



# VET notes

YOUR TOTALLY VETS NEWSLETTER ALL ABOUT ANIMALS ON YOUR FARM

JULY 2014



## Meet Heidi

Hello, my name is Heidi Pihama and I am thrilled to be the new Sales and Reception Manager at Totally Vets in Feilding.

I am new to the area having recently moved down from the Waikato to the fantastic Manawatu with my 4 year old daughter and am thoroughly enjoying it! I have a partner and another step daughter, who is also 4 years of age, so family life is a lot of fun and very busy. We all love sports and enjoy playing netball, soccer and cricket on the weekends, as well as exercising our two dogs, a German Shorthaired Pointer and a little Maltese Shitzhu cross (who moved with me from Australia to New Zealand and is also preferring kiwi life!). I grew up on farms throughout my childhood in the King Country and Waikato areas but moved away to live overseas for many years. However it is great to be working and living in a rural, community environment and getting to know the suburbs and areas around the Manawatu.

I bring to the clinic years of customer service experience in the hospitality industry, managing small to large teams, and years of sales experience working in real estate in Sydney, Australia. I am enjoying working with the Reception and Sales Team to ensure our clients, both human and animal, receive the best experience, service and expertise in the Manawatu.

The team here are passionate about animals, large and small, and want to help our clients



get the best out of their animals for as long as possible. We are dedicated to continually improving our customer service and products to our clients, welcome feedback, and are keen to help answer any queries about your pets or animals on the farm.

**I look forward to getting to know you and your animals, so please feel free to chat to me when you are next in the Feilding clinic!**

## Calendar Competition 2014

**Totally Vets Team**

Entries are now being taken for our Totally Vets calendar photo competition.

Children who attend primary or intermediate schools within the catchment area serviced by Totally Vets, and are aged between 5 and 14 years of age (Years 1-8), are eligible to enter.

Thirteen pictures will be chosen to feature with three great prizes up for grabs.

Photos are to be farm or animal themed and the competition runs from 1 March to 30 September 2014. Entry forms may be obtained from your nearest Totally Vets branch, from your school, or can be downloaded from our website.



# Totally Vets current stock health

## Dairy

Preparations for calving are largely complete. If the decision was to milk on later, keep a close eye on cow body condition score (BCS) to ensure it is not compromised and calving targets (5.0 for cows, 5.5 for heifers) are met. An independent assessment of cow BCS can be a valuable investment!

Several more Theileria cases have been diagnosed and the stress of calving may act as a trigger for a spike in occurrence of disease. Look out for signs such as cows lagging behind, increased respiratory rate and/or effort, non-responsive metabolic disease etc. If you suspect Theileria, or would like further information, then call the team at Totally Vets.

## Are YOU READY for SPRING?

1. How long prior to calving should an internal teat sealant be used on heifers?
2. What are FIVE essential considerations when setting up your calf sheds?
3. If you notice a DRY cow has signs of mastitis how would you treat her?
4. What are the THREE accepted methods of euthanasia of a calf?
5. What is the target BCS of cows at calving? Heifers?

1. Four weeks  
 2. Ventilation/draught free, product and teat spray  
 4. F irearm, captive bolt followed by bleeding out  
 5. Strip out infected quarter, barbiturate euthanasia and water  
 5. 5.0 and 5.5 respectively

## Introducing Megan

Hello! I'm excited to introduce myself to everyone as one of the new faces at TVL in Feilding. I am currently in the clinic on Mondays and Wednesdays in a Business Support role working closely with Eliza to learn her key tasks prior to her taking maternity leave. I will be ordering stock for the companion animal side of the clinic, liaising with suppliers, as well as setting up displays and working alongside the reception and customer service team based in Feilding.



I was born in Feilding and, prior to starting a family, worked as a legal executive, administrator for International Pacific College and UCOL, studied photography and then worked for Country-Wide in a sales role. Then, prior to having my second child, I was employed as General Sales Manager for The Radio Network Manawatu/Wanganui.

Married to Simon, we farm 400ha sheep and beef breeding and finishing farm in conjunction with Simon's parents Dennis and Julia. We were also monitor farmers from 2010 to 2012 and gained a huge amount of experience from this. Simon is the Venison Manager for Venison Packers Feilding Ltd and is involved

with Biophive, a local Feilding based company specialising in producing totally natural pet treats. We also co-own and operate Central Mower Services, an outdoor power equipment store in Palmerston North.

We have two boys, Toby 3 years old and Finn almost 2. The boys love being out on the farm with Dad and, since they both wake around 5am each morning, we are debating if they will be sheep and beef farmers or, with those hours, they may be more suited to dairy farmers!

**I'm looking forward to meeting Totally Vets friends and customers, so please feel free to introduce yourself to me when you visit our Feilding clinic.**

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Nitrate levels have been fairly high, particularly in crops, as current growing conditions are causing levels to build up. Of particular risk is the combination of cloudy weather with active growth and the addition of nitrogenous fertilizer.

Check other important cost and labour-saving activities, that will help set you up for a successful season, have been implemented... ensure ear tags are all in, pre-calving

vaccinations are complete, heifers are shed-trained, calf sheds are prepared and procedures for colostrum collection, storage, feeding etc are in place.

## Sheep & Beef

Recent weather has brought about some dramatic worm burdens in hoggets and weaner cattle. Even though the threat should reduce as the winter progresses, it would be wise to monitor faecal egg counts and live-weight

gains to give you confidence in decision making, particularly around any extension of drench intervals. Ensure use of an appropriate oral combination drench in these stock classes.

Lameness in sheep has been widespread. In hoggets it has primarily been scald, but in mature sheep footrot is showing as the main culprit. Depending on number of animals affected, foot bathing is the most cost effective way to manage this.

# Make the best of what you've got!

Cormac Chalmers

Not all calf sheds are created equal, and most people (and calves!) don't have the luxury of purpose-built sheds. Therefore it is important to follow some basic guidelines, and to make the best of what you've got by trying to work with your facilities.

Calves require protection from the rain, protection from draughts, clean dry bedding, adequate space, and of course food and water. Exposure to cold, wet, and windy conditions can have detrimental effects on calf health. When preparing your calf sheds this season consider the following:

### PROTECTION FROM DRAUGHTS

The shed should stop draughts at the calf level but still remain well ventilated above. This involves having a shed which is preferably facing away from the prevailing winds, with pens that are twice as deep as they are wide or high, and with solid walls that are roughly 1 to 1.5 meters high. The gate should also be solid to below the level of the bedding. The easiest way to ventilate a shed is with the design; an open-fronted 'kennel' style of building is one of the simplest and more effective self-ventilating buildings.



### CLEAN AND DRY BEDDING

The main sources of moisture in a shed are from urine, the feeders, and the troughs. There are a few things you can do to try minimise this.

All feeders and drinkers, which are prone to spilling, should be kept at the gate end of the building, as far possible from the warm and dry back end of the pen. If floors are solid they should fall from the back to the front and not through neighbouring pens. Regular removal or topping up of the bedding will help keep the environment dry.

The bedding should be fresh and deep, at least 150mm thick. The choice of bedding largely depends on availability; sawdust and non-tanalised wood shavings work well in warm sheds. Bedding that allows calves to bury themselves into, like straw, can be provided if your shed is a little cold or draughty.

### SPACE

There needs to be adequate floor space of 1.5-3m<sup>2</sup> per calf and pens should not contain more than 25 calves. This space needs to be used and managed appropriately. They should be filled sequentially with calves of similar ages, rather than filling multiple pens at the same time, and they should be filled and emptied on an all-in all-out basis. Sanitising between batches and having a separate sick pen is a good way to minimise the risk of spreading disease.

### FEED AND WATER

This is whole topic on its own! Sufficient to say here is... make sure calves always have access to clean fresh water; that feeding is consistent (time, temperature, amount, type etc) and if necessary changes are made gradually; if at all possible, keep the feeding and watering of calves at the gate end of the pen.

# Managing Mastitis

Craig Dickson

Mastitis remains the most costly disease of dairy farms. The “costs” include not only the cost of products for treatment and the stress and time taken to treat, BUT how to deal with the largely unseen problem of production loss.

As we all know, management of mastitis is not an isolated event. It is an on-going task that, for best practice, demands a planned approach.

## FOR SPRING COWS STILL IN MILK

- Using dry cow therapy appropriately in cows being retained.
- Culling chronic mastitis offenders AND cows with persistent high somatic cell counts.

## FOR DRY COWS

- Check cows in the paddock daily for the first week keeping a close eye out for any swollen quarters.

- Strip and treat infected quarters with a lactation product. Do NOT be tempted to infuse with dry-cow therapy!
- Keep the cows away from the dairy shed for two weeks. After this time it's ok to bring them in for a closer inspection of udders. Teat spray them while they are there.
- Ensure you have booked in a milking plant check over the dry period and resolved any issues before spring.
- Consider use of an internal teat sealant for heifers. For those who have read our recent newsletters there has been an article on heifer teatsealing and the advantages of doing so. If you are in doubt about its benefits ask anybody that has done it... It's not too late!

## FOR COWS CLOSE TO CALVING

- Calve cows down in a clean environment.
- Cows/heifers that are well bagged-up and dripping will benefit from pre-calf teat spraying.
- The first few weeks of milking is a stressful time for heifers. Find the time to train them into the shed. You will be rewarded for your efforts.
- Avoid holding cows on wet dirty races during milking.
- Newly calved cows need to be milked and checked for mastitis before 12 hours has elapsed.

- Identify new clinical cases, treat early and aggressively.

Monitor the number of clinical cases you are getting and be prepared to intervene more aggressively if there are too many. SmartSAMM guidelines suggests a trigger point for action if, during the first 14 days of calving, you exceed 10 clinical cases per 100 calvings of all cows or 15 clinical cases per 100 calvings of heifers. For some even these levels will be unacceptable.

## TREATMENT

- Know your enemy! Collect sterile milk samples from early clinical cases. These can be frozen and need to be collected before treatment is initiated.
- Be vigilant! Detect and treat early.
- Treat aggressively! The best chance of successful cure of a clinically mastitic quarter is at that first treatment. Be prepared to treat for longer if necessary. Some products have extended therapy withholds on the label. If you are at all unsure consult with your Totally Vets veterinarian.
- Consider the use of injectable mastitis treatments if more than one quarter is infected.
- Milk out infected quarters completely twice a day.

# Gossip

**Barny** is globe-trotting again, this time back to the United Kingdom with his family for a well deserved break and some quality family time. **Joao** is also offshore, again having some family time back home in Brazil to celebrate his mother's 80th birthday.

We are relieved that **Lucy** is recovering extremely well following a close call with a horse. After giving everyone a very big fright we hope to have her back at work within the next couple of months.

Meanwhile **Mark** has taken up an opportunity of a lifetime, currently on a “slow boat to China” quite literally! He is the veterinarian

on-ship for an estimated 21 day voyage with some 2000 heifers all requiring manual feeding and watering... an incredible experience no doubt!

**Selena** has been enjoying some time out of the office as part of our teatsealing team. Her awesome organisational, and now technical, skills have ensured that our teatsealing run has been highly successful.

At Queen's Birthday weekend **Rebekah**, **Kayla** and **Sandy** attended the Association of Pet Dog Trainers NZ annual conference in Wellington, on the fascinating topic of K9 Nosework®. This is primarily a fun activity and in the working dog world it can be used to help train drug detection dogs, search and rescue dogs etc. See next month's newsletter

for a more comprehensive article on what's involved!

Last month saw the mass attendance of TVL vets to NZVA Conference in Hamilton. This conference is the largest on the calendar for veterinary continuing education and is always a highly educational and social event. It was also “seminar season” at Totally Vets with clients attending Calf Rearing, Milk Quality and Spring First Aid seminars. Watch this space for an upcoming lameness workshop.

Our Facebook pages, both companion animal and equine, are gaining momentum with followers increasing daily. So, if you haven't already, check us out at:

[www.facebook.com/TotallyVetsEQ](https://www.facebook.com/TotallyVetsEQ) and [www.facebook.com/TotallyVetsCA](https://www.facebook.com/TotallyVetsCA)

# Best practice for bobby calves

Sarah Clarke

Whilst most bobby calves may be regarded as a “by-product” of dairy farming in New Zealand, these animals are frequently sold for slaughter to overseas markets. Such markets expect that, as food producing animals, bobby calves will be subject to welfare and transport regulations prior to slaughter.

Although transport itself is key to calf welfare, appropriate management of calves prior to slaughter is equally important. There is also an expectation that calves born premature and unlikely to survive, or suffer from debilitating defects, should be humanely destroyed as soon as possible.

## How do I know if my calves are suitable for transport?

- At least 4 days old.
- NO visible disease (e.g. scours), no deformities, no injuries, no blindness or other disabilities.
- Dry, withered navel - NOT pink/red or fleshy.
- Bright eyes - NOT dull or shrunken.
- Able to get up from a lying position without assistance, move freely, weight bear on all legs, have firm hooves which show wear on the soles (indicates that the calf has been mobile and walking).
- Has been fed at least half the daily ration of colostrum (or colostrum substitute) not more than two hours before pick up.

## ... and what about calves that are not suitable for transport?

Humane destruction of livestock is an unpleasant, but necessary, fact of farming life. It is a legal requirement that the person responsible carries it out in a manner that minimises the stress to the animal. To achieve this a plan is required PRIOR to the start of calving:

- **Who?** Any person who is suitably trained. If a rifle is to be used, they must comply with the Fire Arms Act 1983. Every farm should have at least two people available who are suitably trained. Humane destruction can be a distressing procedure and the farm manager or owner should nominate people who are willing and able to carry out the procedure.
- **Where?** It is advised that calves destroyed with a rifle are placed in a chute/race of hay or straw, to minimise the risk of ricochet.
- **When?** As soon as possible.
- **How?** The accepted methods of calf euthanasia are:
  1. With a firearm (.22 calibre with soft nose bullets is ideal)
  2. With a captive-bolt pistol (held firmly against the skull) followed by bleeding out
  3. Barbiturate/anaesthetic overdose (vet only)

Blunt trauma is NOT considered an acceptable method of humane destruction.

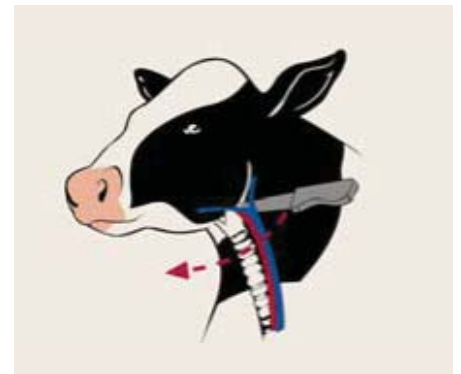


For destroying cattle using a firearm or captive bolt, the recognised target is the ‘frontal target’ and is positioned in the centre of the animal’s forehead. Shown in the diagram above are the imaginary lines to draw, from the horn/horn bud to the opposite eye. The target should be 10mm above the point at which the two lines cross.



The angle of the captive bolt (or gun) should be aimed in such a way that the bolt (bullet) be directed towards, and in line, with the neck. By aiming in this way, the base of the brain and upper spinal column are targeted.

For **bleeding out** following use of captive bolt, use a sharp knife to cut the main blood vessels in the neck and the windpipe of the animal.



Holding the animal’s nose, insert the knife at the top of the neck, behind the angle of the jaw and in one swift movement, cut in an arc from one side of the neck to the other.

Because cattle have deep arteries on both sides of the neck, it is important that the cut is deep enough and long enough to cut all arteries. A significant volume of blood is drained from the animal, which can be distressing for onlookers. Blood should be drained or washed away to prevent hygiene issues, unless bleeding out is done in a paddock.

**ALWAYS check for death in every case and ensure there is NO heartbeat, NO breathing and NO blink reflex.**

# New INJECTABLE Option for Adult Cattle Parasite Treatment

Chris Carter

Treating cattle for intestinal parasites prior to calving and prior to mating is a routine practice on many farms.

In the last weeks of pregnancy the immune system is suppressed and Ostertagia can become active.

Blood testing for enzyme (pepsinogen) levels generally gives a clear picture as to whether treatment is warranted. Testing requires blood samples from a mixed group of 10 cattle.

Pour-on treatments are often the preferred treatment for adult cattle, with Merial Ancare's Eprinex® being a main stay.

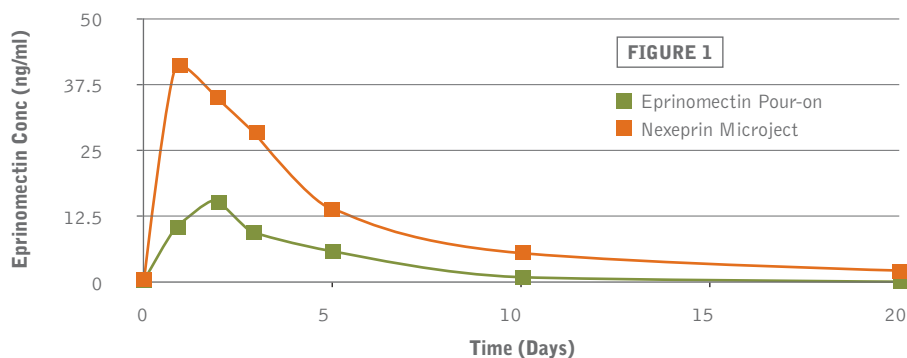


Figure 1: Mean concentration of eprinomectin in bovine plasma after treatment with NEXEPRIN® Microject™ or eprinomectin pour-on.

EPRINEX® has a nil milk and nil meat withholding period and is an ideal choice for use in both dairy and beef herds.

This year Alleva released a new alternate treatment using an injection to treat cattle for parasites. NEXEPRIN® Microject™ is a unique combination of eprinomectin and vitamin E in a long-acting base and is designed especially for use in adult cattle. Nexeprin® is proving to be an effective alternative treatment to pour-ons.

Nexeprin® has a number of unique features:

- It is a low dose subcutaneous injection (1ml per 100kg LW).
- Like Eprinex®, Nexeprin® also has a nil milk withholding period but the withholding period for meat is 14 days.

- Nexeprin's® active ingredient rises to higher levels in the blood when compared to the equivalent pour-on. This higher concentration aids parasite control by eliminating parasites that might not be susceptible at a lower dose.

The inclusion of vitamin E in the formulation can also bring benefits to those cattle which have a higher supplementary feed or when cattle are under stress. Vitamin E is an important element essential for many body processes and so can be beneficial when cattle are either in, or coming out of, a stress period.

**NEXEPRIN® Microject™ is an option definitely worth considering so contact the Totally Vets team for more details!**



## Totally Vets in the Community

Organisations and individuals often approach Totally Vets with requests for fundraising support and sponsorship. Requests vary from major events, such as the New Zealand Dairy Industry Awards, to providing a few one off

giveaways for raffles. Sponsorship is carefully considered and we take pleasure in helping where we can.

This month we feature **Bryce Hirschberg**, the son of Steve and Carol Hirschberg who have a sheep and beef farm just outside of Feilding, and his **Outward Bound experience**.

In March 2014 Bryce approached Totally Vets to provide sponsorship for Outward Bound. His aim was to take on new challenges, step outside his comfort zone, and gain a greater sense of self-understanding.

On his Outward Bound journey Bryce learnt a lot and made lots of new friends. Working with 13 other people around his own age, he was recognised for his hard work by his watch mates. During a tramping section he was frequently out in front. "A moment when I had to step up was when we had to navigate

our way off Mount Cullen, which was part of our six day journey. Travelling along the ridge we came to a dead end, cliffs straight down in front of us. I managed to work out where we were and then lead us down to a saddle where we stayed for the night. Everyone was extremely happy to know they were all on the right track!"

According to his mentors Bryce made the absolute most of his time at Outward Bound and learned many valuable lessons. They believe that he learned the importance of mental as well as physical strength in overcoming adversity. He learnt there is an inherent reward for doing something to the best of one's abilities. He experienced the power of leading by example and being the change you want to see... Bryce can be rightfully proud of his achievements at Outward Bound!

# Lameness in Dairy Cattle

Joao Dib

As you are well aware, early spring often brings about the onset of lame cows. On some properties the problem will be severe and lameness poses a real challenge. The pain from lameness is relentless and can affect cows in many ways, such as:

- Slowness of movement
- Depressed feed intake
- Decreased milk production
- Weight loss
- Decreased fertility

Additionally, on the farm as a whole, lameness will:

- Increase labour requirement
- Create job dissatisfaction as dealing with lame cows is a difficult task
- Create financial costs to the farm
- Increase replacement requirement as cows that become severely lame are often candidates for culling

For the dairy industry, lameness also poses a risk to industry image as lameness is a serious welfare issue. Unfortunately this was highlighted for me in a recent instance. Whilst travelling on SH1 I noticed, as a herd came from milking back out to pasture, an apparently large number of severely lame cows. At least 30% of the herd had varying degrees of lameness, some very obvious. The degree was severe enough to grab my attention from driving and cause me to stop and pull over!

By now most of you will have hopefully addressed at least some of the challenges to lameness prevention on your farm. Risk areas such as races, yard entrances, sharp corners, congestion points may have been identified and dealt with, if not completely, at least to some degree. Needless to say preventative measures are key to managing lameness, prevention is

always better than cure, and it is never too late to make improvements!

However, I would like to bring to your attention a few important points as these can be dealt with in the very near future. They are:

- Improving and perfecting the **identification of lame cows**. Are you satisfied that all involved at your farm can pick up lame cows from the subtle to not so? Early detection is the key to rapid recovery and prevention of irreversible damage.
- **Treatment facilities**. How good are your facilities? Are they protected from rain, wind and have washing facilities that are easy to use? Treating lame cows can be arduous work, hard on the cow and on the operator. The better your facilities, the better and faster the job will be done. Remember, health and safety is paramount.
  - Think about **safe power outlets**. The time is not far when we may be using grinders to treat lameness. Used expertly they are safe and fast.
  - **Restraint**. Nothing new here. These days there is great gear to restrain cows easily and they make the work safer for both cow and operator. It is no longer acceptable for a leading industry to have cows tied to metal bars and operators bent down at ground level trying to get the poor old cow or heifer treated. Bad for the cow, bad for the operator. Legs break easily and operators backs ache!
- **Hand tools**. No short cuts here. The cheaper the meaner... invest in top quality knives, trimmers etc. Keep them sharp at all times. Also get wrist protectors and gloves and use them on the hand that supports the foot. It WILL prevent injuries!

Finally, consider cow nutrition and trace elements and the impact it can have on hoof health. Totally Vets can offer very professional, science based advice that has the potential to improve the health of a cow's hoof. Healthy Hoof consultancy is also available.

**We wish you all a good start to the season and hopefully very few lame cows. Let's show New Zealand we can do it!**



## NUTRO® Natural Choice in-store at Awapuni

NUTRO® NATURAL CHOICE dog and cat food is now available in-store at Totally Vets Awapuni clinic.

NUTRO® uses only the highest quality ingredients. The recipe is one that dogs and cats just can't resist. You'll also notice the difference - they will have healthier skin, a shinier coat and there will be less backyard waste!

Our pricing is competitive and when you buy 10 bags the next one is FREE.

### NUTRO HAS

- Meat as 1st and 2nd ingredient
- 100% palatability guarantee (money back guarantee)
- Rice or potato carbohydrate source for low GI energy
- Higher digestibility reducing back end waste
- Natural preservatives; rosemary extract & vitamin E
- High levels of Linoleic Acid added in, guaranteed to improve skin and coat quality.

### NUTRO DOES NOT HAVE

- Beef
- Chicken by-products
- Corn or corn gluten
- Wheat or Soy protein
- Artificial preservatives or colours
- Artificial flavours or sweeteners



# Bayer Metabolics single-use bag system



Pre-attached giving set and needle with every bag



1

Sharp sterile disposable 14G x 2" hypodermic needle



3

2

Snap-off needle connection



Available from **Totally Vets**

Bayer New Zealand Limited, 3 Argus Place, Hillcrest, Auckland.

# WINTER WARMER



## BUY 2 x 500mL PACKS OF NEXEPRIN MICROJECT & RECEIVE A MORPHY RICHARDS FLAVOUR SAVOUR\*

The NEW Morphy Richards Flavour Savour Searing Slow Cooker not only looks great on the outside, but is bursting with features on the inside to help everyone cook like a master chef! Brown the meat and then set to slow cook all in the one pot on the same base!

**morphy richards**

\* Available from **Totally Vets** while stocks last

www.alleva.co.nz



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