



COURTESY MICHAEL KARR

Te Awamutu Veterinary Association Inc. trading as

**TOKOROA & DISTRICTS
VETERINARY SERVICES**

**TAUPO
VETERINARY
CENTRE**

July 2018



In This Issue

*An Insight To Our
Veterinary Practice* Page 2

*Transition
Management* Page 3

*Winter Food For
Thought* Page 4

*Gearing Up The Calf
Shed* Page 4

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

The calving season is soon to begin – we hope you have managed to get in a well earned break over the dry period and are rearing to go. Now is a good time to double check that your RVM is completed and you are stocked up with the supplies you will need for the Spring!

In this issue we discuss what to look out for when feeding crops, transition management and how to best set up your calf sheds for a successful season of calf rearing. Also in this issue, an insight to the history and development of our clinic from its founding in 1970 to the current day.

If you have had new staff members join the team recently, please make sure that their contact information is available to us – clarifying contact information now will prevent any potential miscommunication in the future.

Remember to put things in place to care for yourself and your staff over the Spring. Make sure you are getting in good meals and have healthy snacks on hand in the tractor, on the bike or tucked away in the dairy shed.

TAUPO CLINIC

3 Oruanui Street
PO Box 637

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

07 378 5433 (24 hours)

TpoRecep@taupovets.co.nz

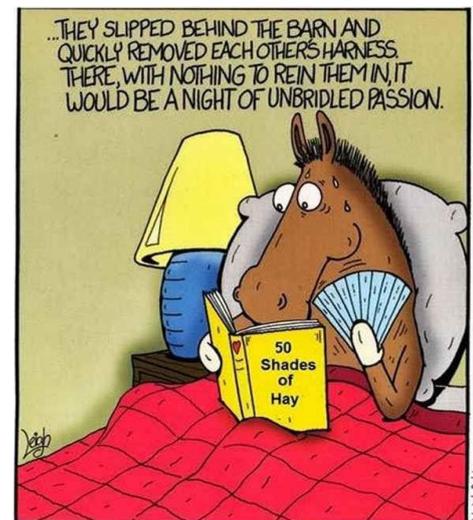
WHAKAMARU CLINIC

Tihoi Road

Mon – Fri
8:30 am – 4:30 pm

07 882 8094 (24 hours)

WhakaRecep@tokvets.co.nz



An Insight into Our Veterinary Practice

In the 1940`s local farmers around New Zealand got together establishing their own Veterinary Practices in order to service their Animal Health needs. These were called “Vet Clubs” and appeared all over NZ, some of which still remain today. They have a committee elected from those farmers who set policy and guidance for the operation. They are a non-profitable organisation with any profits going to the benefit of the farm owner.

Te Awamutu Veterinary Association (VETORA Waikato) as it is known in the Waikato is one of the initial enterprising concepts still in operation today and which we are now part of. Your farmer representative on the Te Awamutu Board is John Sargent – Whakamaru. In time you will become members of the Vet Club and be able to nominate and vote on your elected representative.

Our practice was born out of the Putaruru/Tokoroa farmers forming the “PUTARURU VET CLUB” which remained operating under this name until the 1970`s, when three of its Vets took over the management under a private scheme contracted to supply veterinary needs to local farmers. Hence “TOKOROA & DISTRICTS VETERINARY SERVICES” was born and remains today.

In the late 1970`s it had three vets servicing the Tokoroa/Whakamaru area, with another practice servicing Putaruru. With farming becoming more intensive and demanding we now have seven vets operating in the Tokoroa/Whakamaru region and a further four based in our Taupo clinic, all backed up by three trained veterinary technicians. Added to this is our team of six vets who focus on our companion or small animal business. We also have a great team of support staff to add to our mix.

We pride ourselves on our team culture amongst all staff and this is evident in a number of ways. Our people are involved in local sports clubs and community organisations and socialize together on a regular basis; we train, learn and work together.

We have a commitment to giving veterinary school graduates a start in their careers. This gives a good mix of new young blood in our system alongside our older more experienced Vets. We currently have 14 experienced vets alongside three graduates this year, we couldn't ask for a better mix.

The older more experienced offer;

- “On farm” animal health experiences and farming practice
- Ability to adapt faster when the pressures on because they've been there before
- Role model leadership

Our graduates offer;

- A fresh perspective that brings new and innovative ideas
- The latest in Technological ideas that relate to farming and veterinary care
- They are open to learning new skills and gaining experience
- They have boundless energy to put into their job benefitting our clients

Whether our staff are new or old we have a huge commitment to ongoing training and education for all. People don't stay inexperienced in their job for very long especially in the world of farming in which we all live, you gain experience very fast, and you need a good mix of new and older blood to maximize the benefits.

We have an obligation to our clients and staff to maintain a modern, innovative and technology based service, this means updating equipment regularly as well as training our people.

Transition Management

Now is an important time to be reviewing and implementing a transition management plan for your herd. The exact time frame of transitioning cows from dry -> springers -> colostrum's -> milkers is variable in the literature but essentially involves the time from three weeks pre calving, through to three weeks post calving.

Key targets of good transition management are minimising the time a cow spends in a negative energy balance, and ensuring her metabolic requirements are met. The concept of DCAD, magnesium and calcium control is essentially a method to improve a cow's ability to mobilise calcium at a time when she needs it the most. To discuss this more in depth, please contact your vet.



Some important tips to get your herd, and your team through this busy time of year;

- Using BCS's to guide your feed allocation – cows need to be at BCS 5 and heifers at 5.5 one month out from calving. Hopefully a pro-active approach has allowed your herd to be at the right condition this close to calving
- High levels of potassium (K+) can inhibit a cows ability to mobilise calcium - do not put springers on effluent paddocks and potassium should be avoided in your autumn fertiliser
- The use of anionic salts in the transition period;
Depending on your system being used, Mag sulphate / Mag chloride / Mag oxide will be given to the herd Be aware that both Mag sulphate and Mag chloride are bitter tasting, and if being used in your Dosetron – some cows may select paddock water over troughs. Make sure you transition the herd onto this
If dusting with CausMag be aware of the difference between allowance vs uptake- the dusting rate on a bad day may need to be higher than on a nice blue bird spring day
- Do not supplement calcium pre – calving (unless tests have been done to show that you need it) as it lowers the cows ability to then mobilise calcium when they need it. It is important however to supplement the colostrum mob and heifers after calving
- Pay particular attention to your high risk cows; older animals, high producers, over-conditioned cows and Jerseys

Good transition management is well worth the effort. Done correctly it can reduce the incidence of several animal health issues (endometritis, metritis, RFMs, mastitis, lameness and abdominal upsets such as LDA/RDA and acidosis), improve productivity and reduce the stressors of springtime dramaticall.

Four men are in the hospital waiting room because their wives are having babies. A nurse goes up to the first guy and says, "Congratulations! You're the father of twins."

"That's odd," answers the man. "I work for the Minnesota Twins!"

A nurse says to the second guy, "Congratulations! You're the father of triplets!"

"That's weird," answers the second man. "I work for the 3M company!"

A nurse tells the third man, "Congratulations! You're the father of quadruplets!"

"That's strange," he answers. "I work for the Four Seasons hotel!"

The last man is groaning and banging his head against the wall. "What's wrong?" the others ask.

"I work for 7 Up!"

Winter food for thought

The use of crops through the winter period is an effective way to bridge feed deficits, and lift the ME quality of what your herd is receiving, but it is not without its risks. The use of brassicas (Turnips, Swedes, Rape, and Leafy Turnips) as well as Beets (Fodder Beet & Sugar Beet) and cereals is common in the area.

Just a reminder for clients who have been using crops and may still be close to calving. Fodder beet in particular is low in phosphate, and if you still want to utilise this crop up into the transition period we suggest to add at least **50gms of di-calcium phosphate (DCP) into their diet daily**. Also ensure that if you are feeding crops which may be high in nitrate that you get a sample tested before the stock start grazing.

Important animal health risks that you and your staff should be on the lookout for are;

- Acidosis: dehydration, in appetite, bloated and often with foul smelling green diarrhoea
- Photosensitivity: usually 10-14days after going on to crop (but as early as four) cows may twitch, flick their ears/tails, stomp/kick and show swelling around eyes, ears, udder and feet
- Choke: dehydration, rapid bloating
- Nitrate poisoning: more common in overcast weather, during changeable colder months. Cows may show signs of rapid breathing, wobbliness, excess salivation, abdominal pain, muscle tremors, blue discolouration and recumbency
 - Make sure you have a way to test your nitrate – if you drop in samples we can test in house and/or send them off to the lab
- SMCO poisoning: usually seen when cattle have been on crops for at least five weeks. There is an increased risk when; crops flower, re-growth occurs and after frosts. Signs include red coloured urine, lethargy, paleness and increased respiration
- Phosphorus deficiency
- Less commonly; Vitamin B12 deficiency, oxalate poisoning (presents with milk fever like signs)

Gearing up the calf shed

Now is a good time to ensure your calf sheds are ready to go, some important things to keep in mind are;

- Calf pens should be warm, sheltered and free from any objects/sharp material/stray wires which may cause injury
- Bark chips, post peelings and saw dust all make great bedding material. Bedding needs to be at least 20-30cm deep at the start of the season. To assess the bedding for your calves stand inside the pen yourself and drop down on your knees – if it's too hard for you, it's probably uncomfortable for them
- Do you have adequate space? Remember each calf should be allocated at least 1.5m²
- Sheds should be draft free but have ventilation present above calf level to ensure the air stays fresh and prevent calves getting pneumonia. If you can smell ammonia in the calf shed then it requires more ventilation
- Make sure you have a disinfectant policy ready
- If you haven't already, organise to have solid partitions between pens (cheap material can be purchased from hardware stores to do this) and also allocate a separate isolation area for sick calves
- Adopt and maintain an "all in – all out" policy
- WATER, WATER, WATER - all calves need to have access to fresh water; this is best placed at the front of pens

