



VET notes

YOUR TOTALLY VETS NEWSLETTER ALL ABOUT ANIMALS ON YOUR FARM

JUNE 2012



Above: Shaun Christison caught the winning 7.05kg snapper

Totally Vets fishing tournament

Barney Askin

In all the years we have been running this event, this was possibly the most enjoyable one. The weather gods were on our side and there were some large hauls of fish as well as some excellent specimens caught.

Congratulations to Shaun Christison who landed a magnificent 7.05kg Snapper and won the tournament.

This year we were lucky enough to have "Mark the fish filleter" from Levin who did an amazing job filleting most of the fish caught on the day and making it look very easy. A huge thank you to him and hopefully we will be able to get him back next year.

Thank you once again to the Whanganui Boat club for their hospitality and to the coastguard for watching out for us.

Finally, thank you to all of our sponsors without whom it would not be possible to run this event.

See you all next year!

Our Aimee's off to Hawaii

Paul Wiseman

Aimee Perrett will be competing at the Ironman World Championships in Kona, Hawaii on October 13th. Aimee leads the Totally Vets management team as well as sorting our Human Resource issues. You'd think all that might be enough in itself to keep one person busy!

Aimee has always been a keen runner and took to Masters swimming after she and her family arrived in New Zealand in 2003. She tried her hand at triathlon in 2005 and was hooked. Having a young family at the time meant she wasn't able to commit to training until 2008 when she did her first Half Ironman in Taupo. After another gap, her friends convinced her to enter Ironman NZ in Taupo in March this year. Due to the rampaging weather that weekend, the event was cut to a Half Ironman, but was still considered a qualifying event for the World Champs. With a third placing and some luck, Aimee qualified and signed her name on the dotted line, as part of the NZ Age Group team going to Hawaii. This is a dream come true for Aimee, who had "qualify for Kona" on her bucket list.

Aimee's first ever Ironman will be at the World Champs - a scary thought. However, her infectious enthusiasm and excitement counters the daunting prospect of competing

in the 3.8km swim, 180km bike ride and 42.2km run in 28°C!

Her passion for triathlon is a long way from her eventing background and completing a Zoology degree in the effect colour perception has on the dietary choice of laboratory mice! By the way, the mice were the third choice of animals to study after voles and red squirrels were discovered to be in short supply.

"I love competition and the challenge of an Ironman" she said. Although they think she's a bit loopy, her two boys, Fin and Corey and husband Sean are right behind her. She also has fantastic support from a very loyal and dedicated group of triathletes in Feilding and Palmerston North, which really helps with the training, particularly over the winter months.

Entry to the Hawaii Ironman is not found in a Weetbix pack! It takes dedication, willpower, sacrifice and hours and hours of hard work and training. Your workmates and friends at Totally Vets are all barracking for you Aimee.





Totally Vets current stock health

Dairy

Parasitism has been an issue for R1 heifers over the summer and is predicted to remain an issue going into winter. Keep drench intervals to 4-5 weeks and a June drench may require a follow-up in July. Continue to appraise the R1 heifers for signs of illthrift.

Heifer mastitis in early lactation is not only a nuisance; it is also a permanent lifetime production loser. Of the options known to minimise heifer mastitis, teatsealing four to six weeks before the planned start of calving is proven to be effective and economic. Training the heifers to the shed before the day of treatment makes the whole process an awful lot easier.



HA HA What the?

A new trend has exploded in China's upper class where people are transforming their pets into miniature versions of animals or just dyeing them crazy colours. Pandas seem to be a big hit and obviously their favourite. It's become a huge industry and people are spending thousands on professional hair dyes, salon cuts, accessories, you name it!



And you thought you'd seen everything!

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NAIT scheme - just around the corner!

Pip Stewart

The National Animal Identification and Tracing scheme (NAIT) will be mandatory for cattle from 1 July 2012, and for deer from 1 March 2013.

REQUIREMENTS FOR INDIVIDUALS

Newborn animals must be tagged within 180 days of birth or before they are moved to another NAIT number, whichever is sooner. This is the only tag an animal will need - there is no longer a barcode required.

Animals exempt from tagging include:

- Bobby calves (less than 30 days old) going direct to meat processors, with a direct-to-slaughter tag
- Animals that are impractical to tag which are being transported direct to a meat processor, and which have an official Animal Health Board (AHB) primary barcode tag. An impractical-to-tag levy of \$13 per head excluding GST will apply to these animals

GET YOUR NAIT NUMBER

People in charge of animals need to register in the NAIT IT System and get a NAIT number. A NAIT number is different to an AHB herd number or dairy participant code.

REGISTER YOUR ANIMALS

Animals must be registered in the NAIT IT System within one week of being tagged.

You can register your animals in the NAIT IT System now on a voluntary basis.

ANIMAL MOVEMENTS

Animal movements must be recorded when the person in charge of animals or the NAIT location changes; for example, if animals are bought, sold, sent off for grazing or sent to the meat processors.

Movements must be recorded in the NAIT IT System within two days of the movement taking place.

The right ear is preferred as meat processing facilities, sale yards and many farmers use fixed panel readers with scanning capability on the right-hand side of the animal.

For more information, please visit the NAIT website on www.nait.co.nz

From 1 July 2012 (applies to all cattle)*

	AHB-approved primary (barcode) tag	NAIT-approved primary (RFID) tag	Approved secondary tag
Moving cattle to slaughter	Not required	✓	Not required
Moving cattle for sale or grazing	Not required	✓	Not required
Cattle remaining on property	Not required	✓	Not required

Key

✓ Required

* Bobby calves (animals less than 30 days old going directly to slaughter) require a tag issued by the meat processing companies.

Capital stock have a three-year grace period for NAIT-approved RFID tags, unless being moved off-farm. Newborns must be tagged within 180 days of birth, or prior to their first off-farm movement.



Those of you with an early calving start date will need to be setting a date to vaccinate your cows to protect your heifer replacements and bobbies from the ravages of Rotavirus scours. Rotavec® Corona vaccine administration is recommended three weeks before the planned start of calving.

Sheep & Beef

Recently we have seen a number of cases of Salmonella in ewes. If you are getting

random and/or sporadic deaths, Salmonella infection could be the cause. Remember that if this is the case, act sooner rather than later. Salmonella typically does not occur as an outbreak but kills stock here and there over time. Before you know it, a substantial percentage of your flock could be lost. Post mortems are well worth the investment to confirm a diagnosis and instigate prevention or treatment - see last month's article on the value of sick and dead animals.

We have also found high nitrate levels in crops. If you are unsure of your own levels, it's easy to get them tested. Just bring in a shopping-bag's worth of crop to either clinic and we will send it off for testing. Results are generally back within the day if samples are submitted before midday.



Hind pregnancy-scanning

Hamish Pike

Just a reminder that if you are planning to scan your hinds for pregnancy, please book with us well in advance.

Hinds can be diagnosed in fawn from 30 days pregnant until around 120 days pregnant. After 120 days, the pregnancy tends to drop down into the abdomen, increasing the risk of calling a pregnant hind dry.

In other words, it is best to scan hinds 30 days after the stag was removed, and before 120 days after the stag was introduced.

For a three-cycle mating, this leaves only a three-week window for scanning.

For example:

Stag in	10 th March
Stag out	13 th May
Scanning date	3 rd June to 8 th July

Please do not hesitate to phone your vet regarding dates, or if you are unsure about your facilities, and the help required.

JOHNE'S DISEASE - FREE TESTING FOR 'KNOW YOUR STATUS'

Johne's disease is an intestinal disease causing progressive weight loss, sometimes with scouring, leading to emaciation and eventual death. Johne's disease affects any age of deer from weaning through to adulthood. Unlike other species, young deer may suffer severe disease which is rapid in onset (up to 25 % losses) whereas in adult deer, cases tend to be more sporadic (one-off) and slowly progressive. The latter is more typical of the disease in other species e.g. cattle, sheep and goats.

Johne's Disease is an emerging threat to the deer industry in New Zealand. It has been estimated that approximately 62% of New Zealand deer farms have been infected.

Financial losses on individual farms can be very high. For example, it has been estimated that a deer farm with 1000 hinds, and a medium prevalence of Johne's disease, could be expected to lose \$35,000 per annum.

This estimate takes into account deaths in young deer (8% prevalence), deaths in adults (2% prevalence), detained and downgraded carcasses at deer slaughter premises and Tuberculosis-testing losses. Johne's disease can cause false test-positive reactions at the time of reading a TB test; it can also show lesions similar to TB at post mortem examination.

Johne's Management Limited (JML) was established in 2007 to promote the control of Johne's Disease in farmed deer in New Zealand. It is funded by the deer industry.

This year JML is offering to pay to blood test up to 100 deer for Johne's Disease on an individual farm. Blood-testing could be done while the hinds are in the yards for pregnancy-scanning, or TB testing, for instance.

The aim is to drive the 'know your status' promotion more actively, helping farmers get a better understanding of whether or not Johne's Disease is on their farm, and if so, an indication of the prevalence of the disease.

If you are interested in taking up the offer, please contact your Totally Vets vet.

Winter feeding

Ginny Dodunski

Following our 'dry spell' over much of April and early May, the moisture that has since been delivered has mostly been on the back of cooler temperatures and shorter days. This, combined with the higher levels of dead matter and stem in many pastures, has seen sluggish grass growth on many properties; 'where did all that feed go' has been heard, and on many blocks there are still big areas that need tidying up.

None of this paints a particularly rosy picture for the 'ideal' feeding of breeding stock (especially ewes) for the next couple of

months. But getting some priorities in order regarding who needs the best feed will help with the management and allocation of the areas of short green feed, short yellow feed (!) and areas that still look rough.

Most ewe flocks will have been doing some work over recent weeks, but with scanning coming up (or happening now) you will have some information on which ewes need the most looking after, and which can continue on some clean-up duty.

If ewes are still on pasture control duty after scanning, could at least the most vulnerable multiple-bearing sheep (2ths, light twinnings, triplets) be in front to get the pick of the higher ME part of the sward, with some more low-risk sheep and ideally cows, following behind?

Low-risk sheep are single bearing ewes; plus to some degree the very best conditioned MA twinnings. However, it does seem a real shame to deliberately strip weight off these, as it is this condition that is going to drive some really good performance this year if it can be protected.

And then there's the complication on many farms of actually having enough mouths, if you split mobs, to properly graze paddocks in a reasonable time-frame. As a general rule of thumb, once animals have been in a paddock for more than 4 days, they will have picked over the good bits and be into weight-loss territory on the rubbish that is left. At least when mob-stocked and moving quickly, there is a fresh pick for everyone on a regular basis.

In a year like this, the application of nitrogen fertiliser to the better areas of the farm could be the difference between making the most of what the summer and autumn delivered, and letting it all go to waste. Doing this and accepting that you will not clean up the very roughest paddocks this winter could well result in a better productive and financial outcome than simply forcing stock to eat all of what is currently standing.

We can model this up for you if you would like to analyse such an approach for your own situation.



What's the goss?

We will all be very sad to see **Brian Hunter** leave us at the end of this month after being with Totally Vets for 13 years. Brian is retiring in the broadest sense of the word - he has many hobbies, plans and projects which will keep him very busy, including the new Coach House Museum in Feilding. He will also be spending eight weeks in the UK and Canada visiting his children and grandchildren, fitting in the Edinburgh Tattoo and a tour of Northern Scotland. We will all miss you Uncle Brian!

We farewelled **Anita, baby bump** and husband **Arno** last month. They will be

settling into their new home in the rural community of Rakaia, in mid-Canterbury. Despite a population of 1000, the Rakaia May newsletter was 24 pages long - so lots going on! Our best wishes to them both.

Congratulations to our Totally Vets sporty boys - **Eliza's son Corbyn** (5), got player of the day and his brother **Fletcher** (6) scored three tries at a recent Sunday morning match - a great start to their rugby season. **Chrissie's son Kyle** (9) is also one to watch in the future - he picked up the year 5 overall Sport Champion (boys) at Lytton Street School in Feilding. Well done Kyle!

A round of applause for our small animal vet **Suzanne Lane** who graduated last month with a Master of Veterinary Medicine

(MVM) from Massey University. Her thesis was entitled 'a comparison of unilateral and bilateral laryngeal surgery in dogs'. We are all very proud of you Suzanne and know how hard you have worked to get there.

A number of our production animal, companion animal and equine vets will be attending the New Zealand Veterinary Association conference later this month in Hamilton. **Barry, Joao, Barny, Allie, Christine** and **Jeanette** will be attending a range of presentations relating their area of interest, with both **Trevor** and **Ginny** also speaking at the event. Trevor will be reviewing the International Parasitology Conference he attended last year and Ginny will be doing a talk on 'the crisis that is the pet lamb'!



Uncle Brian

Nigel Coddington

At the end of June this year, we sadly lose the services of Brian Hunter, our Field Representative. Uncle Brian, as he is affectionately known by the team, started with us in May, 1999, following his retirement from farming. He has lived and worked in the Manawatu around Feilding all his life, and has an amazing knowledge of the district, the people, and the history relating to our area.

When Brian started with us, he brought with him his amazingly humble and helpful attitude. He has helped make TVL a more complete service business in what we do.

His main role initially was to call on farmers and 'chew the fat' with them - gain feedback on how we were performing in our client's eyes; find out if our clients needed help with any particular problems (whether they were aware of it or not) - and alert the appropriate person within our team to respond to this; and provide feedback to everyone in the clinic as to the problems our clients were facing and

the implications that had with us. This role continued throughout his time with us, and he achieved in this exceptionally well. The main reason for this is his wonderfully genuine, caring and thoughtful approach to life and people, which immediately gained respect and trust. He is supportive, has a great sense of humour, enjoys life, and brings a positive attitude to everything he is associated with.

Taking this role was not easy for Brian - he is not a person to push himself to the front! - in fact, the opposite is true of him. He is the quiet achiever, enjoying helping others achieve, and very happy to stay out of the limelight. Even so, to perform as he has, he has had to push himself out of his comfort zone on many occasions!

Brian's roles within TVL diversified over time - he takes an active role in marketing, as well as being the support person in delivery of various services - from client seminars and Monitor Farm projects, to supporting staff within the team with initiatives that make their tasks easier, as well as bringing an awful lot of common sense to the team. Drench gun fixer, BBQ cooker, prize presenter, product deliverer, recorder (via photographs) - you name it, Brian has done it!

Brian also brought to the team the sense of community - as an example, he is a core member of the team that has brought the

Coach House Museum to reality as a world class exhibition in Feilding. It is an excellent example of his attention to detail, as well as his pride in 'doing the job right the first time'.

Another aspect of Brian is his commitment to his family; he is immensely proud of all of their achievements. He brought these family values into TVL with him - for which we are eternally grateful.

It is impossible to convey all of Brian's qualities and values in a phrase - nothing is too much trouble for him; he genuinely cares for people; he takes pride in his work - but avoids the accolades due; he is a truly humble person - never putting himself above others. This bionic man (two new hips) never complains, and never focuses on himself. And despite outwardly being seen as a lovely, affable, cuddly teddy bear, he has more steel than most.

Brian's many exemplary qualities have resulted in him becoming the 'father figure' for the team - he is always available to bounce ideas or problems off (he has great listening skills); and is prepared to take those worthy on to the appropriate person. He has been a key member of our team, helping us to be the best we can be.

We will miss him terribly, and thank him for the years of knowledge and sage advice he has given us. Enjoy your retirement!

Don't wait till the scours hit the fan

Paul Wiseman

Do something about calf scours now.

Every spring, our vets deal with calf scours. Scours outbreaks can be difficult to control and they can be very costly and stressful for the calf rearers.

Most of the issues which lead to scours outbreaks are well understood and generally can be avoided, by implementing a few basic management principles.

So this season, we offer a proactive approach to the prevention of calf scours. A winter consultation can be arranged to look ahead to the calf-rearing season and make sure that you are in the best shape to rear healthy calves with minimal problems.

This involves a farm visit where we check off and discuss the key areas for successful calf-

rearing. We identify any potential hazards and put in place a plan of action.

A follow-up visit early in the calving season can be arranged if required.

If you are interested in a preventative calf rearing consultation and a stress-free rearing season, contact us now.

There are vaccines suitable for use to aid in the prevention of calf scours caused by rotavirus, *E. coli* and coronavirus.

These vaccines work by creating 'hyperimmune' colostrum, with greatly enhanced antibodies against the target viruses and bacteria. Effective colostrum management and feeding is essential to ensure calves receive the benefit of vaccination.

Rotavec® Corona only requires a single shot for heifers and a single annual booster, while the alternative vaccine, ScourGuard® 4(K), requires two shots for heifers or for previously unvaccinated cows, followed by a single annual booster. Totally Vets will be offering Rotavec® Corona vaccine.

Timing of the booster vaccinations before the planned start of calving (PSC) is critical. Rotavec® Corona provides 12-week duration

of cover. In seasonal calving systems, a booster given three weeks before the PSC will cover all calves born in the first nine weeks of calving.

The higher the antibody response to vaccination means that calves born in the first nine weeks receive the highest quality colostrum, including your valuable replacement heifer calves. Research tells us the benefits for calves receiving adequate colostrum at birth include:

- More likely to achieve target mating weights
- More likely to calve at target weights
- More milk produced in their first and subsequent lactations
- Get back in calf better
- An increased survival rate in the herd
- Saves you money in replacement costs.
- Fewer scouring calves
- Much improved general health

Contact us today about a pre-season calf-rearing planning session to ensure your calves get maximum security against scours. For more information on vaccination, please contact your Totally Vets veterinarian.



Inhibitory Substance Audits

Greg Smith

Following an Inhibitory Substance (IS) grade, Quality Consultants New Zealand (QCONZ) has undertaken to audit offending suppliers. During an audit, all potential faults are recorded even if these are not directly responsible - in other words, the accidents that are waiting to happen as well as those that did. QCONZ has recently summarised the findings from the last two seasons.

There are eight broad categories that faults are identified under. These are marking of cows, treatment records, separation/management of treated cows, treatment administration, drug usage, drug storage, dry-cow therapy and plant cleaning. The issues that had the greatest number of faults recorded against them are briefly described below.

Marks not being cancelled at the end of



Transition time for dairy cows

Lindsay Rowe

The transition period is defined as the period from three weeks before calving until three weeks after calving. This period is fundamental to the whole season's production and reproduction. Managed well, it can set the scene for top milk yields and maximum fertility. Managed poorly, it will limit potential production and adversely affect herd fertility.

The focus of transition management is to

1. Physically prepare the cow for a change from the dry state to that of a lactating cow. The Golden Rule is to maintain appetite! During the last week prior to calving there is a natural decrease in the cow's intake - often by as much as 30% and it is occurring at a time when her

requirement for energy is dramatically increasing. Dry Matter (DM) intake in the two to three weeks pre-calving is the single most important factor in managing the transition cow. She requires at least 11-12kgDM of a high quality ration daily through until calving. After calving, intakes must then become totally ad lib if cows are to perform to their potential.

2. Plan and manage feed carefully so as to avoid any sudden changes in the diet for the cow as she moves from the dry mob through to the springer mob (transition cow) into the colostrum mob and finally into the lactating herd. Done well, this will promote efficient rumen function and rapid recovery of full appetite.
3. Prevent hypocalcaemia (low blood calcium) over the calving period. Hypocalcaemia is a very significant problem in our lactating cows, milk fever being just the tip of the iceberg. Cows with low calcium levels are much more likely to experience other problems: calving trouble, retained foetal membranes, uterine infections, mastitis, lameness, reduction in appetite and ketosis.

The risk of cows experiencing these problems can be reduced by minimising the

drop in the cow's blood calcium around calving through

- Aiming for a near ad lib high-quality ration while keeping the level of lush green pasture in the ration pre-calving to a minimum - this will require the addition of maize silage and high quality hay to the ration.
 - Ensuring that recommended levels of anionic salts are added to the ration in the period leading up to calving.
 - Using calcium enriched drenches immediately after calving.
 - Adding lime-flour and magnesium oxide to the post-calving diet.
4. Prevent immune suppression over the transition period. The majority of disease in dairy cows occurs in the second half of the transition period when the cow's natural defence mechanism is reduced following insufficient energy and protein intakes. Working hard to maintain intake through the transition period is then crucial if the risk of disease is to be minimised. Ensuring that a surplus of trace minerals is available is also critical at this time, as it is thought trace minerals may be able to boost the immune system.

treatment - staff are more likely to ignore/ overlook marked cows that turn up in the milking herd and require withholding; treatment records that are incomplete; not separating treated cows from the milkers - using test buckets and rowing up treated cows behind milkers are riskier options; not disconnecting the delivery line prior to milking and treatment; off-label drug use

such as increased dose, increased duration or combination therapy without increased withholding times; inadequate drug storage - drugs scattered across the bench and storing DCT alongside lactating cow treatments is not good enough; using an insufficient number of hot washes and not replacing the filter sock between milkings; finally, under DCT, the treatment of dry quarters but also

not marking before a cow is treated and inadequate records.

QCONZ is promoting the MRS T system as the best practise for treating cows whether it is during lactation, at drying-off or in the dry period. This is self-explanatory as follows: **Mark it, Record it, Separate it and then Treat it.** Often it is by not following that basic process that errors are made.



PREGNANCY-SCANNING SHEEP

There's much more than 'pub talk' to be made from pregnancy-scanning ewes!

- Knowing the ewes that are carrying more than one lamb so that they can have special management is where most of the value of scanning is captured
- Identifying and managing multiples can bring a 5 to 1 return on the scanning cost
- Quit non-productive dry ewes early and conserve valuable feed for productive animals
- Single-bearing ewes can be relegated to more difficult areas of the farm

Totally Vets encourages those who are not scanning to look seriously at the advantages to be gained.

Contact one of our skilled and experienced operators for a no-obligation discussion. We are happy to discuss your individual requirements and the services Totally Vets can offer.

For more information without obligation, please contact:

Totally Vets on 06 323 6161

Ross Edwards on 0274 402 032 or

Guy Haynes on 0274 555 424



WOMEN'S ONLY CALF-REARING SEMINAR

Presented by Totally Vets with MSD Animal Health

WHEN Thursday June 14th
WHAT TIME 9.30am to 2.30pm
WHERE Feilding clinic, 25 Manchester Street

MORNING THEORY SESSION - Focus on calf health

AFTERNOON PRACTICAL ON-FARM SESSION - Facility assessment - Practical animal health skills

COST \$20.00 per person, which includes morning tea and lunch
Seminar fee can be charged to your Totally Vets account

Limit of 50 people so get in quick to book your place

CONTACT **Hayley at Feilding** on 06 323 6161 or Hayley@totallyvets.co.nz or
Anna at Palmerston North on 06 356 5011 or Anna@totallyvets.co.nz