

FRANKLINvets update

Welcome to Franklin Vets

Mike Culpin

Due to demand from our existing clients, we have employed Mike Culpin, to work in conjunction with Matthew Airey and Ross MacDonald, meaning we now have 2 rural sales managers in the Franklin & Papakura districts and Ross in North Waikato.



has continued his commitment to his community service by continuing his role as a volunteer with the Waiuku fire brigade.

Mike's mobile number is 021 742978

Sarah Briggs

Sarah is joining the South team and will be based in Te Kauwhata, but will spend some time working at the Pukekohe branch in the small animal department too. Having finished at Massey 2011, she is looking forward to putting all of those years of training into practice!



February 2012

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Congratulations to Holly Walton and fiancée Paul, who at the time of print are expecting their first baby and Kris Brownlee who will be taking maternity leave at the end of March.

Fishing Trips

Two of the annual **Eprinex** and **Rumensin** fishing trips into the Hauraki Gulf were again held in December with great success. Clients and staff had plenty of fun with almost 300 snapper caught over the 2 days. The top catch went to Brett Dewdney with a 12 Kg Kingfish which provided a great fight, and a good workout. Two further trips that were postponed from December are due to take place in the coming months.

Thanks to Merial-Ancare, the makers of Eprinex, and Elanco the makers of Rumensin for their co-sponsorship of these trips along with Franklin Vets.



Brett Dewdney



Marty Hewitt



FRANKLINvets



Dairy

Grades and BMSCC

David Hawkins, BVSc

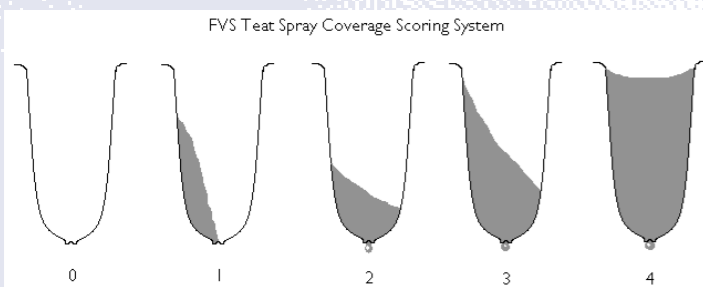
Grading for BMSCC is a pain for everyone. Fonterra doesn't like it, farmers don't like it and the cows don't like it. Nevertheless we are heading into that time of the year where grading for BMSCC is a common occurrence resulting in penalties, lost days in milk and extra hassle.

Production decline in the mid-late lactation may account for up to 15% variation in SCC.

So a spring herd with BMSCC sitting at 200,000 could reasonably expect to be sitting at 230,000 as a direct result of production decline over the December to March period. Climbs in BMSCC over and above this reflect increase in clinical and subclinical infections within the herd.

Teat spray is the most important tool for reducing spread of infection at this stage of the lactation. The "FVS Teat Spray Scoring System" (see figure below) has been developed to assist us with evaluation of teat-spray coverage on a herd basis. Aim for 75% of teats to be covered to a score of 3 or more.

If your herd has a BMSCC higher than 250,000 your herd is in a high risk period for spread of infection. Make sure that you use the higher mixing rate of 1:4 in this situation.



It is critical to be able to manage spread of infection even at this later stage.

Herd testing is important so you know who is where in the herd. If your herd's BMSCC is climbing quickly, an extra herd test will provide valuable information. Use this to identify infected cows, double check these with the RMT or conductivity meter and manage appropriately; see spring editions of Update for more tips on herd tests.

If you have problems with BMSCC that are not responding, call your local vet. We have the expertise in the practice to assist you resolve these issues.

Teat Condition Project

Is your BMSCC around 150,000c/ml or lower? We would love to hear from you. David Hawkins, our Waiuku director, representative on the National Mastitis Advisory Committee and tutor on the Advanced Mastitis Course, has been funded through Boehringer Ingelheim to complete a Teat Condition Evaluation Project. Whereas we see a lot of teats in herds with problems, we see very little in herds that are clean. This project is designed to evaluate teat condition in clean herds and thereby help us in our understanding of how this impacts mastitis development. Contact David on 09 235 9101 if you would like more information or want to be involved.

Up to our armpits

Greg Lindsay BVSc

The scanners are live and the gloves are on again as we enter the second month of the summer pregnancy testing season. Late December and January were very busy with early PD results steadily rolling in. Toughbooks with Infovet software have again improved our ability to rapidly assess the performance of herds after scanning, with pregnancy rate curves and lists of results printed on-farm and specific group analysis (i.e. treated non-cyclers or induction cows) now also available.

With improved cow condition in 2011 and more consistent pasture growth rates, it was anticipated that scanning results would better those of previous seasons. This is not to say that farms didn't come up against their share of feed challenges, battling rapid declines in pasture quality throughout most of the mating period.

To date, herd 6-week in-calf rate results have been positive, with rates to date averaging around 65%. Some farms are still struggling to elevate themselves into the upper bracket of 6-week ICR results (i.e. 70% and above). If you are unsatisfied with your herd's performance this season, we can arrange a complimentary introductory consult with an InCalf-trained vet who will demystify your fertility focus report, discuss the InCalf programme with you and help determine the next best step.

As final scans are upon us, we must remind you of your obligations if you are planning to induce cows this season. It is now compulsory that for cows to be eligible for induction they must have accurately aged pregnancies. **If you do not have aged pregnancy data this season, we will not be able to induce on your farm.** Therefore, if you are considering inducing cows this coming calving period, we would strongly recommend you have your herd scanned at the correct stage of pregnancy for accurate aging. A final scan 6 weeks after the bull is removed allows for this.

We look forward to seeing you and your cows over the coming weeks!

How much has clinical mastitis cost you this season?

Kris Brownlee BVSc

It is estimated that each case of clinical mastitis costs a farm \$300. The achievable target clinical mastitis rate is less than 10%, so a clinical mastitis rate of 15% in a 300 cow herd = \$4500 lost.

Now is the time to focus on the areas you can control to decrease your clinical mastitis rate next season. To achieve this, we encourage you to arrange and participate in your upcoming food-safety consult.

For farmers who have entered mastitis data into *Minda*, we can access all of the following through *Infovet*:

- Last year's dry-cow antibiotic usage
- This season and last seasons' bulk tank somatic cell count
- This season's clinical mastitis case rate and when they occurred
- Recent herd test results

Having this excellent information available means that the advice can be individually tailored to economically fix your problem.

Some examples of different scenarios:

- A herd with a high rate of clinical mastitis over spring needs to

- offer better protection to calving cows. Management changes or changing to a longer, stronger-acting dry-cow antibiotic may suit, or dry-cow treatment plus Teatseal™ may be the best option
- High clinical mastitis rates spanning the whole season may need a milking visit and/or a plan to cull cows to create a cleaner herd for next season

Choosing dry-cow therapy (DCT) and when to dry off is also influenced by:

- The length of your dry period** – Cepravin® has a 49 day withholding period, so autumn-calving herds may struggle to use it this year. These farms may consider a short-acting DCT and Teatseal™ if they have a problem with clinical mastitis over calving.
- Condition score of the herd** - Light cows, (BCS 3), need to be dry mid-March if you are calving in mid-July. Don't be fooled by the available grass and milk skinny cows on too long.

Whatever your situation, we encourage you to get the most out of your food safety consult. Get the clinical mastitis cases into Minda and let's see you at the clinic to plan an appropriate treatment regime.



Facial Eczema – production losses in the absence of clinical disease

Ilyse Jennens BVSc (Dist)

It is well known that the liver damage associated with clinical cases of facial eczema leads to high production losses. Subclinical disease will also cause production losses; however these animals will appear healthy with no visible signs of the disease. Studies in cattle have been carried out by Agri-feeds into the subclinical effects on heifer liveweights and milk yield of sporidesmin, the toxin found in facial eczema spores.

In the first of these studies, heifer calves were either treated with zinc boluses or left untreated. There was no liver damage detected in the treated calves 50 days after treatment but moderate liver damage in the non-treated group. Heifers were also weighed weekly and those not treated were behind the treated calves in weekly liveweights from the first week. After 120 days of treatment, there was more than 10kg difference between the two groups. This emphasises the importance of treating young stock with zinc boluses to minimise liver damage and to

maximise liveweight gains. Regular weighing of young stock is also vital so that a reduction in growth rates can be detected and corrected early.

In testing the effect on milk yield, cows were dosed for 8 days with very low doses of sporidesmin toxin. There was no liver damage detected in these cows; however their milk yield was reduced by an average of 8-25%. This equates to \$10.92-\$34.13 per cow per day over 21 days (based on a \$6.50/kgMS payout). This demonstrates how even doses that are too low to produce detectable liver damage or skin damage can still cause reasonable financial losses.

Preventing the damage by dosing with zinc before facial eczema spore counts rise is the key. Please contact your Franklin Vets clinic if you would like to make a booking for our technician to administer zinc boluses to your young stock.



Coping with the heat

David Hawkins, BVSc

Just as the summer months bring different stresses onto us working out in the open, so they bring related stresses onto stock. Part of the post-peak decline in milk production in temperate areas can be attributed to these stressors impacting cow health and performance.

Water, after oxygen, is the most important nutrient we need for survival.

Studies have shown severe short- and medium-term reductions in milk production following water restriction in dairy cattle. The average dairy cow producing 15 litres of milk per day will need to consume upwards of 70-80 litres of water to meet production and environmental demands. No prizes for guessing the message here; ensure that your cows have plenty of clean, fresh drinking water available.

In higher temperatures and higher humidity, cows spend less time grazing and chewing their cud. In addition, pasture has higher fibre content and lower digestibility at this time of the year. So, not only are cows typically eating less, but the food they are eating is of much poorer quality. Of the feeds typically fed out in summer, good quality pasture silage, PKE, meal and turnips are reasonable to good sources of cost-effective protein.

Another, often-overlooked strategy in helping cows maintain intakes is the provision of shade. Shade can be provided as hedges lining the edge of paddocks, trees specifically planted to provide shade or shade

cloth.

Heat stress, as well as decreasing appetite, can also contribute to development of subclinical rumenal acidosis. This may contribute to the cases of summer metabolic disease that are seen over January and February. While heat stress can develop directly from exposure to the sun and humidity, various ryegrass endophytes can predispose cows to the development of heat stress. Mycotoxin binders are available that appear to reduce the effects of these endophytes. Contact your clinic for more information.

Monitoring for heat stress is a good idea.

The first sign of heat stress is clustering around the water trough or in groups, trying to get shade from each other. Additional signs are a drop in production, drooling, panting, decreased cudding and irritability. (Apart from cudding, these signs can also be observed in farm workers and vets with heat stress!) As a rule of thumb, if a cow is breathing more than once per second, actions to mitigate heat stress should be taken.

So enjoy the warm months, but be mindful that the same difficulties we face are also faced by our bovine companions!





Sheep

Barbers pole

Hennie Lock BVSc

Barbers pole is a blood-sucking parasite that causes production and profit losses by lowering growth rates and killing lambs and hoggets. Barbers pole is unique in a number of ways:

1. Immature worms suck blood and animals can suffer significant anemia within a few days of ingesting larvae.
2. The barbers pole worm is extremely prolific with each worm producing thousands of eggs per day, quickly contaminating pasture.
3. Barbers pole does not cause scouring, and sudden death may be the first sign of infection.
4. The Prepatent period, (the time taken from infection until the worm matures and begins laying eggs is shorter than most other worms).
5. Pasture contamination normally peaks during March and April, but outbreaks can occur from January onwards.
6. While most drenches kill Barbers pole, many do not have any persistent activity meaning re-infection can occur within days

At this time of year, warm and moist conditions favour the build-up of barbers pole on pasture. To minimise the impact of barbers pole, a combination of management decisions and strategic drenching is important. Long-acting drenches like moxidecton and closantel play a vital role in preventing parasite build-up on pasture and protecting lambs. It is important to keep drench resistance in mind when using a single-acting drench.

This is an ideal time to do a drench test (FECRT) to determine how effective drenches are at killing internal parasites on your farm. Get in contact with Franklin Vets for advice to prevent losses due to barbers pole or drench resistance.

Flystrike

Quirien Domper BVSc

The grass is growing well with plenty of moisture and mild temperatures but BEWARE THE DOUBLE EDGED SWORD... These same conditions are perfect for the survival and development of many parasites, including flies! If you have not already taken steps to prevent flystrike in your flock, now is the time to act to prevent costly losses with reduced weight gains and even deaths.

Control is best achieved by managing risk factors

from several angles rather than relying on a single 'silver bullet' approach. Prevention strategies should include:

- Shearing or crutching sheep to remove long wool and dags
- A suitable parasite management program to prevent scouring and dag formation
- Burying or burning of carcasses (including rabbits and possums) and keeping offal holes covered to reduce fly breeding areas
- Using and properly applying an appropriate flystrike protection product

Recent years have seen the development of resistance to some of the available fly control products. Please contact your vet or technical advisor at Franklin Vets to discuss the best treatment options for your property.



Exotic

Unusual Orthopaedic Cases

Paul Eason BVM&S MANZCVS (Surgery; Emergency and Critical Care Medicine)

One of the pleasures of being a vet is the opportunity to test your skills in species we don't commonly work with, at least not in the way described here. All mammals have very similar structure and physiology of course, but only similar, and species differences abound.

Principles of orthopaedic repair tend to be relatively uniform however. We aim to replace broken bones into their normal position, put some form of device in place to resist the forces that will act on the repair and try and disrupt it, and make sure it is a repair modality that the species in question will tolerate. It can make for some head scratching and late nights on global orthopaedic chat rooms (yes, they exist...) trying to come up with solutions.

Buck is a lively young British Alpine goat

who shattered the tibia and fibula before Christmas. The multiple fragment nature of this injury made me choose a combination of a pin down the middle of the bone and a fixator frame on the outside. This very strong construction allowed Buck to walk around on the leg while it healed. Over the next 10 weeks the implants were removed in stages, and Buck is now running around as normal again.



Honey is a much-lover Flemish Giant rabbit

who was attacked by a dog, and fractured the top of the femur, just below the hip. This is an unusual fracture in any species, but the presence of a large muscle tendon attaching to the fractured part made a firm repair essential. I chose to use a pin and tension band wire technique, and Honey was back using the leg normally extremely quickly.



These two cases illustrate that it is possible to carry out major surgery on all species, if we do a little research, pay attention to detail, and apply basic principles of surgery.

The real challenge with these two cases was the anaesthesia, but that's a topic for another time!

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