TOKOROA & DISTRICTS VETERINARY SERVICES

TAUPO VETERINARY CENTRE

January 2018

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TOKOROA CLINIC

Ashworth Street
PO Box 182

Mon – Fri 8:00 am – 5:30 pm
Sat 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

07 886 6119 (24 hours)

TokRecep@tokvets.co.nz

TAUPO CLINIC

3 Oruanui Street
PO Box 637

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Sat 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

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TpoRecep@taupovets.co.nz

WHAKAMARU CLINIC

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Mon – Fri
8:30 am – 4:30 pm

07 882 8094 (24 hours)
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Happy New Year! Bring on 2018. We hope you all had a great Christmas/New Year and managed to get some time off to spend with friends and family.

The hot weather is great for holidays, but not for growing grass. If the predictions for a dry January/February are correct, then ensure your back up plan is sorted. If you are considering the switch to once-a-day milking, plan to begin before the feed shortage hits and to stagger the herd to prevent BMSCC spikes. DairyNZ has a good online resource, titled the "Summer management plan", which we recommend referring to.

Don't forget the heat also affects your cows and they can develop heat stress. Where possible, reduce the walking distance and speed to the dairy. Reduce the time spent in holding yards and minimise handling stress. Consider feeding high-fibre supplements at night time to reduce the impact of heat production from fermentation.

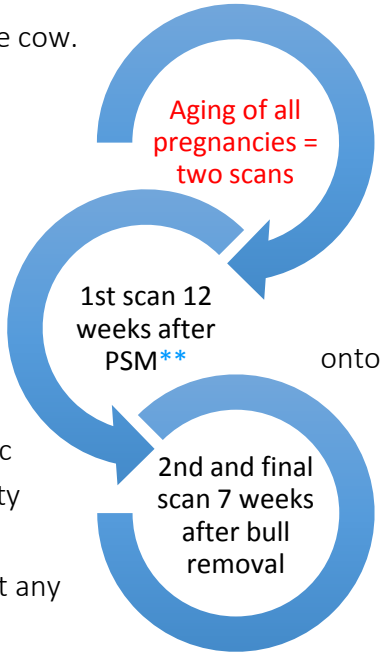
Remember to book in your scanning – spots fill up fast!

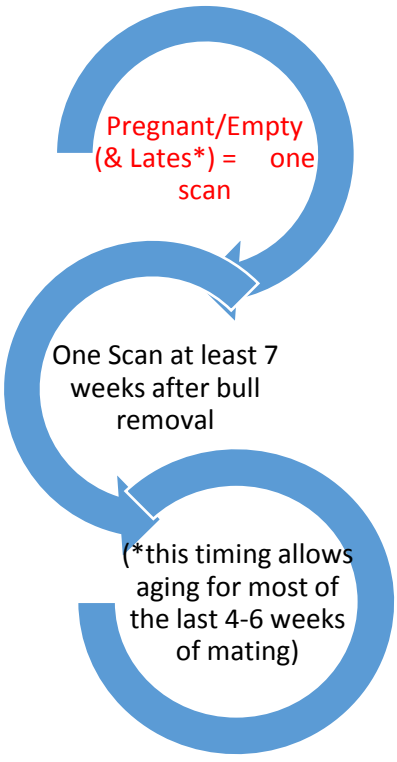
Does she have a bun in the oven?

Option A: 2 scans

Here we are again! It's time to get scanning!

- Aging all pregnancies gives you maximum information for decision making for culling, drying-off, winter grazing and calving.
- Modern rectal ultrasound machines used, making it quick and easy on the cow.
- Empty cows are only called so after being checked manually/by vet. This is the only way to accurately confirm empty cows.
- The bull must have been away from the cows for at least 7 weeks to call empty cows. Otherwise you will have a 'recheck' group.
- Rotary sheds can be scanned at the same time as milking. Herringbones must be done between milking sorry!
- Recording scanning data onto InfoVet allows the data to be loaded onto MINDA. We need to know if you wish to do this.
- **Cows tested early in pregnancy have a greater time for early embryonic loss to occur. This means there might be some cows which show up empty at calving time.
- *If you only need to know pregnant/empty, then scanning can be done at any time
  7+ weeks after bull removal.





REMINDERS

Calf vaccinations

Calf leptospirosis and clostridial vaccination programmes should be completed. Remember once infected with lepto, animals remain shedders for life, so it is better to stop them becoming infected in the first place.

Sudden death from clostridial disease often strikes your best calves and is 100% preventable by vaccinating. Saving one animal pays off the cost of the vaccine.

Herd + heifer lepto

Autumn/winter is the biggest risk period for leptospirosis as the weather gets wet. Vaccinate heifers now to ensure they are lined up with the main herd for annual boosting

Toxovax for ewes

Toxovax for sheep has a very short shelf life so is made to order. It needs to be given at least 4 weeks before tupping. One vaccination provides lifetime protection. If you are joining the ram in early March, 2-tooths will need to be vaccinated in early February, so you will need to order your vaccine approximately now. If you are hogget mating you need to decide if you are going to vaccinate all the hoggets that go to the ram or chose not to do the hoggets and wait until 2-tooth stage before vaccination.

Spore spotting

Now is the time to assess how effective your FE prevention programme was last season and have a think about how best to approach it this season.

Clinical cases of FE with peeling skin, agitated cows and reduced milk production are fairly obvious and a clear indicator that preventative measures aren't working. The not so obvious are the sub-clinical cases, where production suffers. You can have these sub-clinical cows in the herd without even knowing however, if you have clinical FE there will be many more with sub-clinical disease; think the tip-of-the-iceberg scenario.

We use regional spore counts and local monitor farms to help determine when it is time to begin zinc dosing, however these should not be a substitute for monitoring spore counts on your own farm. There is such huge variability between and within farms that you can never assume your farm is safe unless you have spore counted.

A reminder of your zinc options;

1. **Drenching** – provides reliable protection, but is time consuming and often impractical.
2. **Bullets** – Provides reliable protection, but spore count before administering to avoid giving too early because more will be needed if the FE season is prolonged, putting stock at risk for zinc toxicity.
3. **Trough** – poor palatability so requires a period of transition. Should never be used as the only form of dosing as daily water intakes of stock can vary considerably depending on weather, milk production, social hierarchy and DM intake.
4. **Fungicide sprays** – you MUST spore count before spraying as fungicides only stop spores germinating and will not kill existing spores. The whole farm needs to be sprayed (along hedges, under trees even) and the grass should be green and growing so it absorbs the fungicide.

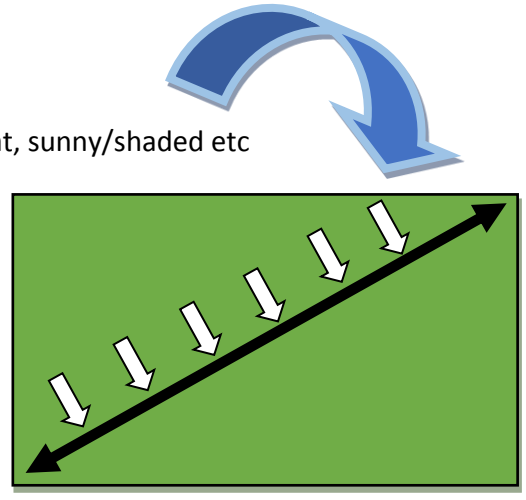
DairyNZ research of 105 farms across the North Island during February- April 2014, highlighted that the only reliable method of Zn administration to get protective levels in the blood was either drenching (daily or bolus), in the feed or in the feed combined with water dosing. Water dosing alone wasn't effective in the study. *Note: this is not to say it can't be effective, but monitoring Zn blood levels is necessary as dosing adjustments are needed more often than not.*

Common treatment errors

The main error in dosing occurs due to either; a wide variation of cattle weights within the herd and lack of weighing to deduce the required dose; and/or a lack of monitoring the response to supplementation which would allow for adjustments to protocols. **The best way to monitor effectiveness is to check blood Zn levels from 10 cows in the herd 1-2 weeks after beginning treatment.**

Sampling tips;

- Pick a mixture of 4 different paddocks – north/south facing, hilly/flat, sunny/shaded etc
- Sample the **same 4 paddocks each week**
- Walk in a diagonal line from one paddock corner to another, sampling every 10 steps
- Avoid collecting too much soil, but sample as close to the roots as possible



Mycoplasma bovis update

Given the recent discovery of *Mycoplasma bovis* in the North Island we urge all our clients to consider the following;

What is the biggest risk factor for introducing *Mycoplasma bovis* onto my farm?

The movement of infected stock from the origin farm was identified as the cause of *M.bovis* spread, both within the South and North Island. Therefore, the biggest risk factor is the introduction of infected stock to your property. What complicates identifying affected animals is that some show no clinical signs and would only be detected if tested for Mycoplasma. Nose-to-nose contact is required to infect a naive animal.

How can I minimise this risk?

It is absolutely crucial that you know where stock are coming from before purchase or lease. Check that NAIT records are up to date. The NAIT system has been essential in tracking stock movements from previously detected positive farms.

Although bulls are considered low risk, care needs to be taken with the management of service bulls due to their regular movements;

- Check the source herd BEFORE purchasing bulls – refer to the DairyNZ pre-purchase checklist
- Quarantine all bulls for 7 days and monitor for lameness (swollen joints) and respiratory problems when brought onto the farm and when returned to farm of origin

Check with graziers regarding their policies for keeping your stock separate from others and quarantine stock brought back from the runoff/grazing.

The MPI website below is an excellent source of information with answers to frequently asked questions.

https://www.mpi.govt.nz/protection-and-response/responding/alerts/mycoplasma-bovis/