

# FARM VET NEWS

FEBRUARY 2012

[www.thevetclub.co.nz](http://www.thevetclub.co.nz)



## Veterinarians:

### Rotorua

Craig Kusabs  
Mark Anderson  
Eileen Alves  
Patrick Lord  
Jeremy Forlong

### Reporoa

Mike Beavon  
Mathew Fiskien  
Marcus Tamaira

### Ngongotaha

David Barrowman  
Eileen Alves

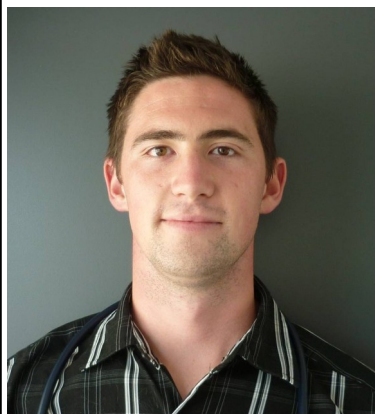
### Small Animal Vets

Stacey Tremain  
Edith Brascamp  
Chris McKenzie  
Anna Goodman

## Welcome back Patrick Lord

Patrick has returned again to help us with scanning this year. His experience, arm and good eyes are appreciated in helping out the team with this busy time of the year.

## And Hello to Jeremy Forlong



After graduating from Massey in 2011, Jeremy decided to join The Vet Club as a large animal veterinarian. Outside of his vet interests, he enjoys rock climbing, cycling, playing guitar and piano. He looks forward to meeting the farmers and getting his hands dirty.

## Staff News

Farewell (sort of) to Angela Brake, who has taken maternity leave to have her first child in March. Ang is the wheel behind the smooth running of admin within The Vet Club. We now have to learn to stand on our own two feet. **Or** run to Tania who has taken over from Ang while she is away.



If you would like to get your newsletter by email please send an email to [admin@thevetclub.co.nz](mailto:admin@thevetclub.co.nz) and help us save the trees.



## Spore Counts - a change

We now have six monitor farms throughout the region for monitoring spore counts locally. If you would like a text with weekly spore count results, please contact one of our branches

Alternatively, nationwide results will be entered onto our website each Friday when they come in from Gribbles along with our own clinic area results.

Please note that if you wish to drop in your own grass samples for spore count testing, there will now be a small charge to cover lab fees.

## Worming for your Dogs

**Let us take the hassle out of remembering when your dogs had their last worming.**

Just email [admin@thevetclub.co.nz](mailto:admin@thevetclub.co.nz) with your dogs details and we can send worming tablets in the post to you

Email us and the rest is easy!!!!



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## Heifer Weight Monitoring and Animal Health Services

Both research and farmer experience testifies to the production wastage of poorly grown dairy heifers. Poorly grown maiden heifers will often get in calf if planes of nutrition are adequate at mating, but research consistently demonstrates these animals struggling to conceive, hold their pregnancies and produce milk in subsequent seasons. In other words the damage done early through poor growth early in life will affect performance in later seasons either as empty or late cows and lower production.

With New Zealand's 6 week in-calf rate identified as a critical limiting issue in the industry, youngstock growth has been identified as a key factor in cow production and reproductive performance.

Proper youngstock management is crucial, including regular growth checks through weighing, health monitoring and treatment programs.

### “You can't manage what you can't measure”

Regular weighing (at least every three months) is essential; weigh bands are unreliable over 200 kg and we all know how unreliable measuring by eye is! Weighing stock with scales is the method of choice.

It's important to set true targets and ensure these are met all the way through the first 24 months of life. How do we set realistic targets? They are individual for each farm. Weigh a proportion of 6-8 year olds in your herd in either Dec–Jan time or April–May time. Body condition scores should be 4-5. You should aim for your heifers to be at 30% of this mature cow liveweight at 6 months, 60% at 15 months and 90% at 22 months of age. Another way to estimate mature cow liveweight is using Liveweight Breeding Values, these can be obtained from LIC or Ambreed. Then use the following formula:

$$\text{Expected mature liveweight} = 503 \text{ kg} + \text{Lwt BV}$$

Lwt BV values are individual for each animal and breed; they can be positive or negative (e.g. Jersey).

### Young stock services

The Vet Club is pleased to offer a comprehensive youngstock weighing and animal health service. Our techs and vets can perform multiple services at visits providing our farmers with convenience and peace of mind that routine tasks are completed when required. Our services include:

- Stock weight monitoring– we have a portable set of scales to weigh individual animals and can tailor a weighing plan to your farming operation
- Growth rate analyses – our vets can help our farmers identify growth issues and develop corrective actions where necessary
- Vaccination services - Leptospirosis, 5n1, 7n1, BVD and Salmonella
- Routine worm treatments
- Routine trace element supplementation with copper, selenium and cobalt
- Zinc bolus administration
- Faecal worm egg counts to determine effectiveness of parasite control
- Blood sampling for trace elements
- Disease investigations

Please contact your local branch to discuss these services or any other queries regarding your young stock.

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## Lungworm (*Dictyocaulus viviparous*): WATCH OUT

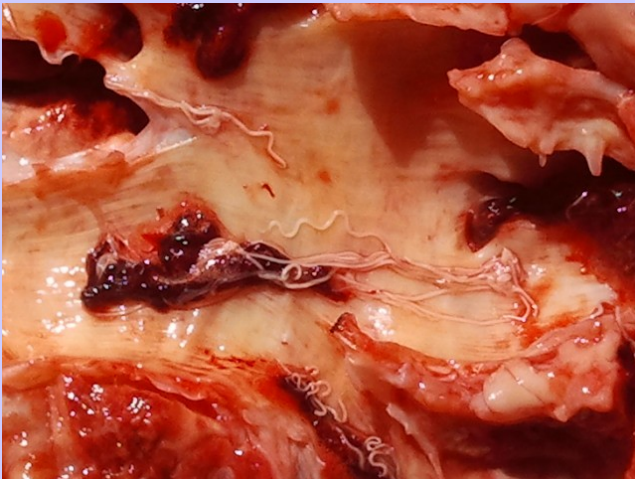
Bovine lungworm infections normally observed during the autumn period have recently been detected in the area. Although calves are generally more susceptible to clinical infection, older stock may also become clinically affected, especially if previously unexposed.

Larvae deposited in faeces, once ingested, migrate to airways maturing en route and settle within the bronchi.

Clinical signs of pneumonia may be observed with mild coughing and severe respiratory distress (characterised by rapid, shallow breaths) often seen. Secondary bacterial infections may result.

To prevent production losses associated with lung damage caused by bovine lungworm, broad spectrum anthelmintics in the avermectin/milbemycin family are especially effective against both larval and adult stages.

Note that with heavy infestations, treatment may need to be combined with Non Steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs) and antibiotics as large numbers of dead worms may block off smaller airways, worsening clinical signs. Speak to vets for more information.



*Dictyocaulus viviparous* within airways

## 'UNDERSTANDING THE UDDER'

### WORKSHOP

Wednesday 7th March 2012, 10am - noon

At Rotorua Animal Hospital

Theory and practical session covering:

- function of the udder
- mastitis
- dry cow therapy

Including a hands-on **dissection of the udder**

Anyone welcome, no charge for members

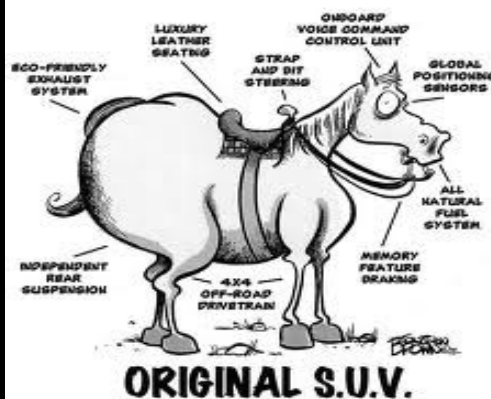
Registration essential as places are limited to 20

Sign up by calling Rotorua clinic before 22nd February

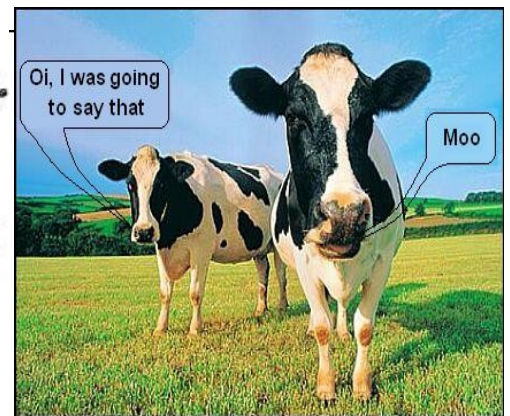


## A TRIP TO THE VET

He's Gonna Stick That Thermometer Where ?



## ORIGINAL S.U.V.



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# Face-Guard™ 90 - 250kg



We are coming up to that season again, and if the last few years are anything to go by, facial eczema may be upon us earlier than we expect.

Facial eczema is caused by the ingestion of spores from the pasture fungus *Pithomyces chartarum*, which is most prevalent in the leaf litter at the base of the pasture. The fungus proliferates during warm moist conditions coming into autumn in both the North Island and the northern and warmer coastal areas of the South Island. Generally, 2-3 consecutive nights of pasture temperatures around 15-16 degrees Celsius, combined with humidity or light rain creates perfect conditions for the fungus to produce spores which contain the liver toxin Sporidesmin.

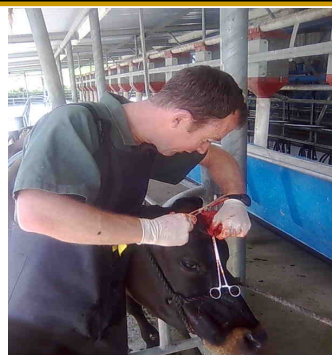
Most areas will have access to local and regional spore counts. While these can be helpful in alerting to potentially risky conditions in the area, they should always be treated with caution as vast differences may be seen across farms, and even across paddocks on the same farm due to variation in topography and aspect.

These spores can rapidly reach dangerous levels that can potentially harm animals grazing pasture, damaging the liver and leading to serious animal health and welfare issues. The Sporidesmin damages the liver, eventually obstructing the vital bile duct system and allowing a build-up of toxic metabolites which are normally filtered and eliminated from the body. Affected animals show varying degrees of emaciation, ill-thrift, poor reproductive performance and milk production. Phylloerythrin, which is one of the breakdown products of chlorophyll in plants, accumulates after the biliary system shuts down. A build-up of Phylloerythrin in the tissues leads to photosensitivity and causes the skin to become inflamed and 'sunburnt', giving the characteristic and graphic skin lesions seen with facial eczema.

Zinc has been shown to protect the liver by forming bonds with the Sporidesmin, rendering it inactive and incapable of causing bile duct damage. There are a number of ways that zinc can be administered to animals - the simplest and most effective being administration of an intra-ruminal zinc bolus, such as Faceguard.

Faceguard zinc boluses have an innovative bolus design offering flexible treatment options depending on the weight of the cattle and the length of the risk period. Only one pack size is required to cover cattle from 90-250kg and top-up treatments may be tailored to fit a longer or shorter season. The first dose of Faceguard will last up to six weeks, which is longer than other zinc bolus products available on the market. The durable design of these boluses ensures that they will not crack or break, even when dropped. This makes them very safe in terms of the potential for toxicity and cost-effective in terms of reduced wastage. Faceguard boluses will completely dissolve over the treatment period, leaving no residues and there is no milk or meat with-holding.

Don't gamble with your animal health this season and get in early with prevention, knowing that if the season turns out to be a long one there is the flexibility to top up as required with Faceguard.



## Marks surgical skills

Update on cow—fully recovered and returned to herd. Looking like one of the girls.



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