly pass
Standing in a concrete hole, knowing each cow by it's arse
And your only perk at 3.30 as you daily roll from bed,
Is the occasional warming feeling as one piddles on your head*

*At least you have an office out in the open air all day
Going round and round in circles making summer silage and hay
And after 6 months of gathering it from every where about
You go round and round the other way and feed it all back out
And your social life would be enthralling I've heard many a cocky
say
That the highlight of the week is the regular visits from RMA
Your nitrogen levels are way to high and of your effluent ponds
they bitch
By any onlookers prospects she's a bastard of a way to get rich
So the whole purpose of being a milking cocky has really puzzled
me
Most of you don't even touch the stuff when you have coffee or tea
So with out a doubt my loyalties indeed with sheep will stick
And will agree to disagree that its sheep farmers that are thick.*

Graham Williams

BE PREPARED FOR BLOAT

Call John for
delivery of
200L Blocare 4511



Eltham Vet Services

September 2010

So where will you be on March 20th next year around lunchtime? If Ken Ring is to be believed (he's the Moon man who predicts the weather) nowhere near Canterbury or Marlborough because that's when and where the next big earthquake is going to hit. I heard him on the radio this morning and he was saying that the Christchurch earthquake could easily have been predicted if we followed the path of the moon and looked at where it was when previous big quakes hit. Apparently there is a very similar pattern each time. If that's the case, why didn't he tell us before the quake hit? I have my doubts; although in the arm wrestle to predict the weather between him and Niwa & the Metservice, I would have to say his predictions of a wet horrible September have been closer to the mark. I want to believe the Metservice because they keep saying the weather will be nice apart from occasional isolated disruptions. Well so far this month has had isolated outbreaks of good weather days but the rest have been crap! I hope you are all coping okay with the wet and the mud. Mastitis cases have risen as cows find themselves lying in wet pasture all the time and also the stress of constant wet weather and mud seems to be uncovering those cows with underlying facial eczema damage and Johnne's disease. There has been a definite upsurge in cases of Johnne's and undetected liver damage diagnosed in the last month as poor weather and post calving stress bring those conditions to the forefront. According to most of you feed is getting short too. It's there somewhere under the rain and mud, but unless we get some sun, that's where it's going to stay and that means stock in poorer condition than we would like. And that of course, has ramifications with mating now just over a month away for most of you. Mind you as one of my "glass half full clients" said the other day: "At least if we get crap weather now, perhaps we will get good weather in October and November just in time for mating, which would be the exact opposite of last season". I'm going to go with him and try to stay positive. Inductions have come and gone. If you haven't done your cows by now you have definitely missed the boat unless you had cows calving in December. Thanks to the vast majority of you who accepted and adopted the new code that was thrust upon us all at late notice. And thanks especially for not taking it out on us! We had a very small number who claimed they didn't know there had been changes. Now that may be true although 99% were well aware of it. Unfortunately as the Judge generally says when convicting people who use the excuse they didn't know: "ignorance of the Law is no defence". I'm afraid when it comes to inductions this season, the same applied. Next season it will be even more restrictive because the 60 day rule will apply and we will need to identify and target your induction cows at least 60 days prior to the event. That means for most of you these pre-induction consults will need to take place in late May/early June. Please remember that and make sure you get us to date the late pregnancies at scanning. If they haven't got dates, we can't do them. This season we were allowed to be a little forgiving due to the late notice; next season we won't have that luxury. So, with that in mind this newsletter is all about mating and your options to consider over the next month. We have an incentive there for you to be pro-active this year so read on ...

Tylan/Tyloguard Dose Rate Reminder

The recommended dose rate for Tylan and Tyloguard is 5ml per 100kg. That means that for an average 500kg cow you should be giving 25 mls daily for 3-5 days. More if she's bigger. Unfortunately many of you are so used to jabbing everything with 20mls that you aren't following the prescribed dose rate for these drugs which results in under dosing, poor response to treatment and the chance of creating resistance to one of the best mastitis drugs we've got. Please dose correctly, use intelligently (i.e. don't treat every cow with it - target multiple quarters and older cows) and complete the course.

Tailpainting Starts Now!!

A reminder that whether you like it or not, mating is less than 6 weeks away for most of you and even sooner for some. You should start tail painting and recording heats from 35 days out. For many of you that means NOW

Vaccinations

Included with this newsletter is the form we send each year regarding vaccination requirements. Please complete and return the form to enable us to schedule appropriate visits. Remember no IBR (catarrh) vaccination for calves if they may be exported to China or Mexico as heifers. IBR is a component in our routine BVD vaccine 'Viracare' which gives good protection for calves away grazing against BVD and IBR/Catarrh. So please tell us if there is any chance of export and we will vaccinate your calves with Pregsure instead to protect them against BVD when away grazing.

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
J Larkin 0274 482 585

Veterinarians

Alistair McDougall BVSc - CEO
Giles Gilling BVSc BSc MRCVS
Andrew Weir BVSc, PGDip (Epi)
Jim Robins BVSc, BSc, DipPharm
Polly Otterson BVSc, MSc,
Teresa Carr BVSc
Adrian Clark BVSc
Linley Gilling BVSc
Lindsay Lash BVSc
James Bruce BVSc

Office

Joan Hughes John Larkin BBS
Lisa Goldsworthy Jill Watson
Sue Morresey Frank Suter



BVD TESTING OF BULLS – THIS IS A NO BRAINER

Avoid disasters – make sure all your service bulls are BVD free

BVD is a widespread viral infection of NZ cattle and has a wide ranging impact on cattle performance and hence productivity, including growth of young stock, pregnancy rates, susceptibility to disease and milk production.

A proportion of cattle that get exposed to the virus become carriers for life. These are the animals that become infected whilst still a foetus. These ‘persistently infected’ animals are the major cause of spread of infection and should be detected and culled.

Persistently infected bulls are a great way to spread the virus as their semen contains large amounts of virus. They are also introduced to the herd at a time of greatest potential impact – at mating and first 3 months of pregnancy. The virus affects conception rates and causes increased early embryonic loss. The semen quality of these bulls may also be inferior. If this isn’t sufficient, there are likely to be persistently infected calves born the following spring. These can be hard to rear and may well die before reaching 2 years of life.

To avoid such disasters, **it is essential that all bulls brought in for mating are tested free of BVD virus.**

It is preferable that they are also BVD vaccinated prior to their use.

When purchasing bulls that are advertised as BVD tested, ask to see a veterinary certificate of proof, or the actual laboratory results. Make sure the result says ‘BVD Ag negative’ or ‘BVD PCR negative.’

If they haven’t been BVD tested, purchase them conditional on a negative test. Purchase them early enough to allow this to happen and give time for 2 vaccinations one month apart prior to their use – i.e. purchase at least 6 weeks prior to putting them into the herd.

Given the devastating economic impact a BVD persistently infected bull can have on a herd, it is a no brainer to insist all bulls are BVD free at the time of purchase, even if you have to pay slightly more for such assurance.

For more information on BVD, refer to www.controlbvd.org.nz

BULL POWER - DON'T ECONOMISE!

Earlier in the year Teresa, Andrew and Polly did quite a few InCalf consultations reviewing herds’ breeding performance. While every farm was different, and each had its own strengths and weaknesses, lack of bull power was by far the most common area of weakness. How do we measure the bulls’ performance? Using the Fertility Focus Report we compare a herd’s actual empty rate and estimated 6 week in-calf rate with the industry targets for their length of mating. If the 6 week in calf rate compares much better than does the final empty rate, we look more closely at bull numbers, selection and management.

If you would like to try this yourself, you can download your Fertility Focus Report from MindaPro or Mistro. If you don’t keep electronic records you can phone LIC or Ambreed and ask for one.

The table below gives recommendations for the number of bulls which should be **with the herd at any one time**. More are needed to allow for rotation and rest. You will see that the actual number recommended depends upon the size of the herd and the % which are pregnant when the bulls go in. The % pregnant will depend upon the length of AB, the submission rate and the 3 week non return rate. The 6 week in-calf rate from your last Fertility Focus Report can give some indication but if you are in any doubt about how well AB has gone, you should assume a low percentage - about 40-50% - are pregnant when the bulls go in.

I know that bull hire is expensive but \$650 for a 2 year old bull is less than one empty cow. Don’t economise on bulls, it will cost you more in the long run.



Likely % of herd pregnant at start of bull mating and Bulls needed

| No. cows in milking herd | Very low (less than 40%) | Low (40-50%) | Moderate (50-70%) | High (more than 70%) |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 100 | 2-4 | 2-3 | 2 | 2 |
| 200 | 5-6 | 4-5 | 3 | 2 |
| 300 | 7-8 | 6 | 4-5 | 3 |
| 400 | 9-11 | 7-8 | 5-6 | 3-4 |
| 500 | 12-13 | 9-10 | 7 | 4-5 |
| 600 | 14-15 | 11-12 | 8-9 | 5-6 |

SYNCHRONISING HEIFERS - Your options

If you want to synchronise heifers this season you basically have two options and what option you choose will depend on where they are, how easily you can get an AB technician out there and how much you want to spend.



Option 1 - Two Prostaglandin (PG) Injections 11 days apart (10-12)

This is the lowest cost option, but comes with a few provisos:

We inject all heifers with PG on first day and repeat a second shot 10-12 days later. Heifers will start coming on heat from about the 2nd day after the last shot and the bulk will come on heat over the next 5 days. You can continue to AB longer if you want but generally after 5 days the bull is put out to ‘mop up’ any late cyclers and returns

- Heifers must be cycling. PG’s only work on cycling animals so if your heifers are small and you haven’t seen any action this won’t work.
- Insemination needs to be to observed heats so this option is not suitable if you want to do fixed-time inseminations
- Do you or the AB technician have time to visit every day for 5 days after the second injection to inseminate heifers seen on heat?

So, if your heifers are in good order, cycling and you are able to visit each day for at least 5 days after the second injection this option may be suitable for you. It is cheap at \$5.50 per injection + visit fees.

One last fish-hook however - even in ideal circumstances occasionally we find we get a very poor result with this option. Frankly we don’t know why. Usually, all things being equal it works well when inseminating to observed heat, but be warned, occasionally it just doesn’t go well.

Option 2 - Cidrs

This is your only practical option if you intend fixed-time insemination and works as follows:

- Day 0. Vet visit to insert Cidrs and inject with GnRH
- Day 7. Vet visit to remove Cidrs and inject with PG
- Day 9. Inject with GnRH and inseminate all heifers on that day

Last season the recommendation was to inseminate the day after the last injection but what happened was about 50% of heifers came on heat on Day 9 so the recommendation this year is to do them at the time of the 3rd injection. It also saves you an extra day of yarding. We will usually leave you the 3rd shot to give yourself, saving you another visit fee.

Cost \$38 + visit fees

Pinching

One morning while making breakfast, a man walked up to his wife, pinched her on the bottom, and said: "If you firmed this up, we could get rid of your control top pantyhose." While this offended her, she kept silent.

The next morning, the man woke his wife with a pinch on each of her breasts and said: "You know, if you firmed these up, we could get rid of your bra." This, she decided, was beyond a silent response, so she rolled over and grabbed his crotch.

With a death grip in place, she said: "You know, if you firmed this up, we could get rid of the gardener and the pool man."



Flagpole

A group of managers are given an assignment to measure the height of a flagpole. So they go out to the flagpole with ladders and tape measures, and they're falling off the ladders and dropping the tape measures. The whole thing is just a mess.

An engineer comes along and sees what they're trying to do, walks over, pulls the flagpole out of the ground, lays it flat, measures it from end to end, gives the measurement to one of the managers and walks away. After the engineer has gone, one manager turns to another and laughs: "Isn't that just like an engineer? We're looking for the height and he gives us the length!"

Deodorant Stick

A blonde walks into a pharmacy and asks the assistant for some bottom deodorant.

The pharmacist, a little bemused, explains to the woman that they don't sell bottom deodorant, and never have.

Unfazed, the blonde assures the pharmacist that she has been buying the stuff from this store on a regular basis, and would like some more.

"I'm sorry," says the pharmacist: "we don't have any."

"But I always get it here," says the blonde. "Do you have the container it comes in?" the pharmacist asks.

"Yes!" the blonde replies: "I'll go and get it." She returns with the container and hands it to the pharmacist who looks at it and says:

"This is just a normal stick of underarm deodorant."

The annoyed blonde snatches the container back and reads out loud from the container: "To apply, push up bottom."



CIDRS OR OVSYNCH?

So which program should you use?

Obviously OvSynch is cheaper and less hassle so was very attractive especially last year. In some herds we have found it to be very successful. In other herds less so.

OvSynch will deliver lower conception rates on average than CidrSynch. If your cows are in good condition and have been calved more than 40 days, there is a chance it will deliver results comparable with Cidrs. On a few farms we have achieved 50% conception to the fixed-time insemination with OvSynch. However I believe those cows were not truly anoestrus, rather what I would term 'sub-oestrus' and just needed a "kick" to get them going, which is why OvSynch worked so well for them.

However in truly anoestrus cows the evidence is overwhelming that added use of a Cidr will consistently deliver better conception rates than OvSynch on its own and would certainly be our recommended treatment option in thinner and/or younger cows that are likely to have very little activity on their ovaries. There is obviously a greater up front cost to this but the return on investment will outweigh the cost of treatment especially early in the mating season.

The earlier you treat non-cycling cows the greater the initial cost obviously, but also the greater the return in terms of increased days in milk the following season which translates to more money.

So those are your choices. Have a chat with your vet to decide what is the best option for you and when is the best time to treat.

Please note that due to a general apathy when it comes to returning injection guns and unused drugs, there is a 7 day amnesty for their return. If you haven't returned the left over 3rd shots within 7 days of giving that injection you will be charged for what we left behind and \$30 for the missing injection guns. They are of no use to us returned 2 months later because in the meantime we have had to buy more guns to replace the ones you haven't returned!!

BLOAT

With all the recent rain, warmth and (hopefully) some sunshine soon, we could see an explosion of new grass.

With that comes Bloat so below is a re-print of some bloat basics from previous newsletters.

Pasture bloat is a potentially fatal condition that typically affects cattle grazing pastures with high clover content. The problem is due to the normal gas bubbles produced during digestion being unable to coalesce, forming stable foam in the rumen rather than free gas. This causes an increase in ruminal pressure which stimulates increased rumen movements, worsening the formation of foam. The frothiness causes a physical obstruction that prevents the normal burping reflex causing the cow to bloat up. Bloat may occur as soon as one hour after being let onto bloatagenic pasture. **Control options include:**

Grazing and pasture manipulation - Several techniques are available. In severe challenge situations grazing can be restricted to 20 minute sessions on high bloating pasture before stock are shifted onto less bloating pasture. Strip grazing can be used to control access to pasture. Roughage content in the diet can be increased by feeding out straw or hay. Sward composition can be manipulated to increase the grass to legume ratio. Pasture can be allowed to mature to increase lignification of the stems, reducing leaf. Hungry cattle can be fed hay or straw prior to introducing to bloating pasture to prevent rapid intakes of dangerous pasture.

Surfactants - drench twice daily at milking or add to water troughs. Can be added to lick blocks or sprayed onto pasture. Many products are available, including **Blocare, Bloatenz or Bloataid**.

Ionophores – Rumensin can be drenched once daily, added to the water, as a pre-mix or as a capsule/bullet. Start two weeks before bloat challenge. Ionophores reduce the amount of methane and carbon dioxide gas produced in the rumen by altering the rumen bacterial population. It also lessens the bacterial slime production that contributes to the foam formation. Ionophores do not remove foam once it has been produced. More expensive, and not considered to be effective in the face of a severe outbreak of bloat, but has the side-effect of increasing production!

Use of oils and fats - these can be drenched twice daily at milking time. Can mix with water and spray onto pasture that is providing part or all of daily allowance. Can also add to water troughs. **Paraffin oil** is an example. Rather old-fashioned approach and an expensive option.

WHEN BLOAT STRIKES:

- 1) DON'T PANIC. Have an action plan; use a knapsack and gun set on high dose or bottles with doses made up ready
- 2) SLOWLY move all the cattle off the paddock
- 3) Use high volumes of diluted detergents or liquid Paraffin oil. NEVER use undiluted bloat detergents - as little as 300mls can be fatal
- 4) Hugely bloated cows that are at risk of going down won't last long - stab them!!
 - a) Use a sharp knife, preferably a bloat knife with a guard plate.
 - b) Stab; LEFT SIDE ONLY, one hand span behind the last rib, one hand below the spine where there is maximum pressure.
 - c) A firm stab, and then let the gas and foam escape.
 - d) Treat the animal with a high volume of bloat detergent or liquid paraffin.
 - e) Administer an antibiotic; book a visit to get large wounds stitched a few hours later.



METRICHECKING AND AT-RISK COWS

I think it would be fair to say that most of you are by now well aware of the benefits of metrichecking cows and treating them with Metricure 4-6 weeks prior to mating. Many of you have chosen to check your whole herds in recent years and on some farms this has uncovered a significant number of cows that would otherwise have been left undiagnosed and either got in calf late or not at all due to an undiscovered uterine infection.

For others though, all whole herd metrichecking did was identify cows they already had on their list of "At-Risk" cows and for them it could rightly be argued that checking the whole herd was a waste of money.

You need to decide which group you belong to and then plan your next step.

If you have had a lot of retained cleanings (RFM's) the most recent advice would suggest that you treat these "At-Risk" cows in batches 2-4 weeks after calving. The rest of the herd can be done closer to mating (preferably at least 4 weeks before; we really don't want to be treating and examining dirty cows a week before mating when we are concentrating on non-cyclers). Leaving dirty or At-Risk cows until then is not a good idea because there is no way they will be clean and ready to conceive at the start of AB if you leave them until then.

Put your At-Risk cows up early.

Remember them?

At-Risk cows are any cows that have a higher risk of uterine damage/infection after calving, which if left untreated, will have a significant impact on whether they get in calf either late or at all. We used to encourage you to record all those cows. Writing stuff down doesn't cost you anything except a little time. I would suggest that in the interests of saving money, if nothing else, you start recording your "At-Risk" cows once again.

At-Risk cows include any cows that had:

- Abnormal calving (e.g. assisted, twins, slips, inductions, dead calves, calving paralysis)
- Retained Foetal membranes
- Vaginal discharge
- Metabolic disease (e.g. milk fever)

These cows have a much higher risk of developing endometritis and should be checked and in most cases treated with Metricure **2-4 weeks after calving** so they are cleaned up and ready to conceive come mating time.

In the case of RFM's in particular, our advice is that even if they appear to have cleaned up there is a strong probability that they have a low-grade uterine infection and it is best to routinely treat them with Metricure at this 2-4 week period. So identify and record those cows as they occur, and put them up for examination and/or treatment **2-4 weeks after calving**.

For those of you who still want it, we will be available to check your whole herd.

For some of you, we also have the option of you purchasing your own Metrichecker and doing the job yourself, thereby saving on vet fees. If you are an AB technician you can even treat them yourself after discussion with your vet otherwise just pull them aside and get us in to treat them the following day.

This option won't suit all of you so have a chat with your area vet - even with an improved payout this season I imagine you are still being encouraged to closely monitor all costs, so it may be an option worth considering.

IRD Inspector

At the end of the tax year, the IRD office sent an inspector to audit the books of a local hospital. While the IRD agent was checking the books he turned to the CEO of the hospital and said, "I notice you buy a lot of bandages. What do you do with the end of the roll when there's too little left to be of any use?"

"Good question," noted the CEO. "We save them up and send them back to the bandage company and every now and then they send us a free box of bandages."

"Oh," replied the auditor, somewhat disappointed that his unusual question had a practical answer. But on he went, in his obnoxious way. "What about all these plaster purchases? What do you do with what's left over after setting a cast on a patient?"

"Ah, yes," replied the CEO, realising that the inspector was trying to trap him with an unanswerable question. "We save it and send it back to the manufacturer, and every now and then they send us a free package of plaster."

"I see," replied the auditor, thinking hard about how he could fluster the know-it-all CEO. "Well," he went on, "What do you do with all the leftover foreskins from the circumcisions you perform?"

"Here, too, we do not waste," answered the CEO. "We save all the little foreskins and send them to the IRD Office, and about once a year they send us a complete dick."



NON CYCLERS - TREAT THEM EARLY

The new induction code recently launched aims to reduce inductions to less than 4% per herd by 2012. This means using alternative methods to tighten calving pattern becomes even more important.

Bringing late calving cows forward will need to be a priority on many farms this year as we work towards the induction targets. One way to tighten calving pattern is to treat non-cyclers early instead of waiting for them to start cycling on their own, often many weeks later.

By tail painting your herd 35 days before mating and recording heats, you can have a very good idea of the anoestrous cows in your herd before mating starts. This allows us to develop a plan to deal with them early and get maximum benefit from the intervention.

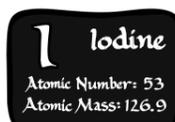
Research in the Waikato has highlighted the value of anoestrus treatment at the planned start of mating (PSM). The study has shown that treating with a CIDR programme at PSM advances conception date (and subsequent calving date) by 10 – 16 days. This means cows calve earlier and the extra days in milk more than cover the cost of treatment.

An early conversation around the subject now will prove ultimately far more valuable, and constructive, than a reflective one in autumn at scanning time, or next spring when calving drags out. Once late September/early October arrives, much of the scene on the farm is set for how mating (and next season's calving) will play out – body condition score can't be changed much and feed levels are at the mercy of the weather.

Early anoestrus intervention provides an opportunity to impact herd reproductive outcomes before mating starts. This in turn maximises the farm's production in the following season.

As an added incentive we are throwing in a draw for a \$2000 travel voucher for those who treat their non-cyclers on or before the start of mating. Look for the notice in this newsletter.

DON'T FORGET THE IODINE



Just a reminder that addition of stock iodine to the water can be of help in getting cows cycling.

It's not a silver bullet but it's one of those oldies that have been shown over the years to be of benefit. What's more, it's cheap and easy to administer in the water so why wouldn't you give it a go?

Iodine levels will have a direct effect on the thyroid gland and production of thyroid hormones (T4) and if low will have an adverse effect on cycling.

We generally don't bother to test for it (actually we test T4 levels) because to be honest it's more expensive to test for it than it is to chuck some in the water.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD IN BOARDROOM

As you probably know, our long serving chairman, Alistair Abbott retired that position at this year's AGM.

A new chairman and deputy chairman were elected by the board at our August meeting.

We are thrilled to welcome our new chairman **Phil Muir** and deputy chairman **Darryl Johnson**.

We look forward to working with you both and continuing the long and fruitful relationship between the board and the employees at Eltham Vets.

WORM ALERT



The past winter was unusually mild with few frosts - ideal conditions for survival of worm larvae.

We are seeing high worm infestations in some herds with poorly milking light 2 year olds. Worm infestation is just one reason why your heifers might be doing badly and you may

wish to discuss other reasons with one of our vets.

A cheap and easy way to check if worms *are* eating up your profits is to bring us 100ml of milk from a well mixed vat. The level of worm antibodies in the milk is directly related to the level of worm infestation in the herd and will tell us whether it will pay you to worm all, some or none of the herd. The test costs \$45 to do.

NON-CYCLERS - CIDRS OR OVSYNCH?

So how are you going to treat your non-cyclers this year and when? Advice from all professionals should be the same when talking about non-cyclers; the earlier you do it the greater cost benefit you will get.

Remember we are talking about a treatment plan that will result in more days in milk the following season and therefore greater return 12 months down the line. While it's always tempting to leave your non-cyclers "a bit longer" to reduce the up front cost you should bear in mind that leaving non or late cyclers until the end of AB will hit you harder in the pocket in terms of milk production the following season and probably result in you needing to treat even more cows the following year as well. Non-cycling cows are a natural occurrence in the seasonal dairy system. The average number of cows not seen cycling prior to mating is about 20% nationwide so unless you are one of the lucky ones who gets very few the only question you should be asking yourself is how will I treat them.

If you decide to be proactive and deal with these cows you have two options:

- OvSynch on its own OR
- with the addition of a Cidr.

We will call the programs "OvSynch" and if we add a Cidr we will call it "CidrSynch". There is a third twist with the CidrSynch option that I will get to in due course.

How do the programs work? A refresher:

OvSynch: Day 0 - line up all non-cycling cows for their 1st injection of "OvSynch 1" by vet
Day 7 - give all cows an injection of PG "OvSynch 2" by vet (we will leave you 3rd shot at this visit)
Day 9 - all cows receive their final injection, "OvSynch 3", generally at evening milking
Day 10 - fixed time insemination of all cows in the morning

A couple of points:

In past years we recommended that if a cow came on after the 1st injection you should pull her out and inseminate her thus removing her from the program. Recent findings would suggest that the conception rate to this insemination after the 1st shot is very low, perhaps only about 18%. The advice nowadays is that those cows should not be removed and stay in the program at least until after the 2nd shot.

The only exception to this advice regarding the 1st shot would be if you are using OvSynch later in the mating season, say after 3 or 4 weeks. In that case, it's always possible she has cycled earlier and been missed in which case this heat could be a 'real' one and you can inseminate her if you wish (especially if she was an older cow in good condition).

Cost of OvSynch is **\$23 per cow plus visit fees**.

CidrSynch:

Essentially do the OvSynch program but on day one put in a Cidr. If you want cows individually examined this does attract an extra cost of \$3.75 per cow. The advice these days is that unless a cow has obviously cycled (i.e. has a 'CL') examination is not cost effective (how many times have we examined a cow, thought she was going to come on and left her only to return 2-3 weeks later and put in a Cidr because she never came on? Not treating her the first time has just cost you 3 weeks potential milk production)

So the program is: Day 0 - vet visit to insert Cidr and inject with OvSynch 1
Day 7 - vet visit to remove Cidrs and inject OvSynch 2 (we will leave you 3rd shot at this visit)
Day 9 - farmer inject cows with OvSynch 3 at evening milking
Day 10 - Fixed time insemination of all cows, generally in the morning.

Cost of CidrSynch is **\$38 per cow + visits** + examination fees if applicable

These prices include GST so will go up by 2.5% on 1st October.

There is a twist to this program. There is an option of an extra injection on day 7. For another \$6 we add an injection of PMSG as well as the PG at day 7, which has been shown to increase conception rates further, perhaps as much as another 10%, but only in the following group of cows:

Results of last season's use of the added PMSG at day 7 has shown, according to Scott McDougall of Morrinsville, that in thin cows and cows calved less than 40 days at time of treatment conception rates do indeed increase and the added cost is beneficial in this group of cows. In cows calved more than 40 days and/or in good condition, this extra injection was not shown to be cost effective.

So perhaps if you have a number of late calvers and very thin cows you should seriously consider adding the extra injection on day 7 to increase the chances of conception for those cows. We call this option "CidrSynch Plus"

Continued overleaf



**Request for Empty 60L Plastic Drums
Wanting to get rid of those old drums??
Frank is doing a great job of recycling.
Drop drums to the clinic and someone will benefit from his ingenuity!**