

HEIFER GROWTH RATES

February is an excellent month to weigh dairy heifer replacements and confirm they are on track to make autumn liveweight targets.

Where animals are found to be lagging behind extra focus can be put into these underweight animals. They can be preferentially fed, (palm kernel, crops, baylage). It is easier to get these animals back on track now rather than trying to do it in winter or spring.

Feed quality can also be an issue in the next couple of months and underweight young stock struggle to handle low quality feeds. Significant benefits can be gained in terms of growth rates by adding some high quality supplementary feeds to the diet.

If you feel your replacements are showing poor weight gains despite good feeding, ensure other issues are not involved including;

- Worm challenges/ drench problems.
- Trace element deficiencies, especially selenium.
- BVD.

Note if you don't have scales to weigh replacements with, the clinic has a platform and indicator for use.



BLACKLEG IN CALVES

In early January we dealt with a case which reinforced the benefits of vaccinating cattle for **clostridial diseases**, especially weaners.

The case involved 110 -130kg weaners which were grazing a chicory paddock. A dead weaner was noted and another was looking very sick and died shortly after. The next day when the manager was checking the mob, he noted another animal that seemed very slow and stiff in its hindquarters. This bull died over night and was brought into the clinic for a post mortem examination.

The post mortem examination confirmed the cause of death as black leg, a clostridial disease that most commonly causes a hind limb muscle necrosis (muscle death). The bacteria proliferates when muscle is bruised or damaged, and deaths are often seen

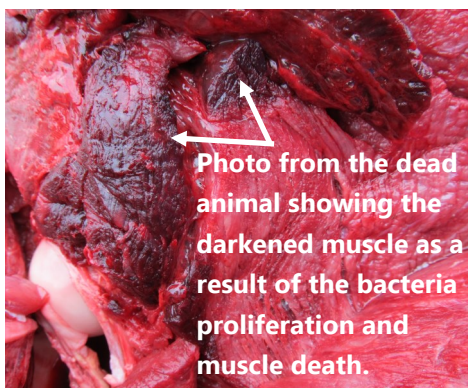
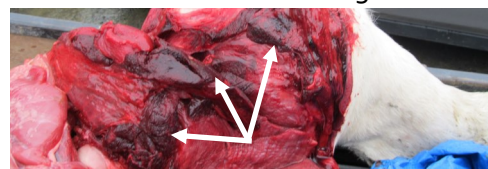


Photo from the dead animal showing the darkened muscle as a result of the bacteria proliferation and muscle death.

after cattle or sheep have been yarded. In this case the bulls were yarded for drenching 3 days previously.

These bulls had not been vaccinated. The manager was advised to quietly yard the bulls again and vaccinate with 10in1. A further 5 bulls were lost meaning a total of 8 bulls died. At \$600 each, the losses amounted to \$4800, the cost of vaccination was \$120!!

It should also be noted that these bulls were grazing chicory. As reported in previous newsletters sudden deaths on high quality feeds such as chicory, plantain and new rye grass/clover pastures are a real risk, we recommend vaccination of cattle with 10in1 and lambs with 5in1 after weaning.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

A lady about 8 months pregnant got on a bus. She noticed the man opposite her was smiling at her. She immediately moved to another seat. This time the smile turned into a grin, so she moved again. He seemed more amused. When on the fourth move, the man burst out laughing, she complained to the driver and he had the man arrested. The case came up in court. The Judge asked the man (about 20 years old) what he had to say for himself. The man replied... "Well your Honour, it was like this: When the lady got on the bus, I couldn't help but notice her condition. She sat under a sweets sign that said, "The Double Mint Twins are Coming" and I grinned. Then she moved and sat under a sign that said "Logan's Liniment will reduce the swelling", and I had to smile. Then she placed herself under a deodorant sign that said "William's Big Stick Did the Trick", and I could hardly contain myself. BUT, your Honour, when she moved for the fourth time and sat under the sign that said "Goodyear Rubber could have prevented this Accident". Sir, I just lost it. "CASE DISMISSED!!"

FE MONITORING

Over the last few days we have carried out our first **spore counts** of the season. Sites counted were in the Turakina Valley, Rangitikei river flats at Hunterville and Mangaweka and north facing Hunterville hill country. These sites tend to be our known "hotspots". As one might expect given the weather we have experienced with cool temperatures, all the counts were low at 5000 or less.

We will continue to monitor these sites at 10-14 day intervals at this stage. You can get updates by phoning the clinic or looking on our website under the blog section.

www.huntervillevetclub.co.nz --> blog

POISONOUS PLANTS IN CROPS

With brassica crop feeding underway we often receive queries about the risks from weeds growing in crops. Generally where crop palatability is good weeds don't cause too much of an issue.

However weeds can cause problems where stock selectively graze the weeds in preference to the crop. This is more likely to occur where animals are first introduced to the crop.

Weeds that we have identified with stock losses include;

- Amaranthus - Redroot (the most common - cause of death especially in lambs)
- Staggerweed
- Witch Grass



LUMPS ON CATTLE/SHEEP

We have been contacted by 2 clients who were concerned about large numbers of cattle at slaughter having "inoculation lesions" lumps!!

Vaccinations or injectable trace elements and drugs can be quite irritating, especially if they don't end up where they are supposed to go!!

Please read labels and use a needle length that puts the treatment where it is meant to go. For **cattle** use **1/2 inch** needles for **subcutaneous**, **1 inch** needle for **intramuscular**. For **sheep** use **3/8 inch** needles for **subcutaneous**, **1/2 inch** needle for **intramuscular**.

Products that are supposed to be given subcut often cause swelling lumps and abscesses if they get into the muscle. Tent the skin or place the needle at an angle to ensure you don't inject too deeply.

Copper injections especially can cause problems in stock, some copper formulations cause less problems than others so if you have problems with copper site reactions a change of formulation may be helpful.

Dirty needles and poor hygiene will also contaminate injection sites and cause infections and abscesses. Ensure needles are clean and keep needles sterile by soaking in meths. Change needles frequently especially in wet, muddy or dusty conditions. Use clean drawoff tubes, vaccinating guns and syringes. **Finally** - to minimise problems that stem from site reactions try to treat animals as high up the neck as possible, (in by the tail for subcut injections can be an alternative option when neck treatments are difficult. If you are unsure about where this is exactly, contact the clinic.)

WORKPLACE EXCUSES

Two factory workers are talking during their shift. The woman says, "I can make the boss give me the day off." The man replies, "And how would you do that?" The woman says, "Just wait and see." She then hangs upside down from the ceiling. The boss comes in and says, "What are you doing?" The woman replies, "I'm a light bulb."

The boss then says, "You've been working so much that you've gone crazy. I think you need to take the day off." The man starts to follow her and the boss says, "Where are you going?" The man says, "I'm going home, too. I can't work in the dark."

SMART JIMMY

A second grade teacher was having trouble with one of her students. One day, she asked Jimmy what his problem was. He replied, "I'm too smart for the second grade, my sister is in the fourth grade, and I'm smarter than her too."

The teacher took him to the principal's office and explained the situation to the principal. The principal told her that he would give Jimmy a test. If he failed to answer one question, then he would have to go back to the second grade and be quiet. The teacher and Jimmy both agreed.

Principal: "What is 3 x 3?" **Jimmy:** "9."

Principal: "6 x 6?" **Jimmy:** "36."

And so it went on like this, the principal asked him every question a fourth grader should know. Finally, after about an hour, he told the teacher "I see no reason why Jimmy can't go to the fourth grade, he answered all of my questions right."

The teacher asked if she could ask him some questions. The principal and Jimmy agree.

Teacher: "What does a cow have 4 of that I only have 2 of?" **Jimmy:** "Legs"

Teacher: "What do you have in your pants that I don't have?"

The principal gasps but before he can stop him from answering **Jimmy says**, "Pockets." **Teacher:** "What does a dog do that a man steps into?" **Jimmy:** "Pants."

Teacher: "What starts with F and ends with K and means a lot of excitement?"

Jimmy: "Firetruck."

The principal breaths a big sigh of relief and says "Put Jimmy in the fourth grade. I got the last 4 questions wrong myself."

AFTER HOURS VET

Emergencies - 06 322 8058

Shop Hours - 8am to 5pm

Monday to Friday

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