

# Veterinary Centre MoozNews

## General Principles of Correct Fodder Beet Transition

Mat O'Sullivan BVSc – VETERINARY CENTRE Oamaru



### 1. Measure your yield accurately

- This is particularly important for the area that you will be transitioning on. Get an expert to help and make sure DM % is measured at a lab.
- Rows are generally planted 50cm apart so there are usually two rows per metre square. A 25-tonne crop should contain 2.5kgDM/m<sup>2</sup> and 1.25kgDM/linear row metre respectively. Note some drills are now planting 45cm rows spaces.

### 2. Allow at least 1 linear metre/cow along the face of the crop

- The 1m spacing means all cows can reach the face. NOTE -any time a practice leads to variable intakes (i.e. shy cows unable to access crop, dominant cows eating more than their allocation) then you increase the risk of acidosis.

### 3. Ensure there is a 6m (minimum) to 10m headland that can be used for transitioning

- The headland provides space for cows to access the crop face and turn (important for less dominant cows). Use a beet bucket to harvest bulbs and create a headland. The headland can also act as an area where supplements can be fed.

### 4. Start at 1kgDM/day and stay there for 3 days until you are sure all cows are eating the beet and then increase by 1kg every second day

- It takes over 14 days to reach intakes of 8-9kg. Cows which have never eaten beet before may take 21 days to achieve this (A true ad-lib intake is 10-12kg - depends on breed size).
- Cows should not enter the crop already full on grass or supplement. Full cows will not eat their allocation allowing others to eat in excess.
- Train cows to stay and eat their allocation before shifting them back to grass. Even if most is eaten in 20 minutes, cows should stay on the break for 2-3 hours so they all learn that they need to eat. Moving the

herd onto a new break (on mass) straight after milking works well.

### 5. Setting your allocation

- Cows can comfortably graze 18 inches under a wire. Set your fence 12 inches back from the row you wish to graze.
- Keep it simple – if you know your tonnage/ha, this will convert to kg/linear metre divided by two. Graze rows lengthwise and calculate the total linear metres required for allocation.

### 6. Feed a good quality supplement, but do not overfeed this.

- For dry cows, feed about @ 7kg of supplement initially. This should be a good quality supplement (not just Barley straw). Keep the supplement levels up around 7kg until the cows reach around 4kg of beet.
- Once at 5kg of Fodderbeet the supplement can be reduced to 4kg (assuming it's not just barley straw!). Then keep the FB climbing
- 2-3kg of a hay or straw should be maintained even with cows at max feeding levels.

### 7. If you find beet remaining after the allocated daily grazing time during the first day 7s, pull back – you are over allocating!

- You typically see the biggest issues with acidosis and deaths at day 7-10 of transition. Cows which have been shy eaters or unable to access the crop face may suddenly take a liking to the crop at the same time as break allocations increase. Their intakes may suddenly rise exceeding the rumens capacity to deal with acid production.



## In this Issue

- General Principles of Correct Fodder Beet Transition
- Collar Fertility Reviews – Shining a Spotlight on Second
- Autumn Production
- Nitrate Poisoning
- Autumn Dairy Drenching
- Cow Culling & Herd Improvement
- UdderNews
- BVD Bulletin
- Preparation of Dairy Cows for Transport



# Collar Fertility Reviews – Shining a Spotlight on Second Calvers

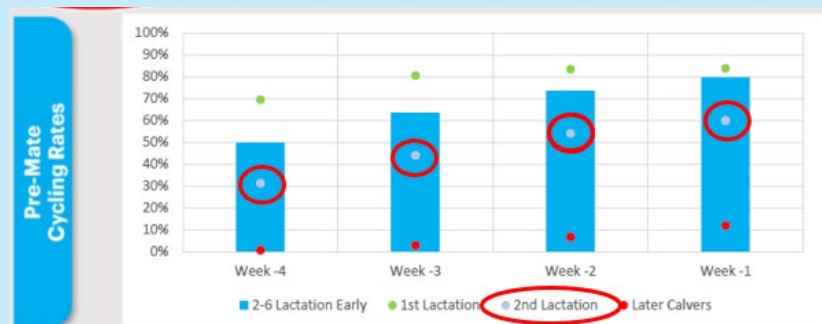
**Ryan Luckman BVSc (Dist) MANZCVS (Epid.)**  
VETERINARY CENTRE Waimate



For years we've championed looking after your 1st calvers; they're the future of your herd, and it's critical that they get pregnant and stay in the herd. Most farms would now have the heifers calving a week earlier than the cows, in a good BCS of 5.5, and then keep them in a young cow/ skinny cow mob during the season. This has been very successful for a lot of farms, with up to a 10% improvement in repro rates on many farms that have adopted these measures.

Many farmers will also chuck their 2nd Calvers (2nd Lactation) into this "young cow mob" on the premise that they're still growing and likely to suffer the most amongst dominant cows. However one of the interesting trends we've come across in our fertility reviews is for 2nd lactation animals to perform markedly worse than 1st Lactation animals EVEN when they are run as a combined mob.

The graphs below show the pre-mate cycling rates of a farm that runs their 1st and 2nd lactation animals together. The green dots at the top of each chart show the cycling rates of the 1st lactation cows, which are tracking 25-40% higher than the 2nd lactation animals (circled with red).



Second lactation animals are still growing, AND producing a lot more milk which makes it a lot harder for them to balance their energy demands. For this reason DairyNZ have long preached targeting a calving BCS of 5.5 (rather than 5.0 for cows 3rd lactation +).

These 5.5 DairyNZ targets are based on the fact that most animals will drop close to 1.0 BCS units from calving to mating, and to optimise repro rates in second calvers they should hit mating at a BCS of 4.5. Repro results from 200,000 cows in the LIC database have further validated this by showing that 2nd lactation animals that were at a BCS of 4.5 (rather than 4.0) had a 2.9% higher 6WICR, and 1.3% lower MT Rate.

If you think that your 2nd lactation cows may be struggling, then aiming to reach a calving BCS of 5.5 is likely to aid them. However to achieve this you will need to start now by;

- Looking at drying off light 1st lactation animals immediately
- Considering OAD for 1st lactation animals under a BCS of 5.0
- Running a separate Wintering mob and priority feeding them

Get in touch with your prime vet if you want to look at the current performance of your age groups, and discuss what strategies may be right for your farm.



# Autumn Production



**Luke Smyth BVSc**  
VETERINARY CENTRE Oamaru

Most local farms are 5-8% behind in milk production for the season and Fonterra has trimmed the forecast milk pay out to a midpoint of \$8.30 kg MS.

With the autumn flush of grass, you may be tempted to chase those last few kg's of milk solids to make up for the shortfall in production and help the cash flow by milking as many cows for as long as possible. But if cow condition at dry off is compromised then this may not be the best approach.

The key objective in late lactation should be how to best set the cow up for the 23/24 season. This requires a focus on body condition. There is a strong relationship between body cow condition score at calving and milk production during the subsequent lactation. Simply put, cows that calve at BCS 5 produce more milks solids and cycle 7 - 10 days sooner than cows that calve at BCS 4.

To achieve BCS targets of 5 for mixed age cows and 5.5 for R2's and R3'an individual cow would be a BCS 4.5 at dry off.

There are 3 effective strategies for achieving a BCS 4.5 prior to dry off.

1. Reduce milking frequency to once a day.
2. Drying off cows early and providing additional feed. Providing supplementary feed to milkers.

To guide this process, we do need to know some key information.

- What is the current BCS of an individual cow and her BCS target.
- Predicted calving dates of individual cows.
- Available feed. Pasture cover, quantity, and quality of supplements

Ideal strategy for May

- Get all known culls off farm to reduce stocking rate.
- Get a whole herd pregnancy test done, any new empty cows can be culled.
- Get an individual cow BCS done and dry off cows with a BCS of 4.0 or lower at the start of May.

Some points to consider.

- Feeding supplement in the autumn can be a profitable exercise providing the supplement is at least 10.5 MJ M/kg DM. However autumn supplement fed to lactating cows does not have a large effect on BCS gain as most of the energy consumed ends up being partitioned to milk production in mid and late lactation.
- Dry cows partition more of the energy consumed to BCS gain and have reduced ME requirements for walking and maintenance.
- Once a day milking only has a significant effect on BCS gain if cows are on OAD for more than a month, walking less and still being fed as TAD cows.

**WHOLE HERD PREGNANCY RETEST – \$1.86** plus GST  
Identifying just 0.5% empties will off-set the preg testing in cow wintering costs.

# Nitrate Poisoning

**Vanessa Love BVSc – VETERINARY CENTRE Ranfurly**

Nitrate poisoning is due to a buildup of the compound in plants that cattle are grazing or accidental fertilizer ingestion. The nitrate ion in the plant becomes nitrite in the rumen, enters the blood stream and combines with red blood cells. This causes non oxygen carrying methemoglobin to form instead of hemoglobin. Cows are particularly vulnerable.

Clinical signs can occur within an hour of exposure to the toxic feed and include:

- Salivation and frothing
- Diarrhoea
- Abdominal pain (especially if fertilizer is the cause)
- Laboured breathing
- Staggered walking
- Body tremors
- Blue/grey gums
- Coma and death

Nitrate poisoning cases usually involve multiple animals. The treatment is methylene blue dissolved in saline given intravenously, which replaces methemoglobin with hemoglobin and if given quickly enough will save the animals life. While waiting for your vet to arrive, all animals that seem unaffected should be moved

away from the toxic feed and monitored closely.

Eye fluid and blood from deceased animals can be tested for nitrate levels, and the blood usually has a characteristic chocolate brown colour.

Plants use nitrates for growth as a protein source, this process requires energy from photosynthesis. Nitrates build up in plants during periods where photosynthesis is limited such as during prolonged foggy weather, low temperatures and during frosts.

When rain breaks a drought, plants rapidly pick up nitrates and commonly become toxic.

The most affected feeds are annual ryegrasses, some new pastures, oats, kale, rape and brassicas. Suspect feeds can be tested either at your local Veterinary Centre clinic or test kits can be purchased for use on farm. The test turnaround time is approximately 40 minutes and only requires two handfuls of the feed. Toxic feeds should be retested at weekly intervals until safe to feed.

Risk can be managed by feeding suspect pastures or crops in the afternoon during winter, and filling cows up on hay before changing breaks.



# Autumn Dairy Drenching

- There is considerable national and local trial work that shows drenching lactating dairy cattle is likely to result in an increase in milk solids.
- During the month of May it is a good time to consider removing the worm burden that has accumulated in your dairy cows over the autumn. It has been a very wet autumn with periods of heat which will contribute to high larval challenge.
- Cydectin Pour-On and Eprinex are two of the most effective anthelmintics, both having significant persistent activity against Ostertagia species of 4 weeks or more. They both have nil meat and milk withhold periods
- If lice are problem in your herd over the winter and early spring, Cydectin Pour-On is recommended. We also stock Reflex Pour-on as replacement for Genesis. Please be aware the reflex has both a 35 day meat and milk withhold period so has to be used strategically once culls are gone and the herd is dried off.

# Cow Culling & Herd Improvement

**Mat O'Sullivan BVSc – VETERINARY CENTRE Oamaru**

This season the practice average BMSCC has maintained at 146,0000 (exactly the same as last year), despite a wet start to the spring. Two seasons ago the practice average sat at close to 160,000. The Co-operative Difference has continued to be an important driver in keeping this down.

One of the major players in reducing BMSCC is identifying those cows which are likely to be chronically infected and removing these from the herd before the next season.

Many of our clients engage us in identifying and prioritising these cows well before the Milk Quality Consult. This enables planning for works space and consideration of replacement purchases to be made where necessary. Herds with high retention rates of chronic infections will tend to steadily get worse over time and are often the highest users of intramammary drugs. Contact your Prime Vet for assistance.



Business Name	
Region Code & H	
Participant Code	
Report Date	16 March 2022
Season	2021

## ISCC Results



Animal Tag	Year Born	17/10/	19/11/	7/01/	5/03/	20/10/	19/11/	7/01/	4/03/	28/10/	12/12/	12/01/	Cull	kgMS	Expected Calving
966	2006	547	1316	1878	2023	1395	2701	1294	1622	1051	1553	20957	Cull	1.24	29/08/2022
979	2007	75	32	34	269	260	35	70	669	74	331	17873	Cull	0.81	MT
164	2013	210	2846	679	953	183	178	195	242	169	597	14049	Cull	2.16	1/10/2022
148	2011	157	170	43	79	12	19	18	20	7869	2105	13618	Cull	1.10	MT
304	2015	23	45	13	14	58	78	84	128	140	50	11734	Cull	1.74	MT
660	2011	74	86	203	186	10	37	199	2036	1761	11515	Cull	1.65	20/09/2022	
1420	2018					51	19	20	18	271	11397	10352	Cull	1.27	31/08/2022
1028	2013	12	52	39	47	12	12	11	19	2474	2560	9460	Cull	1.46	1/09/2022
1010	2017	46	85	75	32	46	22	12	59	45	419	8882	Cull	1.71	6/09/2022
264	2009	12	19	23	363	152	3333	1361	559	1024	4862	8407	Cull	1.59	17/09/2022
905	2017	16	12	23	58	20	1115	123	15	25	42	7510	Cull	1.51	31/08/2022
445	2015	6746	67	190	218	301	29	19	699	25	21	6201	Cull	2.03	16/09/2022
488	2013	748	1897	4114	726	175	206	488	459	1710	632	6134	Cull	1.95	6/09/2022
1372	2009	29	25	11945	79	575	542	332	1519	27	30	5757	Cull	1.39	7/08/2022
1122	2012	47	941	1719	58	15	11	8	107	592	1888	5189	Cull	1.63	MT
496	2011	179	189	562	201	18	24	20	83	11411	3319	5147	Cull	1.25	11/09/2022
974	2014	28	12474	27	24	25	19	34	365	4139	1953	4848	Cull	1.12	11/08/2022
201	2017	17	55	162	20	242	217	52	29	296	161	4466	Cull	1.32	MT
1212	2017	32	18	9	13	45	137	15	21	257	206	4248	Cull	1.98	25/08/2022
486	2011	1978	918	89	2361	8	10	20	588	66	917	4227	Cull	1.17	6/08/2022
1085	2009	96	96	85	69	133	237	149	413	62	66	4015	Cull	1.69	5/09/2022
1446	2018					12	24	9	24	37	82	3833	Cull	1.05	8/09/2022

**A flexible and effective product for use whilst still lactating.**

### Actives:

- Moxidectin

### Label Claim

- 35 days persistent activity against Ostertagia
- Treatment of lice

### Dose Rate

1ml/10kg



Cydectin ACVM A006203

**CYDECTIN**

15 Litre  
**\$1799.00**  
Incl GST

**500kg Cattle Dose (excl GST)**  
**\$5.21**



# UdderNews



**Hamish Newton BVSc PhD – VETERINARY CENTRE Oamaru**

May has arrived so cows will start to be dried off. Regardless of what products you are using they will work best if they are applied correctly and to cows that don't lose some or all of the product after it has been inserted.

The following is a slide from the presentation you will have seen or will see at your Milk Quality Review and dry cow consult. It details some practices we have seen that result in good outcomes.

Keep an eye on the weather forecast and try

to avoid wet weather as well. Finally please read the "Best practice administration" poster that we are attaching to all dry cow orders (Antibiotic DCT and TeatSeal) and make all of your staff aware of the standard of hygiene you expect when putting any product into a cows teat.

## SLIDE

**1**

**At Last Milking**

- Identify/mark cows by treatment category with colour codes
- Cows to stand on yard after milking

**2**

**Set Up**

- Clean down shed
- All staff have a quick breakfast
- Return for staff briefing – roles and process
- Set up tables, water baths and towels.
- Have an overseer that ensures area stays clean, restocks tubes, provides clean towels, watches job hygiene etc

**3**

**Insertion of Product**

- Good practice to have 1-2 pre-cleaners of teats
- Follow best practice administration guide. Teats **MUST BE CLEANED AGAIN** before each insertion
- Mark cows as treated, teat-spray and clean-up tissues/tubes before exit.

**4**

**After Insertion**

- Cows stand on yard till last cow treated in mob
- Cows slowly walked back to paddock (controlled by bike in front)
- Put cows in large area, low cover/tag to clean up, feed straw

Use DRY gloved hands!



Have DRY cleaned teats!



Use DRY tubes!



Put the cows somewhere DRY as possible after being teatsprayed. You may need to dry off another day if it is raining.



# BVD Bulletin

**Andrew Muir BVSc BSc (Hons) VETERINARY CENTRE Oamaru**



This month we have our annual look at the bulk milk antibody results for the season in the district. Antibodies give us information on the exposure of a farm to BVD. When we look at trends at a farm or district level this allows us to see if exposure has increased or decreased.

The graph shows us the percentage of farms at each antibody level for any given season. Over time we can see that has been an increase in farms with low or no exposure (blue box), currently 12.7% of all farms. However, at the other end there has been a steady increase in farms with very high exposure (red box). With the intermittent breakdowns we see in herds that have PIs showing up in the bulk milk results this is not unexpected.

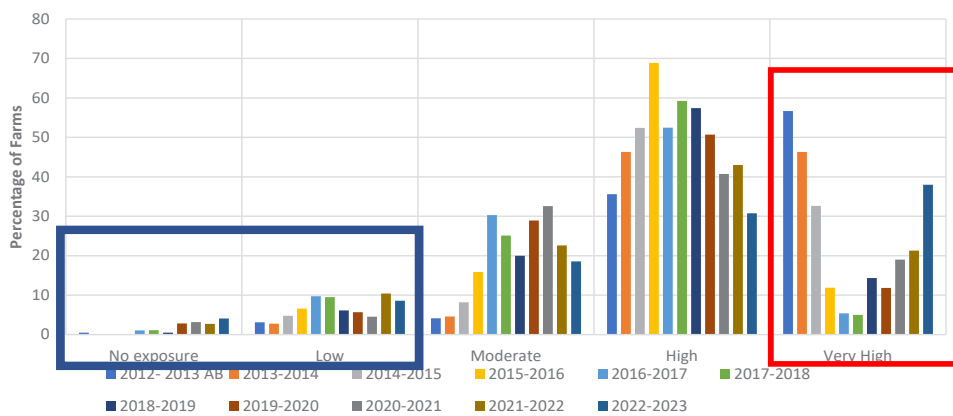
Having a BVD PI turn up in the herd at mating can be disastrous, especially if you have low levels of antibody. This risk can be significantly reduced by:

- Testing 10- 15 random calves over the winter to see if they are infected. This is a very fast and easy test to see if you

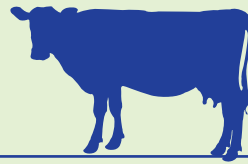
have PIs in your young stock.

- Enrolling your herd for a status pack which will make sure that cattle in the milking herd have a negative status. This can make removal of any virus very quick and easy.
- Making sure that any cows, bulls or heifers that are bought into the herd are certified negative.

Antibody levels of dairy herds over the last 11 seasons



# Preparation of Dairy Cows for Transport



## Preventing Down Cows

Follow these 3 steps before your cull cows get on the truck:

### Step 1

Stand them off pasture (green feed) for 4-12 hours prior to transport.

### Step 2

Provide roughage/dry feed and water while they're stood off.

### Step 3

Supplement with CALCIUM (lime flour), as well as Magnesium. Add to roughage, dry feed or as an oral drench.

### What do I need to do?

It is vital that dairy cows are prepared adequately before transport to another farm or saleyard/slaughter. Even though the risks are greater for lactating cows, dry cows can also suffer from low levels of blood calcium. Therefore, all cows should be prepared properly regardless of lactation status, using the guidance on the back of the page:



**BOOST CALCIUM  
 BEFORE TRANSPORT**



In summary it is essential for the welfare of your cows that they are prepared for transport and receive CALCIUM as well as magnesium supplementation. Good preparation will also maximise your potential economic return.

More information can be found here: [www.dairynz.co.nz/transport](http://www.dairynz.co.nz/transport) or seek advice from your vet.

## Veterinary Centre by the Big Blue Cross

**Oamaru** 311 Thames Street 03 434 5666  
**Palmerston** 29 Stronsa Street 03 465 1291  
**Ranfurly** 16 Charlemont Street East 03 444 1020

**Waimate** 128 High Street 03 689 7213  
**Kurov** 32 Bledisloe Street 03 436 0567  
**Omarama** 13 Chain Hills Highway 03 438 9868  
**Glenavy** 19 Redcliff Road 03 689 8118



Dairy cows should not be starved. Stand off pasture for 4-12 hours before transport BUT provide roughage/dry feed and water until loading on the truck.

You can then add CALCIUM and magnesium to the hay/baleage/palm kernel.



1. Add 100 grams of **Calcimate** per cow to feed during stand off (4-12 hrs before transport). This provides each cow with 35g of CALCIUM. An alternative supplement can be used but it must contain the equivalent amount of CALCIUM.



2. Also give 60 grams **Magnesium Oxide**. Note that this contains Magnesium not CALCIUM so is not a substitute for Calcium supplementation.

