



Making Dry off Count

By Hamish Clare, Anexa FVC Morrinsville Veterinarian, Advanced Mastitis Accredited Advisor

1. Your **Milk Quality Consult (MQC)** is a great opportunity to review the current season's performance as well as deciding on the best approach at dry off for your herd.
2. The number of herds using teatsealant through **selective therapy or combination therapy** (teatsealant + antibiotic DCT) has increased a lot in the last four years. We have seen some fantastic results, with clinical mastitis rates over the calving period often dropping by half or more. On 2 particular farms the incidence of mastitis dropped from 27% and 32% to 7% and 12 % respectively in the following season after moving to combination therapy!
3. Every year we see problems where **hygiene at dry off** has been poor and cows have developed mastitis as a result. Bacteria present on the outside of a cow's teats come from dirt and faeces, and can cause severe infections if pushed inside the udder during treatment. These can be highly resistant to antibiotics and can cause cow deaths. This is especially important if you are using teatsealant alone. If you have never used teatsealant before, and are planning to this season, make sure you discuss this with your Vet. If you are not sure about hygiene or you need extra manpower, our technicians are available to help.
4. **Cull persistently infected cows.** Culling problem cows is the best way to eliminate some infections from the herd. If cows had high somatic cell counts (HSCCs) last season and are high again this season despite having received DCT then they should be placed on the cull list. Cows greater than seven years old and cows with lumps (abscesses or scar tissue) felt in the udder should be prioritised. We can help you sort out a cull list using herd test and treatment information if required.
5. If you are struggling to keep your bulk tank somatic cell counts (BTSCC) down late in lactation, and not finding clots on your filter, or haven't herd tested recently to easily identify HSCC cows then look for and **dry off those cows doing low production** (around or less than 5L/day) which can easily have SCCs of 500,000. The next step would be to Rapid Mastitis Test (RMT) the whole herd to find the worst high somatic spore count (HSCC) cows. This can be a time consuming job but our Technicians are available to help if needed.

Gold Standard Dry Off Procedure

This is especially important when using Teat Sealant alone.

- ✓ Check if your teatsealant product should be warmed before inserting. Dryseal should not be warmed but in cold conditions warming Teatseal may make application easier. Do not immerse syringes in water. If tubes need to be warmed, float the Teatseal bucket (with syringes dry inside) in a container of warm water.
- ✓ Clean and treat one teat at a time so there is no risk of the teat end getting dirty again before inserting the drycow.
- ✓ Clean each teat thoroughly with a separate wipe or a cotton ball soaked with Meths; often this can require more than one.
- ✓ Partially insert the intramammary tube, taking care not to damage the teat end
- ✓ Apply a generous amount of teat spray.
- ✓ It is best to dry cow the front quarters first and then the back quarters to avoid transferring dirt from your arms onto the back teats.



Stay On Top of Mastitis with This Exciting New Test

The Dairy AntibioGram is a new test now available to New Zealand dairy farmers which detects and monitors antibiotic resistance in mastitis bacteria.

Antibiotics are a valuable tool in the dairy industry for the maintenance of good animal health and welfare and need to be used responsibly. However, with antibiotic resistance becoming a serious concern in both human and animal medicine, knowledge of the resistance status in your herd is the key to choosing the right treatments for your cows, and for monitoring and preventing the development and spread of bacterial resistance.

The test is easily to do and is performed on bulk milk samples taken from the milk processors.

Talk to your local Anexa FVC Vet for more information and watch out for our introductory pricing offer.





New LIC test for *Staph aureus*

Staph aureus is a contagious bacteria usually transmitted between cows during milking by milk liners or milker's hands. It often causes chronic/long term infections and has poor cure rates to treatment e.g. 25-50%. Some strains are resistant to commonly used antibiotics such as penicillin and often culling is the best treatment option.

Using individual Herd Test milk samples, this test is a convenient way of identifying cows with *Staph aureus* infection in your herd. It will allow you to make more informed decisions for dry cow treatment versus culling as part of an overall mastitis management plan.

If you aren't herd testing or are after a cheaper option, we can offer selective culturing for *staph aureus* from sterile milk samples at the Anexa laboratory. For more information talk to your Anexa Vet.



Nitrate Poisoning

By Louise Coats, Anexa FVC Ngatea Veterinarian

The beautifully timed rain and lovely warm ground temperatures have set a perfect storm up for potential nitrate poisoning if pre-feed testing and controlled feeding regimes are not followed. Numerous brassica samples tested so far are very toxic, and if fed will happily kill cows. Please, get your crop tested before you feed it. If the reading is above 100, do not feed it. Rape stems have been testing at 250 to 500 and leaves at 10 to 100.

Cost of lameness

By Hanneke Officer, Anexa FVC Rototuna Veterinarian

Did you realise?

- A lame cow can cost you \$310.09 in early lactation before she shows her lameness. Imagine the cost if you include treatment time, drugs, withhold and production loss!
- If more than 7% of your herd is lame per year, there are changes you can make to decrease prevalence.
- Regular hoof trimming not only decreases the occurrence of lame cows (resulting in increased production and improved reproduction), it also identifies most common causes and probable risk factors specific to your farm.

Now is the perfect time to plan track maintenance to be scheduled after dry-off? Considering the significant cost, arrange a chat with your Healthy Hoof Provider regarding what is needed on your property to get it done right. If you're comfortable walking on your tracks in bare feet, so are your cows - If not... they're not!

Is your vaccine program working?

By Arnica avn der Wiele, Anexa FVC Ngatea Veterinarian

Last year some of our Anexa FVC farm clients and Veterinarians took part in a nationwide Massey University trial that looked into the efficacy of long-term vaccination of dairy herds for leptospirosis. 200 dairy herds were randomly selected from throughout New Zealand and our vets took 20 urine and blood samples from each selected client's herd during the period December 2015 to March 2016. This month the first results of the trial have been shared with us. It is great to participate in these studies and be able to present you with local, up-to-date New Zealand information.

Leptospirosis is estimated to cost the New Zealand economy \$36 million per year. People are infected through direct or indirect contact with animal urine. Preliminary results of the trial indicate that animal vaccination programs continue to be an effective measure to prevent shedding in New Zealand dairy cattle and thus reduce exposure to humans. The results also reinforce the importance of a multi-faceted approach to this complex disease.

In other words, yes, our vaccination programs are working but you still need to make sure that you use it in combination with other protective measures to prevent you, your family and your staff from contracting the disease.

Continue to protect you, your Staff and Family

- ✓ **Vaccinate** your animals under advice from your veterinarian.
- ✓ **Control rodents and wildlife:** seek advice on baiting and trapping, vermin-proof buildings and feed stores.
- ✓ **Minimise contact with animal urine** - "Keep it off. If splashed then dry and wash"
 - a. **Personal hygiene:** hand washing, no smoking/eating/drinking in the shed.
 - b. **Personal protective equipment:** aprons, gloves, boots, keep wounds covered. Make sure that this equipment is effective at keeping you safe.
 - c. **Protect against exposures** not in the milking shed such as effluent spraying, assisting calving, home kill and hunting
- ✓ **Be aware and share your awareness** - remember, others can be exposed when not working e.g. kids playing in puddles. If you have 'flu-like symptoms, seek medical help early and raise the suspicion of lepto to your Doctor - "hey Doc, might this be lepto?"

For further information about Lepto or to work out the risk on your farm, contact your lead Vet and complete a Leptospirosis Risk Management Appraisal. We are here to help.



Zinc Supplementation can be hit and miss – how to get yours to hit the mark

By Rachel Hamill, Anexa FVC Morrinsville Veterinarian

The summer of 2016 was one of the worst seasons of recent times for facial eczema (FE). After last year's devastation, we really wanted to make sure we were getting our Zinc right and that our cows would be protected from further liver damage this season.

This year, we have been encouraging our farmers to test their herd's blood Zinc levels, to make sure they are reaching the protective range. This involves blood sampling 10 animals from the herd. The results have been enlightening! Almost all of the herds we have sampled have had a proportion of the herd that did not have Zinc levels high enough to provide any FE protection, and in several herds it was the majority of cows.

Most of these herds were using in-line water treatment to supplement the cows. Although it is the most popular method of supplementation, it is also the most unreliable. By working with their Vet, these farmers have been able to formulate a plan to get their Zinc supplementation to hit the mark. We have also seen some cases of Zinc toxicity again this year. Zinc toxicity can cause ill thrift, cows off milk, milk fever like signs, scour, abortions, anaemia, jaundice and death. Blood testing has allowed Vets working with these farmers to decide when it is safe to continue Zinc supplementation again following this diagnosis.

The more we test cows for Zinc, the more we realise how hit and miss Zinc supplementation can be. As this year's FE season starts to draw to a close, we encourage you to think about checking your herd's Zinc levels early next year, before the real threat starts.

Do you know how much Zinc your cows are really getting? Without blood testing, your guess is as good as ours.



Trace Elements and Copper

Winter is coming! The unseasonal weather patterns we have already experienced in 2017 are proof that every year is different. Many of our herds are going to be milking on for longer this season. We have already seen some spring-like metabolic issues related to increased production and flush pasture growth. Diet, production and animal health may all be different this year.

As winter approaches, we recommend that you do trace element testing on all classes of stock. We commonly test Copper, Selenium, Magnesium and B12, to ensure good animal health heading into the stressful period of late pregnancy and calving.

During autumn it is especially important to test cows for Copper levels. Liver samples are a wealth of information and let us look at how much copper is actually in storage. With this knowledge, we can tell if you are:

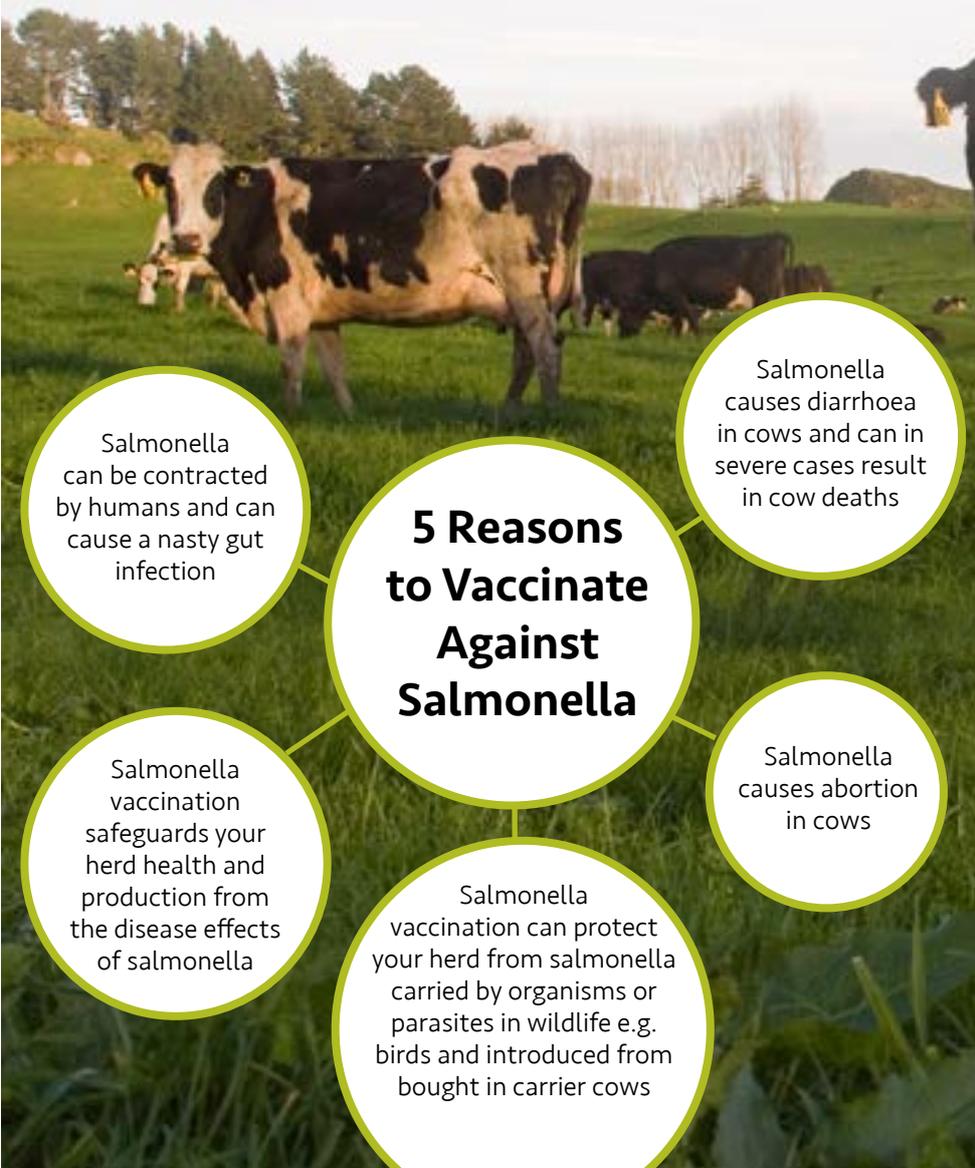
Over supplementing Copper:

- Copper toxicity can be fatal and we have seen several herds over the past few years with extremely high copper levels after supplementing minerals and also feeding PKE.
- Unnecessary supplementation wastes your money! Why go to the effort and expense of providing additional supplementation to cows that already have enough Copper to get them through the winter.

Under supplementing Copper:

- Low Copper can affect production, reproductive performance, and growth rates in younger animals.
- The herd may be adequate at the moment, but how do you know they won't be low in another month's time? Liver biopsies allow us to predict how long current reserves will last and ensure your cows get through until caving without the risk of deficiency

Make informed decisions about how you supplement your animals this year. Book in your trace element testing with your local AnexaFVC Vet – we're here to help.



5 Reasons to Vaccinate Against Salmonella

Salmonella can be contracted by humans and can cause a nasty gut infection

Salmonella causes diarrhoea in cows and can in severe cases result in cow deaths

Salmonella causes abortion in cows

Salmonella vaccination can protect your herd from salmonella carried by organisms or parasites in wildlife e.g. birds and introduced from bought in carrier cows

Salmonella vaccination safeguards your herd health and production from the disease effects of salmonella

Herd Condition – Stay on track for Spring

By Dave Curnow, Anexa FVC Ngatea Veterinarian

With the abundance of grass this autumn many farms are planning to milk on for longer. At discussion groups most farmers are (or have) removed supplement to try and utilise the grass fully.

Like everything in farming, there is always a compromise and the short term gain in more days in milk could become a larger loss next season if cow condition falls away.

Target body condition scores (BCS) at calving is 5.0 for mature cows and 5.5 for 2 and 3 year olds. A lot of herds do not reach these targets due to a combination of inadequate feed (type and amount) offered and time before calving.

To the right is a local example demonstrating the impact of BCS on reproduction.

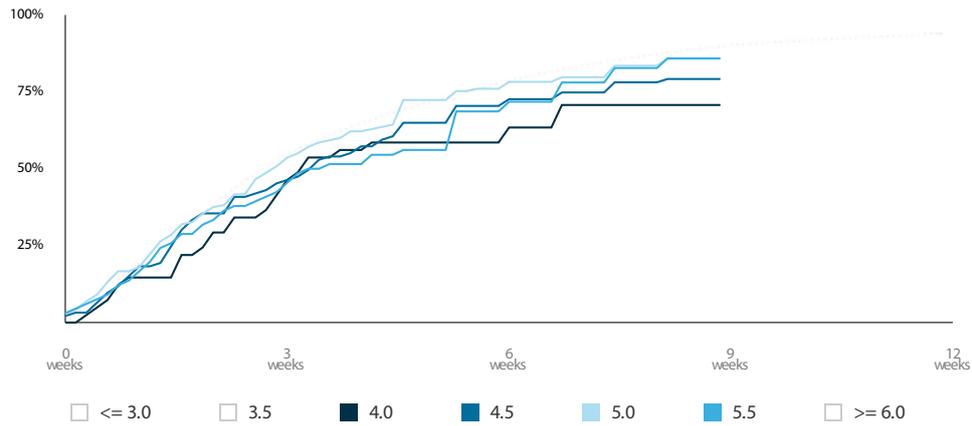
In this herd, cows calving in BCS 5.0 had a 6% higher 6 week in calf than a cow calving in 4.5, which is worth \$24/cow, and cows calving in BCS 4.0 vs 5.0 had a 17% lower 6 week in calf – worth \$68/cow.

The industry average lost milk production is 15kg per BCS unit below target at calving.

Planning ahead requires knowing where your herd is currently, continued monitoring, and having a sound plan over the coming months.

If you would like your herd body condition scored to industry standards or would like advice on how to get your herd to calving targets please contact your local Anexa FVC Vet.

In-Calf Rates by Body Condition Score



In-Calf Rates by Body Condition Scores as at Planned Start of Calving (PSC)

BCS	Count	In-calf rate				Not in-calf rate	
		3 weeks	6 weeks	9 weeks	9+ weeks		
<= 3.0	1	0%	100%	100%	100%	0%	
3.5	1	0%	100%	100%	100%	0%	
4.0	41	4%	41%	59%	71%	29%	
4.5	93	10%	45%	70%	79%	21%	
5.0	144	15%	51%	76%	86%	14%	
5.5	66	7%	42%	69%	86%	14%	
>= 6.0	24	3%	42%	89%	100%	0%	
No BCS	583	61%	44%	66%	78%	78%	22%

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Onsite Lab testing now available

At Anexa FVC we strive to offer our farmers the best and believe that the way forward is through innovation. To keep up with the ever-changing needs of the farming sector and ever-growing sample testing requirements, we offer laboratory testing that offers faster and cheaper testing for our clients.

Laboratory Services Include:

- ✓ Milk culture and antimicrobial sensitivity testing
- ✓ Calf scour testing, including Rotavirus, Coronavirus, E. coli, Cryptosporidium, Salmonella, Yersinia, Campylobacter
- ✓ Parasite testing: faecal egg counts, drench trials (sheep, goats, cattle, horses, small animals)
- ✓ Haematology and biochemistry on blood samples from small animals and production animal

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5 ways Anexa FVC Vets are working for you:

- 1) We focus on solutions that will improve your bottom line.
- 2) As a Vet club we are service driven, not profit driven.
- 3) You can trust the products we use.
- 4) You'll learn heaps from us and we'll keep you informed.
- 5) We will keep you up-to-date with local and relevant information and research findings.

Find out more at anexafvc.co.nz/about or give us a call.

Book your FREE Healthy Pet Weight Check today*

*March and April only, offer not available at Gordonton and Rototuna clinics, bookings essential.



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