

Welcome to the March edition of our Large Animal Newsletter. With the first quarter of 2016 coming to a close, the days are getting shorter and the evenings a little cooler. This month our Vets discuss Dry Cow Therapy and the management of Drying off, the importance of good Body Conditioning before Calving and the growing resistance of Cooperia in the Bay of Plenty. We've included a brief profile on Tony Austwick, who will be a familiar face to many of you and we also cover Merials current offer of Work Wear aligned with their drenching products. Grab a drink and we hope you enjoy the read.

Drying off Management



Dry cow therapy (DCT) is a significant investment in your herd so we have put together a few pointers below to help you get the most out of it. For further information, there is an administration guide available from the website www.dairywellness.co.nz

This website also has a video demonstrating how to correctly administer dry cow therapy and Teatseal® tubes and a short online training course which is suitable for anyone who will be administering dry cow therapy or Teatseal. It is ideal as a refresher or for any new workers.

Preparation

Recommendations on what DCT programme is most suitable for your herd will be made during your Milk Quality consult. Please contact one of our clinics to arrange a consult and discuss what your DCT requirements will be. We will ask you to provide all relevant information relating to mastitis in your herd this season: Number of clinical cases; Treatments used; Bulk SCCs; Herd Test Data.

Once the programme is established it is wise to get all product on farm, ready to be used when required. You will need to make sure to have plenty of gloves, paper towels, teat wipes, teat spray

and spray paint. Groups of cows should be selected for dry off based on milk volumes, SCC, body condition score, and calving date. Guidelines around this can be found in the SmartSMMM plan, or can be discussed with one of our vet team.

Drying Off

It is important to make sure you have plenty of help on hand and plenty of time to do the job properly. If it is cold, the intramammary products can sometimes be harder to administer. If this is happening, the bucket of tubes can be placed in a larger bucket of hot water to gently warm the syringes up without getting them wet. Do not put the syringes directly into the water because water can carry bacteria which may cause infection if transferred into the udder on the syringe.



The udder should be clean and dry. Disinfect the teat end using at least one teat wipe per teat; making sure the wipe comes away clean when you are finished. When removing the cap from the dry cow syringe, be sure not to touch the end of the nozzle (and don't use your mouth!). Partially insert the nozzle into the teat end up to 3mm and infuse the product (full insertion can damage the delicate inner lining of the teat and reduce effectiveness).

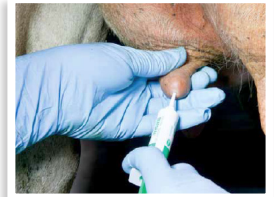


If using an antibiotic, massage it from the teat up into the udder. If using Teatseal in combination or alone it must NOT be massaged into the udder, but must stay in the teat canal. Disinfect and treat one teat at a time, starting with the front left teat and working clockwise round the udder.

Treat all four quarters and follow with freshly mixed teat spray of the correct concentration. Immediately after treatment, mark each cow and record the id number and treatment given.

After Treatment

Once the mob has been treated and clearly identified, they should be walked quietly back to a clean paddock, preferably away from the milking shed and the milking mob. The cows should have access to water and a maintenance ration. Avoid activity that may encourage excessive soiling or movement of the udder during the dry period.



The dried off mob should be checked daily for the first week or so for any swollen udders that may need investigating. It is best to keep the treated mob away from the dairy shed for the first week to avoid milk let down, which can slow down the process of udder dry off and affect the teat plug formation.

If you or your staff need any further information or training on drying off management please contact us on 0800 838 7267



Staff Profile - Tony Austwick

Tony completed his veterinary degree at Massey University graduating in 1995 and will be a familiar face to many of our customers.

He settled in Tauranga to work as a mixed practice vet. Over the years, he has worked with both companion animals and farming/lifestyle animals and really enjoys getting out on the farm to support the practice's farming and lifestyle clients.

His veterinary interests include medicine, surgery – both general and orthopaedic – and dermatology. Tony lives on a small lifestyle property with his wife, four daughters, four cats, one dog, two rabbits, six budgies, a range of chickens and ducks, sheep, three parrots and numerous tropical fish.

Body Condition of cows Pre-Calving is so important!



Planning your Summer and Autumn nutrition is very important to maintain body condition pre-calving and, more importantly, to put weight on skinnier cows in time for calving. Ensuring cows are in good body condition (condition score 5) at the time of calving has direct implications for the success of the subsequent mating period in the next season.

Cows in the correct body condition score at calving have a 12% to 14% higher 6 week in calf rate than their skinnier counterparts, as well as a 10% better submission rates and a 12% better conception rate.

Regular body condition scoring of your herd from February onwards will allow you to have a

realistic idea of where your herd is sitting relative to the target body condition scores of 5 in the cows and 5.5 in the heifers and second calvers by calving time.

It is important to look at the range of weights in your herd, not just the average score, as there can be quite a range of BCS values in a herd. By drying off skinner cows early it will allow them the necessary time to reach their target calving weights. The following table from the InCalf book shows how many days a cow needs to be dry to reach these targets.

Days from next calving	Condition score at dry off	
	Cow	Rising 3yo Heifers
120	3.0	3.5
90	3.5	4.0
60	4.0	5.0
Calving	5.0	5.5

If you have cows that are BCS 3.0 in your herd in early March, and your planned start of calving date is in early July, these cows need to be dried off in early March to allow the necessary 4

months for them to reach a BCS of 5.0 at calving time. We have vets that are qualified to help assist you with body condition scoring your herd if you are unsure of doing this yourself. We can't just worry about putting condition on the cows in the dry period. There are several reasons why trying to put condition on cows in the dry period often doesn't work very well. One is that there is not enough time between dry off and calving to put enough condition on the cows. The other issue is grass cover which is often inadequate or of poor quality. In addition, cows in late gestation struggle to gain weight as their gut capacity is limited by the large foetus.

There are several strategies which may be employed to ensure cows gain condition in late lactation. Increasing feed intakes across the board (to all animals in the herd) may not always be achievable. Preferential feeding of young or thin cows may help to improve the average condition of the herd. Early dry off dates, despite reducing income in the short term, may pay dividends in future as cows calve down in adequate condition and get back in calf sooner.

Cooperia resistance in the Bay of Plenty is becoming a pressing issue and there is now a strong need for a combination drench when considering parasite control.



The results of a recent study showed Moxidectin still has great efficacy against Ostertagia species, however Cooperia species have developed a widespread resistance to this action family.

The study showed the fecal egg counts of young cattle were dominated by Cooperia and reinforced the key recommendation against using a single active ML drench to treat Cooperia. BZ's (the white drenches) have also been shown to be ineffective at removing a Cooperia burden and on their own contribute significantly to drench resistance.

The pathogenicity of Cooperia is particularly important in youngstock as the adults parasites penetrate the lining of the small intestine, and in a heavy burden may result in poor utilisation of feed, anaemia and ultimately poor weight gain. On most New Zealand pasture based systems, cattle will develop strong immunity against roundworms after about 18 months of age and so parasite control is vital in the first 18 months of a calf's life.

The current recommendation for drenching against Cooperia is with a combination drench that includes Levamisole. We stock a range of combination products which are available as oral, injectable or pour-ons. Eclipse or Matrix are examples of combination drenches with abamectin to combat Ostertagia, Trichostrongylus and Lungworm, and Levamisole to target the ML resistant worms including Cooperia.



CHECKLIST

- Maintain facial eczema zinc for prevention
- Plan dry cow therapy for herd
- Autumn drenching calves/lambs – keep regular drench intervals
- Leptospirosis – 2nd Calf boosters
- Mineral liver tests for cull cattle/sheep/deer to the works

We hope you have enjoyed this latest edition of the Tauranga, Katikati, Te Puna and Papamoa Village Vets newsletter

Take a moment to visit the Tauranga Vets Facebook page, www.facebook.com/taurangavets, and Like what you see. We love your feedback and are always happy to answer your animal health questions.



Tauranga Vets
www.bopvets.co.nz