

LIGHT DAIRY COWS

With dairy herds dried off, and on winter feeding programmes, attention is normally turned to improving the body weight of low conditioned cows, especially young cows. For cows with early calving dates, it is difficult to put on much more than ½ a condition score, and this requires an extra 200kgs of good quality dry matter over the next 6 weeks. However, it is a good use of feed to focus on these light cows rather than making a condition score 5 cow fatter.



This season if light cows do not respond to preferential feeding as you might expect, think about other weight gain limiting factors:

- Facial Eczema and damaged livers (consider blood testing to check this and culling if test indicates significant damage).
- Johnes Disease – we continually pick these cows up on blood tests. They should also be culled ASAP to minimise the spread of the disease.
- Parasitism – especially in young cows that have not been drenched recently.
- Trace elements (herd status should always be checked at drying off).

HVC

JULY 16

ewe scanning

Ewe flock scanning data is coming in now. In general, percentages are back on recent years. **Back by 10%** is a fairly common reply to the question, "How did scanning go?" In most flocks this is a result of slightly less multiples and higher than normal dry rates.

Skinny ewes

As in the dairy herd, most sheep farmers are aware that it makes sense to preferentially feed light ewes, under condition score 3, at this time of the year (especially if ewes have been scanned in lamb with multiples).

Following on from last months newsletter, we have investigated problems with light ewes on several properties and have identified the following problems:

- **Worm issues** – this autumn saw prolonged high worm larval challenges on many farms. These challenges have checked ewe performance in some flocks, especially where feed challenges and / or eczema challenges were also occurring.
- **Eczema issues** – some very damaged livers have been found in post mortem examinations. Few cases of 'clinical eczema' have been seen on these farms and the ewes post-mortemed did not appear to have visual signs of eczema.
- **Johnes Disease** – this disease seems to have been a little more prevalent over the last 12 months.

Isolating Light Ewes

When light ewes are identified, it makes good sense to lamb them separately and avoid retaining ewe lambs from these ewes. Why?

- Johnes Disease spreads from the ewe to her lamb or other lambs she comes in contact with.
- Light ewes may have reduced genetic resistance to other health challenges such as worms and facial eczema.
- Light ewes may have physical faults that are hereditary (feet, teeth, etc).



Sheep FIELD DAY

Enclosed with your account is an invitation to attend our Sheep Field Day on the 26th of July.

This day will focus on two topical issues, facial eczema and internal parasites.

We hope to see you there!

Don't forget to RSVP to Aimee by July 22.

Reminders

- Please place your orders for all your Pre-Lamb supplies, to ensure we can meet your needs.
- If paying by Direct Credit, please check you are using the correct client code, so we can allocate your payment correctly.

After hours vet

Emergencies - 06 322 8058

Shop Hours - 8am to 5pm

Monday to Friday

Email - huntervillevetclub@xtra.co.nz

Conference outcomes

Cosmin recently attended a dairy workshop where well regarded speakers gave presentations on calf rearing and mastitis control. Several important points were highlighted in these presentations.

Calf Rearing

- To thrive properly, calves require 10 – 15% of their bodyweight in colostrum in the first 24 hours of life.
- The earlier the calves receive this colostrum within the 24 hour period, the better.
- On modern dairy farms, 45% of calves will fail to achieve these intake requirements.
- Tubing calves with 1st day colostrum is an excellent and simple way to ensure the calves requirements are met despite some publicity which has suggested otherwise.
- Stored colostrum is a fantastic feed source for calves provided that it is

handled properly and that bacterial contamination is minimised.

- Yoghurt can be added to colostrum to preserve it quickly and minimise the chances of bad bacteria proliferating in it.

Mastitis

Teat end damage remains the most common cause of mastitis in NZ dairy cows. The most common causes of teat end damage are:

- High vacuum
- Unsuitable liners
- Over milking
- Wide pulsation ratios

Culling is the simplest way to remove mastitis threats from the herd.

High empty rates or herd building see too many high SCC retained. Not enough use is made of the mastitis records when culling.

Ideally it would be best to milk 'clean colostrum cows' before the cups etc become contaminated by the herd. Colostrum cows and mastitis cows should never be run in the same herd.

Surveys have shown:

1. 2/3 of farmers have poor teat spray coverage.
2. 2/3 also have the incorrect teat spray mix.
3. 12% do both correctly!!



Mileage Rebates and Membership Invoice

Many of you will have noticed a mileage rebate on your May account. This rebate is calculated from shop sales and mileage charged. Just one of the many perks of being a member with us. Members will also notice a charge on their current account for their annual Membership Subscription.

Membership is based on stock units farmed, to be considered a Large Farm Member you would stock over 600 units, and Small Farm Members less than 600. The fee is \$57.50inc for Large and \$28.75inc for Small. If you want to make changes to your membership let the clinic know.

Rugby season

An old married couple no sooner hit the pillows when the old man passes gas and says, 'Five Points.'

His wife rolls over and says, 'What in the world was that?' The old man replied, 'its fart rugby.'

A few minutes later his wife lets one go and says, 'try! Tied score...' After about five minutes the old man lets another one go and says, 'Aha. I'm ahead 10 to 5.' Not to be outdone the wife rips out another one and says, 'Try!'

Five seconds go by and she lets out a little squeaker and says, 'Conversion, I lead 12 to 10.'

Now the pressure is on for the old man, so he strains hard. Since defeat is totally unacceptable, he gives it everything he's got, and accidentally poops in the bed.

The wife says, 'What the hell was that?'

The old man says, 'Half time, switch sides.'

Nitrogen price drops

The price of Urea and DAP continues to fall. At current prices, Urea in particular is looking to be a very viable go to option to help ensure feed covers through August and September are sufficient to optimise livestock performance. It is virtually impossible to make up for lost production where the ewe flock in particular gets away to a bad start at lambing and in early lactation. Every attempt should be made to ensure this does not occur.

If you are uncomfortable with your current feed covers we are happy to assist you develop a 'plan'. (We have access to computer feed budget programmes.)

SCABby Mouth

Like last year, Scabine is not going to be available this season. Once again we will have Phenax and Scabigard available for your vaccination needs.

If you could let us know your numbers early it would be appreciated.