

Tirau Veterinary Centre Ltd

April 2014



Condition, Condition, Condition

It is most important that cow condition is maintained at this time of year, albeit very difficult in the current situation, there is no other window to achieve that all important BCS5 at calving. It is important that condition is increased before the last month of pregnancy to avoid production losses in the coming season. Once the foetus gets to a certain size, the cow's intake capacity is restricted.

Light cows are slow to come in season and have poor conception rates to their first heats. **It takes a month of ad lib feeding to put half a condition score on a cow.** Most cows now only have a couple of months to gain this weight since it is very difficult for a cow to gain weight in the last month of pregnancy due to foetal demands and restricted intake capacity.

As well as sourcing any feed you can and drying off early, you can super-charge weight gain in your lighter cows by using **rumenox**, in the form of either an individual capsule, trough treatment or powder on feed. Rumenox works by improving the digestive efficiency of the rumen in converting feed into energy. The result is 7 – 15% more energy from pasture or supplementary feeds, and less gas produced. Therefore the cow can use this extra energy for weight gain, increased production, combating disease, and is an aid in the control of bloat.

If feeding maize silage it is also

important to add causmag, salt and some limeflour. The limeflour tops up the very low calcium content of the maize silage. Cows with low blood magnesium levels struggle to gain weight through the winter as this mineral is a co enzyme of the energy pathways. Magnesium levels are easily monitored by blood sampling.

Worm drenching cows at this time of the year has consistently proved considerable financial payback through increased production in the following year. The last thing you want is a worm burden soaking up the nutrition from all that expensive feed you've bought.

Optimising cow condition at calving will result in easier calving, fewer downer cows, improved production, higher pregnancy rates and earlier conception.



OF NOTE:

- > Typical of recent years, the Facial Eczema Spore levels are still high and are expected to remain dangerous for at least another few weeks. If your Zinc bullets are running out shortly then talk to us about other options to cover your animals for the last few weeks. Or if you are wondering about different options around drying off then give us a call!
- > Herd leptospirosis time is looming. If you have a TB test coming up we can easily coordinate vaccination with the reading day. Otherwise let us know a time that suits. Don't forget ALL stock require a booster EVERY year so this includes your R2 heifers/beefies/bulls. This annual booster is vital for preventing the carrier state and also in preventing a potential OSH fine of up to \$100,000 if human infection follows non-compliance.

Copper Toxicity

Of particular note this year due to increased supplement feeding is copper levels in your stock. PKE contains relatively high levels of copper therefore if you have been feeding high quantities (>3kg per cow per day) for a long period of time it is vital you have liver samples analysed prior to any supplementation. Copper toxicity is characterized by abdominal pain, diarrhoea, dehydration, shock, red urine, weakness, recumbency, anaemia and death. The signs are due to gastroenteritis, liver insufficiency, red blood cell breakdown and then kidney failure. If death does not result early on from liver damage the animals may succumb to kidney failure later.

A check of other trace elements via either bloods or liver biopsies are also recommended. Any deficiencies will hold your cows back through impaired weight gain, increased susceptibility to disease, reduced production and reproduction.

Liver sampling can be undertaken either on farm or very simply via your cull cows through the abattoir. Simply ask us for a form to fill out and fax to the abattoir. Liver samples provide far more information on copper status than bloods. The liver is the storage organ for copper therefore you can gather a longer term picture, whereas blood copper levels only apply to the time of sampling. These samples will also provide information on facial eczema damage and liver fluke infestation.

Sample numbers need to be 8-10 animals to obtain a representative answer.

Dry Off time is one of the best times to apply a strategic herd drench. Worms burdens at this time of year will prevent weight gains. This is particularly Important after a drought season. Having a good parasite clean out will also have follow on effects on spring production and of course reproduction due to improved condition and lowered stressors. Be careful wasting money on copycat generic products. Talk to us today about the best option for your herd!

The Anniversary

A woman awakes during the night to find that her husband is not in their bed. She puts on her dressing gown and goes downstairs to look for him.

She finds him sitting at the kitchen table with a hot cup of coffee in front of him.

He appears to be in deep thought, just staring at the wall. She watches as he wipes a tear from his eye and takes a sip of his coffee.

"Whats the matter, dear?" she whispers as she steps into the room, "why are you down here at this time of night?"

The husband looks up from his coffee, "I am just remembering when we first met 20 years ago and started dating. You were only 16. Do you remember back then?" he says solemnly.

The wife is touched to tears thinking that her husband is so caring, so sensitive.

"Yes, I do" she replies.

The husband pauses. The words were not coming easily..."Do you remember your father catching us in the back seat of my car?"

"yes, I remember!" said the wife, lowering herself into a chair beside him.

The husband continues. "Do you remember when he shoved the shotgun in my face and said, "Either you marry my daughter, or I will send you to jail for 20 years!"

"I remember that too" she replies softly.

He wipes another tear from his cheek and says...

"I would have been released today."

