

New Season's Tick Control

The New Zealand tick is a three host tick. That is to say, it feeds on three separate hosts to complete its lifecycle and lay eggs. The first feed is in the Autumn (Jan to April). The ticks then fall off onto the ground to moult. The next generation then comes out in August to October to feed again on your animals. These ticks are the "nymph" stage and are typically only a couple of millimetres in size. Applying treatment to stock over the Spring will impact on adult tick numbers at Christmas.

Cattle can be treated with Bayticol or Flumethrin Pour-On at 6 weekly intervals or given Python ear tags that last 100 days. Horses can be treated with Ripcord (if prescribed by your Vet) or Permaxin.

Theileria, "the tick disease", is spread to cattle by tick bites. Nymph ticks are just as dangerous as adults. Calves are the stock most at risk of disease. One bite can be enough to infect a calf but more bites increases the risk and the severity of the disease. Sick calves become anaemic, jaundiced (yellow), weak and may die.

Controlling Costs is about Maintaining Opportunities

Times are tight so we all need to keep a handle on the costs of operation and one of the most important methods of doing this is by keeping your options open. If you have a choice you can make a decision. If you leave yourself with no choices then you have to do what comes along – good or bad.

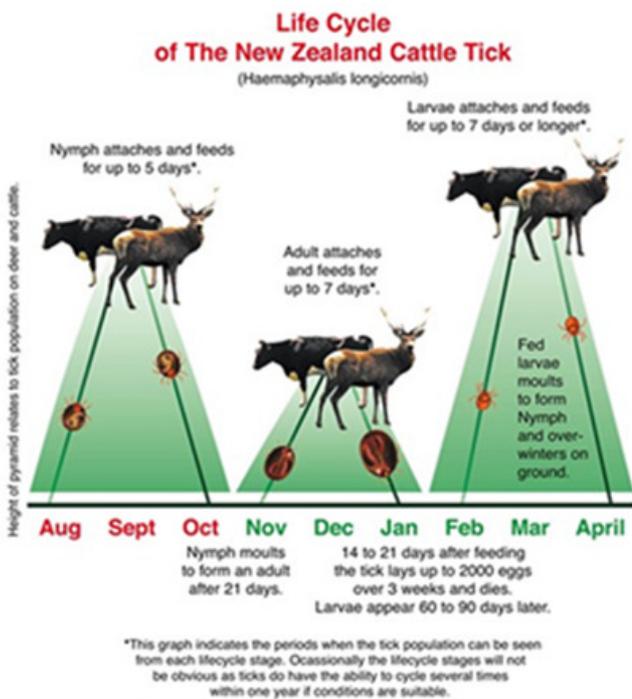


Keeping options open is not always expensive. An example is pre-mating tail painting. If you put tail paint on the herd four weeks before the start of AB then you will have the information three weeks later on what is happening with your cows cycling. You can then make a decision on whether to put in CIDRs early or not. If you don't put on the tail paint you have no choice and the first opportunity to use CIDRs will be after 3 weeks of mating.

The economic model shows that even at a pay out of \$4, early treatment with CIDRs has a positive return on investment. However by three weeks after the start of mating this has become negative. The up front cost of early treatment is obviously higher as more cows are treated and the return will not be seen until next season, as it is mainly in extra days in milk at the start of the season.

Save money for sure, but make smart savings not just cuts, and try and keep your options open so you can still make decisions to maximise your profit. We can often help with advice and information on animal health treatment, management options and outcomes so come in and talk with us.

New Sheep Care Course
We are now offering an evening course on Sheep Care at VN Helensville. Contact Lisa or Mark for further information.



Calf Disbudding

We are very focussed on getting the best outcomes on your farms in all of the procedures and programs we recommend. One of the areas where our vet practice has seen great uptake of our service is for disbudding young calves.

Calf disbudding is an essential farm practice. However, the process does involve burning the skin & underlying horn tissue and, as such, is painful and does cause inflammation. As with all procedures, our aim is to achieve the optimal outcome, both for your business and the health and welfare of your animals.



Calves disbudded without providing any pain relief always perform poorly in studies, hence we do not provide a disbudding service that includes this option. Multiple studies have shown when calves are provided with a combination of local anaesthesia, sedation & an anti-inflammatory injection they are less affected by disbudding compared with calves only given local anaesthesia & sedation.

If you have had a painful procedure under local anaesthesia (e.g. dentistry work) you will be able to relate to the severe pain that returns when the local 'wears off' an hour or so after administration. Behavioural and stress studies in calves report that calves demonstrate this same intense pain within a couple of hours of disbudding. Adding an anti-inflammatory into the program mitigates this pain and stress response, and allows the calf to continue 'normal', happy calf behaviours throughout the day of disbudding.

This year we are able to offer the additional anti-inflammatory pain relief in our gold-standard disbudding service at an affordable price. The price of the gold standard service is \$10.00 per calf compared to \$8.50 for local and sedation alone. For peace of mind and happy calves that keep eating normally, that's only an additional \$75 for 50 calves.

We recommend the use of our gold-standard disbudding service to improve the well-being, health and welfare of your replacement heifers.

How to Reduce Your Clinical Mastitis by 10% at No Extra Cost

When you have your Dry Cow Therapy meeting with Mark Anderson, he will go on about the importance of cleaning the teats well before putting in either the dry cow therapy or teat seal. A recent trial has shown the importance of doing the same when giving milking cow therapy.

In the trial four hundred cows with high cell counts, but no clinical mastitis, were split into two groups. Half were treated with milking cow therapy and half given nothing. The treated cows developed 10% MORE clinical cases of mastitis over the next week than the untreated ones! This says that the act of putting a syringe into the udder increased the risk of mastitis, even though the syringe contained antibiotics.

So to reduce your clinical mastitis cases by 10% per year **CLEAN THE TEATS PROPERLY**. So what exactly do you do?

1. Clean the teat with a teat wipe, or meths on cotton wool, until no more dirt comes off.
2. Make sure the teat is dry before inserting the syringe.
3. Have clean dry hands (and clean them between cows)
4. Only insert the syringe part way
5. Put all the contents of the tube into the quarter
6. Complete the treatment course

This might seem quite basic but a recent phone survey of dairy farmers found that only 30% cleaned the teats before putting in an intra-mammary treatment.

Weber BBQ Winner

Chris Thorpe was the lucky winner of the Weber BBQ from Bayer's recent Faceguard Competition. Congratulations to Chris and we hope he gets some time off farm work to enjoy it this summer.

