

NEWS ON FARM



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Staff News

Robyn – aka “the accounts lady” aka “the lady behind the window” has left our company after 17 years. Robyn has touched a lot of hearts; she has left massive boots for someone to fill and will be surely missed by the staff and clients alike. Her message to you is - to all the wonderful clients, I appreciated all the interactions and laughs I had with you all over the years. And I wish you all well.

Charlotta – Head of People and Culture has also moved on from The Vet Centre. Charlotta was GM Darren’s right hand woman and went out of her way when it came to looking after the Vet Centre crew. Charlotta will be missed by the staff.



Above: Robyn on her last day (probably the only photo ever taken of this endangered species) with GM Darren

Calving has kicked off

Calving has really kicked off at speed over the past 2 months. We have had vets flying all over the place, covering one coast to the other. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we make sure all our valued farmers get the same great level of service from our team here at The Vet Centre. With all the mud and rain, it is no wonder some people are feeling down, the weather is really playing havoc with our farmers, their workers, and their animals this Winter and Spring. We understand the challenges our farmers face as the conditions put extra pressure on time, energy, resources, and the land. Now is the time to call out for help when you need it and not struggle. We are very much part of your farm family so please do not hesitate to call up or call in to let us know how things are going and if there is something or anything we can help ease the pressure of the farm.

Joke

Where do farmers look when they need to buy a new cow?

See back page>

Calf Disbudding - How & why

Best performed between 2-6 weeks of age using local anaesthetic and a heated cauterising iron.

As this is a painful procedure all calves disbudded by The Vet Centre benefit from receiving local anaesthetic and an anti-inflammatory injection for ongoing pain relief. This reduces the risk of poor growth rates.

The horn bud is free-floating in the skin over the skull in calves less than about eight weeks old, although this timeframe can vary. As the calf grows, the horn bud attaches to the skull bone, a small horn forms and the sinus grows into the horn. Dehorning after the horn attaches increases the risk of burning the skull, exposing the sinus, or leaving a larger wound.



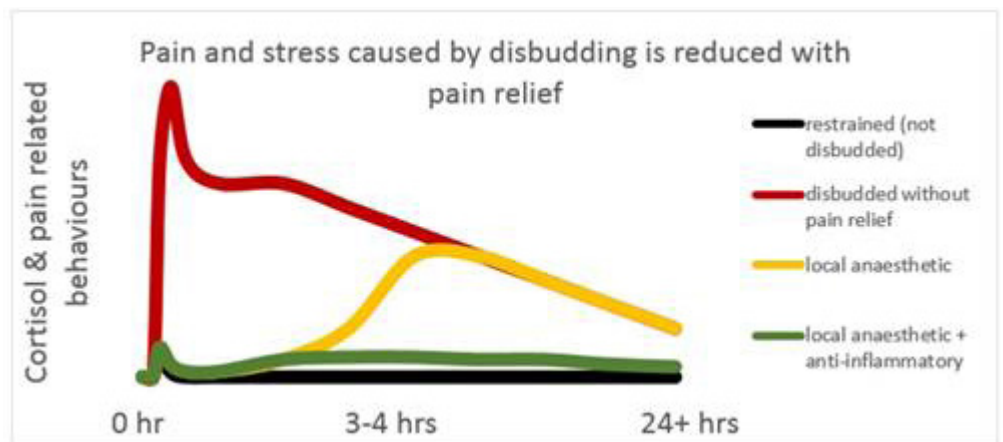
Above: Don't be like Spike – get your calves disbudded from 2-6 weeks old.

Comfort Disbudding

2-6 weeks old
\$15.20/calf

Over 6 weeks old
\$19.20/calf

*Pricing for Vet Centre financial members only.



Lamb Health

Lambing can be a cute and eventful time of year.

The vet centre has in stock replacement colostrum and milk powder for any orphan lambs. Castration / tail docking rings should be used on lambs under six months of age. Docking / tailing season is a good time to vaccinate with a lamb vaccine. If the mother of the lamb was not vaccinated with a clostridial 5-in-1 vaccine one month prior to lambing or if you do not know if she was vaccinated, the lamb should be vaccinated with a lamb vaccine (PK / Antitet) from one week old. The lambs should also be vaccinated with a clostridial 5-in-1 vaccine at weaning (or three months of age) and then given a booster shot one month later and thereafter annually. This vaccine prevents the clostridial diseases – pulpy kidney disease, tetanus, black disease, malignant oedema and black leg. Drenching your lambs – Lambs weaned onto pastures should be drenched every 28 days until they begin to develop their own immunity to worms (at about a year of age).

An appropriate combo / triple action drench should be used to prevent resistance. Ask at your local Vet Centre about options.



Farmers BBQ

We had changed the Farmers BBQ this year to June instead of August. This change was welcomed by some farming faces, one of which had not been able to come along to a BBQ for 3 years he reckons. All the BBQs went off famously with lots of prizes and food to enjoy. We hope you had a chance to see some of the pictures that went up on our Facebook page, there is a few of the team and a couple of winners below.



Massive thank you to Alleva and Black Hawk for their donation of prizes



Metrichecking in batches

Metrichecking is the most practical method to detect endometritis but, often the key to success is metrichecking and treating at the right time.

Treating endometritis early can improve your cows 6 week in calf rate by 10% and 12 week in calf rate by 3%. 20% of all cows are at risk of endometritis on the average farm and can be a common cause of poor reproductive performance. Metricheck early for higher in-calf rates. For earlier detection of endometritis, metricheck cows 2-3 weeks after calving, rather than checking the whole herd in one go prior to the start of mating. Cows that have been calved longer than 2-3 weeks may not show up as metricheck positive, but this does not mean that these cows are "self-cured". The bacteria or inflammation that causes endometritis may still be present in the uterus, but can remain undetected further out from calving, and may have a negative impact on their reproductive performance. As they calve, mark cows in two-week batches with different colours and metricheck in the third week. Cows showing any signs of pus should be treated. Schedule your vet visits every third week to treat positive cows. Ready To Mate phone app - farmers can receive notifications on when to mark cows to assist metrichecking, as well as when to metricheck each batch of cow. Available for free on Android and iPhones.

Search for "Ready To Mate". If you want phone the Vet Centre clinic to discuss options for checking and curing your cows.



Stay vigilant for leptospirosis

Since multiple flooding events across New Zealand earlier this year, public health data is showing an increase in leptospirosis cases in people. This indicates more animals are carrying the bacteria. Taking extra care to reduce the risk of infection is important, by wearing protective clothing, ensuring any wounds are well covered, and practicing good hygiene after direct contact with animals, mud or water on-farm. There is an increased risk of contracting leptospirosis over calving. Herd vaccination and rodent control can help reduce exposure to the bacteria.

Talk to your local Vet Centre to find out more.



Golden Principles of good calf rearing

Select good quality calves

- ✓ Treat calves with care at all times – especially whilst transporting.
- ✓ Provide a feed good quality first milking colostrum as soon as possible 10-15% of body weight in the first 12 hours
- ✓ Give adequate nutrition – colostrum, whole milk, or milk replacer, plus meal or hay to develop rumen. Do not wean too early
- ✓ Calves should be DRY (note not WARM but DRY)
- ✓ Housing should be draught free but well ventilated
- ✓ Segregate age groups, older calves from younger and keep separate from adult stock
- ✓ All in/all out system works best

Isolate and treat any sick calf promptly – have a hospital pen

- ✓ Provide clean air and water
- ✓ Have an adequate manure disposal system
- ✓ Maximum of 100 calves per shed with a maximum of 20 calves per pen
- ✓ Take the milk to the calves not the calves to the milk

Letting your calves outside

Cold and wet calves use more energy keeping warm therefore have less available for growth and are more susceptible to illness causing increases in feed and health costs. There is a 20% difference in growth rates and milk consumption if shelter is provided. Once 3–4-week-old calves can be moved outdoors but should still have access to shelter overnight and on cold or wet days to stay warm and dry.

	Friesian Calves	Jersey Calves
Coat, Calm	3°C	9°C
Coat, Wind	8°C	13°C
Coat, Wind	13°C	17°C

Joke answer

"They look through their cattle log"



Clostridial Diseases

Clostridial vaccines such as Multine 5 in 1, are combination vaccines which provide protection to stock from the main clostridial diseases. Clostridial infections are caused by a group of bacteria which are found in the soil and in the digestive tract of animals. These bacteria produce powerful endotoxins which cause severe tissue damage. Animals are often found dead without any prior warning. Losses can be sporadic or larger outbreaks can occur. Clostridial diseases are not contagious so outbreaks generally occur as a result of a triggering factor rather than from transmission from one animal to another. Younger stock are most at risk with often the biggest and brightest of the mob affected. Vaccination is a simple prevention strategy and relatively cheap especially when compared to the cost of losing valuable animals. Occasionally treatment of an animal in the very early stages may result in recovery but generally treatment outcomes are poor. Clostridial vaccines typically protect calves against the following diseases; Tetanus A disease caused by *Clostridium tetani* which produces neurotoxins that cause muscles to spasm and a generalised rigidity. Infection requires a wound to allow entry of the bacteria and production of the toxin. Black Disease Not seen in cattle in New Zealand. Blackleg Is an acute infectious gangrenous muscle inflammation caused by the activation of spores of *Clostridium chauvoei* which are already present in the muscle. Often triggered by excessive exercise or trauma causing bruising which can occur during yarding and handling of cattle. It can also occur at vaccination or injection sites.



The Vet Centre