

DAIRY TALK

PROVIDING
VET CARE
24/7

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TOP TIP:

No herd escapes endometritis and it is vital to minimise the negative effect dirty cows have on your herd.

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IT PAYS TO BELONG
anexa FVC

Managing condition of late calvers

Katrina Roberts

Mature cows need to calve in body condition score (BCS) 5 and first and second calvers in BCS 5.5. These targets are based on production and reproductive benefits associated with these calving BCS. As cows will not gain BCS in the last month of their gestation, the BCS of late calving cows will not improve prior to calving.



Late-calving cows (i.e. cows calving more than 6 weeks after the planned start of calving; PSC), are not only affected by being late-calving, but may also not be at target BCS (i.e. either too fat or too thin). Ensure that the late-calvers are managed accordingly, and if you have a considerable proportion of your herd in this group (>13% of the herd to calve) you may consider preferentially managing this group after calving to minimise the impact on reproductive performance. Current options for the late-calvers may include: once-a-day milking, running in their own mob, joining the young cow/light mob when they calve and/or preferential feeding.



Book your free Repro Ready Consult

and be prepared for mating. We will discuss your options for this year's mating, so you can make informed choices.

We only need 30 minutes of your time and it's free.



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FaceBook - AnexaVets



Mastitis Advice & Help

We have a specialised mastitis team who have undergone extra training in mastitis and milk quality management. We are accredited by Fonterra so can access demerit relief to help pay for the cost involved with solving a milk quality problem. There is no need to put up with high somatic cell counts or a high prevalence of mastitis. Our mastitis team can assess your individual situation and work with you to make a practical plan to achieve the goals that you want.

If you are being graded, we can attend an afternoon milking to help identify cows causing the grades and get you back to grade-free supply. The accredited vet can then work with you to help prevent future issues. Give your vet a call if you want to discuss this further.



Theileria Cases Around Again

In the last few weeks, cases of clinical Theileria have been diagnosed and blood transfusions required, on the Hauraki Plains. If you are concerned that your young stock may be at risk, it would pay to check them. Look in the mouth at the colour of the mucous membranes or the colour inside the vulva. If the colour is white or bright yellow then it is likely that a tick infestation and resultant Theileria may be a problem.

Ask your vet for the FANI card to help identify sick animals. If undetected and untreated, a small percentage of affected cows will die.

FANI CARD web link: <http://www.mpi.govt.nz/Portals/0/Documents/biosecurity/pests-and-diseases/field-anaemia-nearest-indicator-card.pdf>

Be vigilant of those calves that are slow moving or have labored breathing or cows that have a sudden drop in milk production – these are indications that there may be a problem.

Bull Power – It Comes Down To Simple Maths

A shorter mating period is the new normal. This means getting 'the bull bit' right becomes even more important.

To some extent, it comes down to simple maths: if the same numbers of cows are required to get in calf over a shorter period of time, you will need more bull power. This means both quantity and quality.

Our bull fertility testing service has continued to grow and can give you greater confidence in the quality of your animals. Almost 10% of the bulls we tested last year had low fertility scores and several farms had high failure rates. Just one dominant 'dud' bull amongst many can hold back conception rates and more than one in a small team can be disastrous.

We can also help you structure your bull teams according to individual test results, and give tailored advice on bull:cow ratios and bull management according to your farm and farm system.

Anexa FVC has InCalf-trained reproduction consultants who can analyse last season's results and work out where you should focus your time, effort and investment to get a better return this year. Talk to your vet or call your local clinic to arrange a free introductory meeting.



A Simple Check And Treat Programme Will Result In Better Fertility

Dirty cows can be a major cause of poor reproductive performance. Dirty cows usually have an infection of their uterus termed endometritis. They can take 2-3 weeks longer to get in calf and have empty rates 10-30% higher than clean cows.

No herd escapes endometritis and it is vital to minimise the negative effect dirty cows have on your herd. A simple check and treat program will result in better fertility, earlier calving, more days in milk and more profitable cows.

There will be cows in the herd more likely to develop uterine infection. This group of animals are known as 'At Risk' cows and includes any animal that has had retained foetal membranes (RFM), twins, milk fever, an assisted calving and/or a dead calf.

Metrichecking is a simple and cost-effective method for finding dirty cows and some studies have shown better responses to treatment when cows are detected and treated earlier. Cows can be checked in batches from 2 weeks after calving or the whole herd can be metrichecked, ideally 35 days before the start of mating.



As an alternative to whole herd metrichecking, it may be possible to form a list of 'At Risk' cows and have only these animals checked (or have them checked earlier). However, be aware you could be missing up to two-thirds of the dirty cows by not examining every cow.

Dirty cows can be treated with an intrauterine antibiotic (e.g. Metricure) which is passed through the cervix into the uterus. There is no milk withhold associated with treatment with this antibiotic.

Before mating, all cows in your herd should have a clean bill of health. Give us a call to discuss a post-calving health check so we can treat endometritis and identify any other factors that will improve mating performance this season.



MEMBER ONLY OFFER

\$1 per Cow+GST

(Whole herd only)

Latest Vaccination Recommendations

Leptospirosis is a zoonotic disease. This means it can be passed from animals to humans. It also means we need to endeavour to control the disease as best we can to prevent people from getting sick.

The latest information from Massey University points to a possible change in the ecology and risk pattern of infection associated with Leptospirosis. People in contact with animals are increasingly at risk, including farmers and veterinarians.

Study results indicate that calves may become infected with leptospires before they are vaccinated. They then become 'shedders' in their urine, despite vaccination. In a pilot study, shedding of the bacteria was seen in 30% (13/44) of herds and 13% (18/134) of animals from positive herds. The true percentage of herds harbouring shedders may in fact be higher, despite a long history of vaccination, because shedders may have been misclassified as non-shedders. Age at first vaccination was the only significant factor associated with the probability of shedding. Vaccination after natural exposure to the disease may compromise vaccine efficacy, meaning vaccination will only return stable immunity in unexposed animals. Calves that are vaccinated after they have already been exposed to Leptospires have more chance of becoming shedders.

There has been much discussion over the role of 'maternally derived antibodies' (MDA) in vaccination efficacy. It has been hypothesised that MDA from colostrum in the newborn calf may interfere with vaccination. Unfortunately there is a lack of good data around the actual role of MDA, but it is now acceptable to assume that most offspring have lost protective immunity from their dam by 4-6 weeks of age.

Assuming regression of MDA by 4-6 weeks of age and also assuming that the age spread of young stock to be used for replacement is 6 weeks, then:

Earliest time to start vaccination is at 10 weeks after planned start of calving (PSC), when the youngest replacement calf is at least 4 weeks of age.

Depending on the other vaccinations you use on your calves (for example BVD and Salmonella), your vet will need to draw up a protocol tailored to your farm. To reduce the risk of Leptospirosis becoming a problem on your farm, earlier vaccination is definitely recommended.



Rear Great Calves to Make a Great Start

Calves need to grow well to perform to their full genetic potential as part of your herd. For dairy cows, the reproduction journey starts from birth, so effective calf rearing and weaning with a focus on liveweight targets is vital for their future development.

Heifers that fail to reach liveweight BV based on liveweight targets at mating are more likely to calve slower as first calvers, produce less milk and take longer to get back in-calf. We can help you with your calf management. Here are six tips to get you started:

- ✓ **Build calf immunity with colostrum** and fight off early infectious challenges. Calves need 2 litres of fresh, first milking colostrum within the first 6-12 hours of birth, with the first 6 hours being the most crucial time period for maximum absorption. Ideally, 2 x 2 litre feeds within the first 12 hours is recommended. Calves which do not receive adequate immune transfer from colostrum have been shown to take longer to reach target liveweight for first service.
- ✓ **Reduce the stress on your newborns.** Provide warm, dry, well-ventilated housing.
- ✓ **Top quality staff can do a top job with the right gear.** Employ experienced calf rearers and equip them with good gear to get the job done. Ensure they are comfortable tube-feeding calves. If you or your staff need training on how to use a calf stomach tube, we are happy to help.
- ✓ **Supply adequate quantities of good quality feed.** Pre-weaning nutrition to reach growth rate targets requires adequate supplies of quality feed.
- ✓ **Wean on liveweight.** Heifers that reach target liveweights are more likely to calve early, produce more milk and get back in-calf quicker. Targets on MINDA Weights (at www.MINDA.co.nz) are based on the animal's own individual liveweight BV.
- ✓ **Monitor liveweights through the first 2 years of life.** Heifers which calve down at 90% of their expected mature liveweight should calve quickly, produce more and get back in-calf quicker than those that fail to reach target.

More information on calf rearing can be found in the InCalf book, the DairyNZ website, or call your local Anexa FVC clinic to make an appointment with one of our team to discuss:

- Pre-calving management
- Calf management
- Rearing from birth to weaning; and
- Stress-free weaning management.



Welcome to our new vets

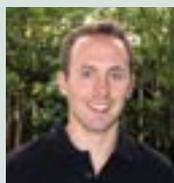
We're delighted to have Lucy, Anne and Robert join our vet team.



Lucy Picott
Te Kauwhata



Anne Gelling
Matamata & Te Aroha



Robert Powell
Rototuna & Gordonton

Coromandel
P: 07 866 8556

Gordonton
P: 07 824 2103

Huntly
P: 07 828 7660

Maramarua
P: 09 232 5891

Matamata
P: 07 888 8068

Morrinsville
P: 07 889 5159

Ngaruawahia
P: 07 824 8630

Ngatea
P: 07 867 7256

Paeroa
P: 07 862 8815

Raglan
P: 07 825 8390

Rototuna
P: 07 853 0027

Te Aroha
P: 07 884 8014

Te Kauwhata
P: 07 826 3581

Thames
P: 07 868 7005

Spring Reminders

Calf Vaccinations

To reduce the risk of Leptospirosis becoming a problem on your farm, vaccination from 4 weeks of age is recommended, with a second shot 4 weeks later. Depending on when you do your annual herd Lepto, you may need to give the calves a third shot to bring them in line with the herd.

Calves should be vaccinated against blackleg from one month of age. They will need two injections four weeks apart.

Calf Disbudding

We are taking bookings now, please contact your local clinic to book your calves in.

Gordonton Spring Hours

Gordonton Spring Hours Clinic open from 10am - 1pm for product purchases. *Note no vet is on site. Normal afterhours vet fees apply.*

Ready for Mating Workshop

1st and 4th September

Anexa FVC vets are running a practical on-farm session to help you get more cows in calf faster. Accurate heat detection in your herd is so important! Did you know that every missed heat is worth \$200-\$300? Have you ever wondered what's actually going on inside the cow for her to cycle and get back in calf again? We will cover all this and more at our pre-mating workshop. See you there!

RSVP now.



Congratulations

to Award Winning Matamata Client

Rex and Sharon Butterworth from Walton have won the 2015 Waikato Dairy Business of the Year award. Well done.

Support is available



Free and confidential help is available through the trusts' coordinator.

0800 787 254 | www.rural-support.org.nz

0800 2 THE VET | anexafvc.co.nz