

CANCER EYE

The commonest bovine cancer that we see and can actually do something about is cancer eye, otherwise known as squamous cell carcinoma. It usually begins as a benign smooth plaque anywhere on the white surfaces of the eyelids, but is most often seen on the margin of the third eyelid (the flap in the corner of the eye that comes across when they blink.) It can progress to a knobby wart like lesion which then breaks open and ulcerates, leading to bleeding and/or infected discharges – this is often the stage when we are called.

Cancer eye is a malignant cancer and can spread into the eyeball itself (treating this may mean removal of the whole eyeball and most of the tissues in the eye socket), the eyelids, the bones of the eye socket and the lymph glands of the head and neck. Any spread into these deeper structures means condemnation of the whole animal at the works.

Call us early – when you see the first signs on the third eyelid. At this stage it is a simple head bale job to remove it, and most times, that's a cure. Metastatic spread can occur even in the early stages, but as a rule, delaying treatment increases the chance that your cow is fit only for dog tucker, not hamburgers; let alone a further lactation or two. The other important point is welfare – it is not acceptable to leave these until they are a real mess when early intervention could prevent unnecessary pain and discomfort.

CHANGES TO 'WORKS CERTIFICATES'

The 'Fitness of livestock for transport veterinary declaration', (usually referred to as a 'Works Certificate') has been revised. Some of the changes will affect you.

1. The form now requires the farm's NAIT number.
2. The maximum duration of the certificate is 7 days.
If the animal doesn't go within 7 days it must be re-examined and a new certificate issued.
3. When an animal is deemed not fit for transport, the vet is now required to specify which one of treatment, home kill, euthanasia or petfood is appropriate and you may be asked to sign that you have been told.

The biggest changes are to the 'Animal owner/person in charge declaration' which you sign. It now states that you will:

1. Comply with the transport instructions on the form and the expiry date.
2. Advise the transport operator of the transport instructions.

This is important. If the certificate is endorsed 'Last on/first off' the truckies may have to change their route.

If the certificate is endorsed 'Same day kill' and the works are not doing night shift, your cow will need to arrive early enough to be killed that day and not held overnight standing on concrete for up to 14 hours. Failure to comply with the transport instructions can lead to a \$500 on-the-spot infringement fine for you or the truckie.

3. Advise the works, or their agent, that this animal has a veterinary certificate and should be considered for priority slaughter.
4. Not transport the animal if its condition changes without seeking further veterinary advice.

So which animals need certificates? The 2016 Code of Welfare says:

"Animals must not be transported if they display any injuries, signs of disease, abnormal behaviour or physical abnormalities which could compromise their welfare during the journey, unless a veterinary declaration of fitness for transport has been completed".



Since her new husband is so old, Jenny decides that after their wedding she and Roger should have separate bedrooms, because she is concerned that her new but aged husband may over-exert himself if they spend the entire night together.

After the wedding festivities Jenny prepares herself for bed and the expected knock on the door. Sure enough the knock comes, the door opens and there is Roger, her 85-year-old groom, ready for action. They unite as one. All goes well, Roger takes leave of his bride, and she prepares to go to sleep. After a few minutes, Jenny hears another knock on her bedroom door, and it's Roger. Again he is ready for more 'action'.

Somewhat surprised, Jenny consents for more coupling.

When the newlyweds are done, Roger kisses his bride, bids her a fond good night and leaves.

She is set to go to sleep again, but, aha, you guessed it - Roger is back again, rapping on the door and is as fresh as a 25-year-old, ready for more 'action'. And, once more they enjoy each other.

But as Roger gets set to leave again, his young bride says to him, 'I am thoroughly impressed that at your age you can perform so well and so often. I have been with guys less than a third of your age who were only good once. You are truly a great lover, Roger.'

Roger, somewhat embarrassed, turns to Jenny and says:

'You mean I was here already?'

After marrying a young woman, a 90-year-old man told his doctor that they were expecting a baby.

"Let me tell you a story," said the doctor.

"An absent-minded fellow went hunting, but instead of a gun, he brought an umbrella.

Suddenly a bear charged at him.

Pointing his umbrella at the bear, he shot and killed it on the spot."

"Impossible!" the Old Man said

"Somebody else must have shot that bear."

"Exactly," replied the doctor.



PINKEYE IN CATTLE



Pinkeye in cattle is a painful & highly infectious disease which can reduce growth rates and severely disrupt management. It will cause temporary blindness in many animals and permanent blindness in some. In a serious outbreak, a high percentage of the mob can be affected. The hot summer months are generally the worst time of the year for pinkeye.

Unusually, this year we saw quite a lot of pinkeye in late spring due to those horrible winds drying everything out but generally it is later in summer.

The main cause in cattle is a bacterium called *Moraxella bovis* (different from the chlamydial cause in sheep).

Young cattle are particularly vulnerable and there are a number of seasonal environmental and management factors which can predispose your cattle to a pinkeye outbreak. These include physical irritants such as wind, dust and pollen, strong UV light, nuisance fly, humid weather, thistles or other stinky vegetation and feeding hay. Bought in stock can introduce infection, while high stocking density can increase spread and poor nutrition can reduce the immune response to infection.

Damage to the eye often allows the bacteria in and then you get the characteristic symptoms of Pinkeye. The first signs will be weepy eyes and an aversion to strong light. As the disease progresses the conjunctiva (pink tissue around the eyeball) become inflamed and the eye becomes opaque (leading to the term "Pinkeye").

Pinkeye is an animal welfare issue, causing prolonged and serious pain. An outbreak can lead to significant economic and production losses through depressed growth rates, loss of milk production, possible culls and disruption to seasonal grazing management. On top of that are the actual treatment costs of ointments and antibiotics.

When dealing with a Pinkeye outbreak it is important to act quickly. This is in the interests of animal welfare, to minimise spread and to reduce production losses. The sooner you recognise it and treat it the more likely you are to have a successful outcome.



Consult us about treatments - most cases respond well to a course of pink eye ointment; some may require further antibiotics and some might even require surgery to save a badly damaged eye.

Note that bringing cattle into the yards for treatment can actually help spread the disease through exposure to dust and the close proximity of other animals, so nothing is ever easy! Ideally, animals treated with antibiotics should be put out into clean pasture and left to recover at low stocking densities. Often however, by the time you realise you have an outbreak and not just a one-off case the disease will be well spread throughout the herd

and it is going to be difficult if not impossible to spread infected cattle out at low stocking rates all over the farm.

In terms of prevention, there is no single action that will completely prevent the disease. A single-shot vaccine is available but is not particularly effective once an outbreak is established. If you suffer historically from pinkeye then a vaccination 3-6 weeks before the usual time an outbreak occurs is very effective.

Other measures are recommended as follows:

- Attempt to minimise exposure to dry, dusty conditions
- Provide access to shelter from strong light
- Control nuisance fly
- Manage pasture to help prevent physical eye damage from thistle and similar plants
- Minimise close contact between cattle
- Maintain good stock condition

Congratulations

to our trading manager John Larkin who recently competed in his second half-Ironman in Tauranga and survived to tell the tale. He's now apparently setting his sights on a full Ironman in Taupo in March. Good Lord John, have you gone mad? You're putting the rest of us to shame!



Purchase 5 Litre
BOSS PourOn
for cattle
& receive a
Selwyn soft shell
Jacket

