



# Bay of Islands Veterinary Services

# Bullsheet

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## Veterinarians:

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**Libby Elvins** BVSc, MRCVS  
**Rob Knott** BVMS

## Editorial

This year is panning out about the same as last year, i.e. very wet! Again it has taken a while for the winter to set in, but it is here now.

Great News on the pay-out front with the lift to \$6.75 per kg of milk solids, and there is talk of \$7.00 per kg for lamb by October, so it is looking good for the coming season.

If you have been to our Kaikohe clinic lately you may have come across our new vet Libby Elvins, welcome to Libby. Libby has practiced in England for 18 months after graduating from Liverpool University. She is here as a 4 month locum, and is fitting in very well.

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## Welcome to our new vet Rob Knott

(Our newest vet) Rob grew up in the heartland of America before moving to California to complete a degree in biology. He's always been fascinated by the great outdoors, and as an ordinary kid from Kansas, loves to travel and experience different ways of living. Rob got his veterinary degree in Scotland from the University of Glasgow and looks forward to many adventures to come in New Zealand! Rob will be based in our Kaikohe clinic.



Libby and Rob

## Mastitis

With the mud out there, we are seeing an increase in the incidence of mastitis. Washing really dirty udders before milking, is a way to help decrease the incidence of mastitis, as is the application of a good teat spray after milking. Trial work has shown a significant increase in cure rates in treating mastitis if you clean the teat end the same as if you were to give drycow or teatseal, i.e. take a little time to clean the teat end with either teat wipes or cotton wool balls soaked in 70% meths before you insert the antibiotic, only go for partial insertion, and massage the antibiotic up into the udder.

Trial work has shown you can increase

the cure rate from a low of 50 % to up into the 80% bracket by not introducing any extra bacteria when you are treating an intramammary infection.

Early season mastitis is mostly caused by Strep Uberus, an environmental contaminate which is ubiquitous on farm. (i.e. everywhere), especially where there is mud and faeces.

First choice intramammary for Strep Uberus is Intracillin or Penclox and Penetheject injection. Where there is more than one quarter involved or she is a reluctant heifer.

## Metabolic Diseases

Be aware, effluent paddocks are not good choices to calve your cows on. If you have been able to spread effluent over your paddocks, take care. Effluent is high in Potassium (K), and that is a problem for calving cows, as it will drop their calcium and magnesium levels, leading to **more Milk FEVER**. Ideally don't use these paddocks to calve cows on or for colostrum cows. The best way to avoid metabolic disease is to provide plenty of Magnesium pre-calving, and a starter drench on the day she calves. Keep the magnesium up after calving with the addition of lime flour for the colostrum cows and the milkers will help ensure they have adequate calcium for the first few days post calving. Remember to offer your springers lots of grass, at least 12 -15 kg DM per day, they may not eat it all, but they do need to take in enough feed so they have the energy to push the calf out and get up and get going.

**Ketosis** is a cow intoxicated by the mobilisation of her own fat reserves. If you have some fat carry-overs, they are most at risk of Ketosis.

**Rumensin Bullets** pre-calving helps pre-

vent Ketosis. Rumensin supply's more energy from the feed and so helps prevent ketosis. The ideal time to treat is 10 days prior to calving.

#### **Starter drenches** – Starter Plus

Starter drenches contain glycerine, molasses and by pass fat to give cows energy, also calcium and magnesium to help prevent milk fever. These can be given routinely to cows after calving to make up for low intakes on the day of calving, also as a booster to any sick cow after calving. NOT to be used before calving as early calcium can upset the bodys calcium absorption and can make cows more prone to milk fever.

#### **Vaccination Reminder Time**

**Lambs** - If you have vaccinated your Ewes prior to lambing, you can leave vaccinating your Lambs till weaning, use a 5 in 1 Vaccine then, followed by a booster at their next drench.

PK Anti-tet (lamb vaccine) is available this year. If you have not vaccinated your Ewes pre –lambing you will need to use PK Anti-tet on the lambs at docking.

**Calves** - Calves will also need their first 7 in 1 at 6- 8 weeks of age followed by a booster 4 weeks later. 7 in 1 covers the 5 most common clostridial infections, plus the 2 most common strains of Lepto. 7 in 1 is a cheap form of protection for new stock on your property. If your farm has a history of sudden death in what appear to be well vaccinated cattle , then Clostridium Sordelli may be the cause, if that is the case then Covexin 10in 1 Vaccine may be your best option.

#### **Calf Disbudding**

Bay of Islands Vets provides a **calf disbudding service**. Ideally carried out when the calves are between 2 and 6 weeks old. This is done with sedation and a local anaesthetic, being less stressful and painful for the calves. It is also an ideal time to vaccinate, tag, apply rubber rings for castration and perform DNA testing if required. If the horn base is over 2cm, gas disbudding is not as effective.

Remember it is a legal requirement to have pain relief provided by a vet if the animal is over **9 months** old. Don't leave the dehorning till later, it becomes a major job so early disbudding is recommended.

#### **DRY COW AND THE BOBBY CALF**

We are frequently asked about the bobby calf if the cow has had dry cow therapy. Most dry cow products have a meat withholding period of 30 days (check with us for specific products).

If cows calve after the meat/ milk withholding time has elapsed there is no withholding period for the bobby calves suckling the colostrum.

If cows calve before the meat withholding time has elapsed or a calf is fed milk from a cow that is still within the milk with- hold period , then **the default with- hold period of 91 days applies. This means the calf cannot be sent as a Bobby calf and will need to be raised.**

If a Bobby calf is fed milk from a cow treated with a RVM i.e. antibiotic, then the 91 day meat with hold default applies.

N.B It is important that bobby calves receive adequate colostrum and are healthy when they go off for slaughter, firstly as a welfare issue for the calf and to ensure you get paid for your product.

#### **Inhibitory Substance Grades**

The testing these days is very sensitive, so ensure you milk your fresh cows out well, a minimum of 8 milkings post calving. If there are any cows being treated for mastitis or sore feet and are on antibiotics, ensure they are kept separate, well-marked and milked after the herd, into test buckets.

**Records** - You need to ensure you have adequate records of which cows were treated with which product, at what date and when they are safe to go back in the Vat. An extra day added to a milk with holding period is a minimal cost compared to paying for a tanker load of contaminated milk. If you think you may have added contaminated milk to your vat, we have a Snap test available, which will give you an idea if the vat can be sent. The Snap test is an overly sensitive test but it is better to be safe than sorry.

#### **Spring Mating. At risk Cows: Metrichchecking!**

To give you the best chance of finding the cows with uterine infections (metritis), the cows need to be checked about 20 days after calving. Keep this in mind.

Checking the cows in two groups is a good solution.

Applying tail paint to the early calving cows then changing to a different colour is a simple way to tell the two groups apart for checking. Cows should be calved a minimum of 2-3 weeks before metri-checking. If you don't want to check the whole herd, then all at risk cows need to be checked.

At risk cows are any which have had

- Assisted calving
- Retained membranes
- Mastitis
- Milkfever
- Sore feet
- Any other illness.

**Non cycling cows** - Do you have a plan? We hope that there is a great spring waiting for us. If you get to 3 weeks into mating and submission rates are below targets there are very limited options. It is ideal to tail paint 4 weeks from the planned start of mating, then check the number of cows rubbed , a week before the start . You then have an idea on how it is looking and your likely submission rate. You can then decide what if anything you need to do, i.e. consider once a day milking those cows not seen to have had a heat , and or using cidrs on that group to get them to cycle in the first 3 weeks of mating.