

NOVEMBER 2019

# VET NEWS

THEILERIOSIS

WEANER CALVES

BREEDING WOFS



Some photos by Richard Hilson

**VET**services  
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# AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF BOVINE PRACTITIONERS CONFERENCE 2019

GEERT GELLING

In September I was able to attend the annual conference of the American Association of Bovine Practitioners, in St. Louis, Missouri. This is a large conference, with around 1000 vets attending, covering dairy and milk quality, beef, sheep and goats, and a few deer subjects. In the week before the conference members of the AABP are able to attend 3-5 day seminars, varying from dairy nutrition, animal welfare, herd fertility, quality milk production to embryo transfer.

The presentations during the conference were grouped per animal species and were divided into general topics, new research presentations and skill transfer presentations. These skill transfer sessions were really well attended by the younger vets as they presented an opportunity to pick up knowledge and practical tips from more experienced colleagues.

The theme of the conference was "Gateway to Success". Our profession struggles to keep people in Production Animal practice. After-hours can be demanding, large numbers in herds and routine testing can be exhausting and mind-numbing. Too many vets leave the profession at an early stage.

The Keynote Speaker, Dan Grooms, Dean of Michigan State University, gave the Keynote Address with the title "You got it wrong, what success really means!". Success is often defined as a great career, scientific excellence or getting rich. Dan defined success as "happiness in your work and fulfilment". John Woodden, a teacher and famous basketball coach in the USA, defined it as "self-satisfaction and the peace of mind that you have done your very best". Dan defined the core value to be successful as: Honesty/Integrity.

Following this introduction Dan sketched a pathway to a successful career.

Have Big Goals.....but Realistic.

Surround yourself with good team mates. Mentor programs are really helpful, but mentors should have had expert careers, they should not be just experts. Team players are humble, hungry to achieve and emotionally smart. Surrounding yourself with the right people, which means find the right workplace to start your career, is very important.

Have fun in your work.

Work Hard.

Be accountable! Own up and move on.

In his free time Dan is a referee for American Football matches. He once stuffed up an important game because he missed a situation, as did his co-referees on the side line, and made the wrong call, affecting the match. One day later, once the film was developed, he admitted his fault and took full responsibility. This issue has not affected his referee career.

Failure is part of success. The most successful basketball player in the world, Michael Jordan, missed 9000 shots, his team lost 300 games and his team lost 26 games because he missed the defining shot. He is still the most successful player in the world.

If you follow this pathway it will be hard not to be happy in your work. Listening to this address I realised that our workplace ticks a lot of those boxes. Making a shift, halfway through my working life, to Vet Services (HB) Ltd has really worked well for me. Starting a career at Vet Services (HB) Ltd will even work better!

## WEANER CALVES ON THE MOVE?

KATHRYN SIGVERTSEN

Dairy heifers and dairy-beef weaners in particular move around a lot at this time of year, through sales and from home blocks to grazing blocks. Transport, change in environment, change in feed, mixing with new animals – all these things can be considered stressful events for a young animal. Easing the transition for these young, susceptible animals can reduce the risk of several diseases.

Remember to provide ample feed initially, and it can be a good idea to provide 10-20kg of calf meal each over the first couple of weeks after arrival. This will help settle them in and keep them quiet, as well as establishing good eating habits and giving the opportunity to observe behaviour and pick out any animals that may be falling behind after arrival.

Weaning off meal can be a high risk time for coccidiosis, as the coccidiostat in the meal helps to keep this at bay. Usually by weaning the calf will have developed some immunity to coccidia but high challenge may put this immunity under real pressure. Particularly risky paddocks would be those that have young calves in them every year, as the parasite builds up in the environment and can persist from one year to the next. History of problems with coccidiosis should prompt testing, if not treatment, a week or two before the risk period. The treatment for coccidiosis can be used as a prevention if the timing is right, as it stimulates some immunity in the calf.

Stress can also predispose to Yersinia (a bacterial gut disease that causes scouring and condition loss) that is common in weaners in times of stress. Sometimes signs can appear similar to a high parasite burden, but they will not respond to drenching. A parasite burden of course will have a significant effect on growth

rate and regular drenching should be a priority for young stock.

If the weaners aren't growing, or are looking poorly, there are many reasons why this could occur. Poor growth rates can sometimes be simple to fix, either a drench or increasing the feed quality/quantity, but sometimes testing can be required, checking essential minerals and trace elements, and for presence of specific diseases. If you have concerns about how your young cattle are doing, get in touch and we can investigate.

### Henry

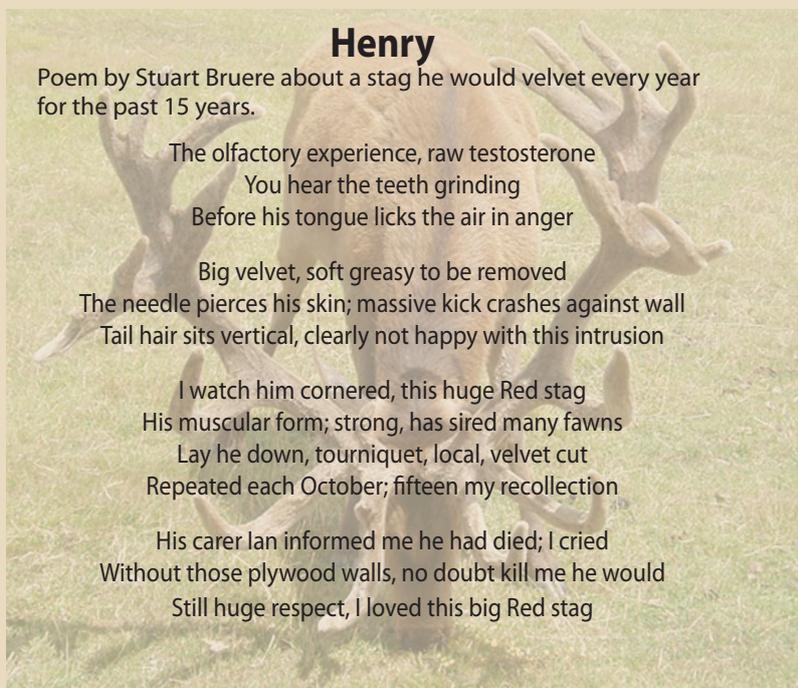
Poem by Stuart Bruere about a stag he would velvet every year for the past 15 years.

The olfactory experience, raw testosterone  
You hear the teeth grinding  
Before his tongue licks the air in anger

Big velvet, soft greasy to be removed  
The needle pierces his skin; massive kick crashes against wall  
Tail hair sits vertical, clearly not happy with this intrusion

I watch him cornered, this huge Red stag  
His muscular form; strong, has sired many fawns  
Lay he down, tourniquet, local, velvet cut  
Repeated each October; fifteen my recollection

His carer Ian informed me he had died; I cried  
Without those plywood walls, no doubt kill me he would  
Still huge respect, I loved this big Red stag



# THEILERIOSIS – (TIE-LEAR-E-O-SIS) — A NEW WORD ADDED TO OUR VOCABULARY!

STUART BRUERE

Sporadic cases of this disease have appeared in cattle in our region over the last few years. As with all new disease debuts; a certain amount of anxiety is created as we figure out how this disease will affect our animals and what measures we need to take to mitigate risk of a disease outbreak.

What is it? It is a tick-born protozoal disease of cattle. So this means cattle have to be exposed to infected ticks and be bitten by them in order to transmit the infection. A colleague at Massey University is currently investigating if lice may also be responsible for disease transmission.

What are the first signs of disease you are likely to see? There are several likely clinical observations you may see. In calves, you are likely to see them becoming slow and weak due to a developing anaemia. This happens when damage is done to the red blood cells. Clinically this will present as pale mucous membranes, increased heart rate, blood stained urine etc. In pregnant cows you may see late stage abortions and in recently calved cows you will see cows becoming lethargic and weak.

At first glance, diagnosis can be tricky simply because it is not a common problem in this area yet. I recall the details of a case I saw last spring, where cows were aborting their calves at a late stage. I carried out several autopsy examinations on the calves at the clinic, alas without any specific symptoms being found.

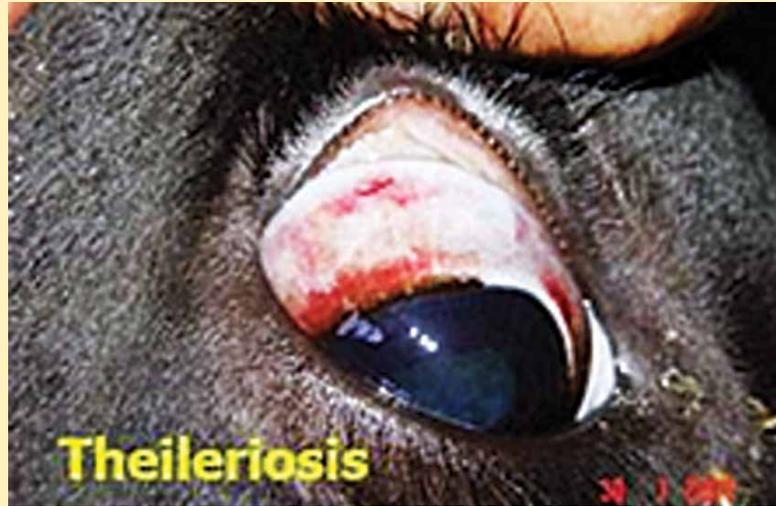
Once the cows that had aborted, were able to be yarded, a blood sample was taken and I was able to confirm Theileriosis as the disease in question. A comment the farmer made heightened my awareness of the problem when she said most of the aborting cow's just "fell to pieces" after the abortion. The penny dropped, as it is common for these cows to drop condition very rapidly after abortion or during the first week of lactation.

The interesting thing about these cases is that I am yet to see an infected animal carrying big fat ticks. The predominant seasons we see this disease appear are the spring and autumn. Treatment of infected animals is based on supportive therapy while the infected animal gains immunity and regenerates the red blood cells required for oxygen transport.

In the case of valuable animals treatment may also include blood transfusions and buparvaquone therapy. I've seen quite a number of cases now; my treatment usually consists of drying cows off and putting them in a paddock with really good feed,

plenty of fresh water and shelter. Recovery usually takes several weeks.

See attached photos I have gleaned from the internet.



Above: Note the very pale membranes around the eye.

Below: Cows suddenly fall to pieces and look like a bucket of bolts.



## BREEDABULL WOF

DAVE WARBURTON

It's coming up to that time of year when you need to go and give your breeding bulls the once over to make sure you can put the bulls out for mating having managed the risks of subfertility or infertility as best you can.

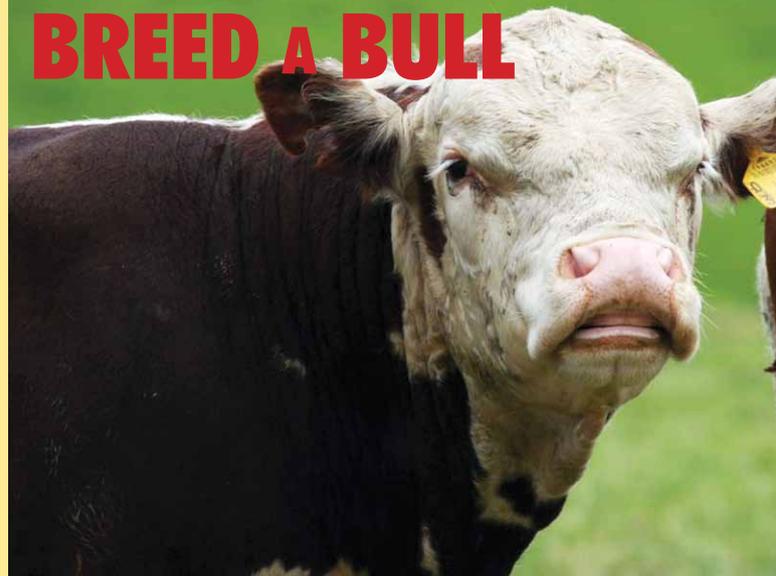
VS HB have developed a package called the BreedaBull WOF which covers all basic aspects of bull fertility.

So one month out from mating we can perform:

- Mating Ability Test
- Vaccination boosters
- Any pre-mating minerals that might be required
- Semen Assessment – we especially recommend this for anyone single sire mating, and any bulls that have been lame or wintered poorly.

We have dealt with a number of disastrous pregnancy rates this last season and a WOF gives you some peace of mind the bull is in working order for the upcoming job.

## BREED A BULL



# WHAT CAN YOU CATCH OFF ANIMALS?

DAVE WARBURTON

Many of the animals we come into contact with can carry bacteria, parasites and viruses that can cause humans illness.

Pregnant women and young children are the most at risk humans because the immune system is under pressure and still developing.

## What are the most at risk jobs on farm?

Calving cows – Cows unvaccinated for leptospirosis can shed bugs in the urine which can get into wounds and mucous membranes such as lips/gums and in humans this has a range of symptoms from bad flu like symptoms through to kidney failure.

Calf Rearing – many bugs that cause calf scours can also affect humans (Salmonella/Crypto are the most likely) and cause prolonged diarrhoea.

Lamb docking/drenching – scabby mouth in humans is called Orf and is a very painful skin scab.

Handling cat poo – Toxoplasmosis is a high risk for pregnant women.

Animal bites – Bites from just about all animals that break the skin can cause nasty skin infections and need to be dealt with promptly at the time of injury.

## Prevention

Some diseases can be vaccinated against – leptospirosis being the main one.

Appropriate hygiene is important – cleaning skin with a suitable disinfectant before handling food, touching your mouth etc

Cover up any wounds with sealed clothing, bandages.

## RAM WOF

CAMILLE FLACK

Don't forget to ensure your rams are ready and rearing to go next mating. This is the time to get them in and give them their annual WOF. Reduce the chance of Brucella Ovis affecting your lambing % by having us palpate your rams for lumps and bumps. This is a quick and efficient way to check for Brucella and at the same time we will also give each ram a health check to ensure they will be ready to perform when you need them.

Find out who's dragging the chain and not going



to perform for you next season. Also consider at the same time having your annual RVM completed. This is an annual script for your restricted veterinary medicines (RVMs).

It is a great time to have a discussion with your vet about what animal remedies to use at what times to get the best performance out of your stock. This document is also very handy to have on hand for all those in house audits, keeping you up to date.

## DO YOU FEED YOUR PIGS SCRAPS?

Did you know that in New Zealand, it is illegal to feed untreated meat or food that has been in contact with untreated meat? This is mostly due to the risk of African Swine Fever which is currently sweeping across Asia and Europe (but also foot and mouth, should either of these come here).

This disease is no risk to people but could be devastating to our pork industry should it come to NZ. Any meat or food that has been in contact with meat must be cooked at over 100 degrees (boiled) for one hour before feeding to pigs.

## OUR VET TEAM

Napier & Hastings:

Clare Ryan, Dave Kruger, Dave Warburton, Georgina Campbell, Greg Tattersfield, Helen Crawford, Ian Leadbetter, Joao Dib, Neil Stuttle, Rachel Griffiths, Rachel Muir, Richard McKenzie, Roger McKinley, Sharné Boys, Siobhan Ellis, Stuart Badger, Veronika Pipe and Vicki Gilchrist.

Waipukurau:

Annelise Enslin, Anyika Scotland, Anne Gelling, Camille Flack, Caroline Robertson, Gammy Muschamp, Geert Gelling, Harry Whiteside, Kathryn Sigvertsen, Lucy Dowsett, Mike Fitzgerald, Nicolette Adamson and Richard Hilson.

Dannevirke:

Johnny Atkins, Kate Matthews, Lucy Webster, Naomi Barrett, Simon Marshall, Sophie-Leigh Anderson and Tim Hogan.

Masterton:

Jacques Van Zyl, Louisa Broughton, Naya Brangenberg, Nicola Haglund, Sandy Redden, Sanneke Neal, Sara Sutherland, Sarah Wolland, Stuart Bruere and Urthe Engel.

# PIMP YA DOG KENNEL

This year on our annual dog vaccination run the Waipukurau clinic held a "Pimp ya dog kennel" competition.

We wanted to put some emphasis on the importance of housing our working dogs in good kennels.

The kennel judging criteria were: elevation, shelter, automatic water, separate eating & sleeping areas, insulation, clean and tidy and concrete floor. Extra points were given for bedding, ramps and access to both ends of the kennels or any other awesome kiwi ingenuity ideas.

We had a great response with over 40 farmers entering into the competition. We saw some amazing set ups. Congratulations to all who won, and to all that have worked towards the criteria that will make life for your team as good as you can.

If you are thinking of doing up your kennels, please get in touch for some key areas and ideas to consider.

Below are some photo's from some amazing setups we saw on the dog run this year.



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For full product details, contact Elanco Customer Service on 0800 352 626.

It is good agricultural practice not to treat animals when they are wet or rain is likely. Prolonged heavy rain following treatment may reduce efficacy and the period of protection against flystrike. Consider retreatment of sheep after heavy rain. **Flystrike protection:** A shorter period of protection may also occur if Cyrex is applied incorrectly, or where there is excessive fleece soiling or dags. **Lice:** For effective control of lice, thorough wetting is essential.

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**DANNEVIRKE** 193-195 High Street **06 374 7021**

**MASTERTON** 24 Lincoln Road **06 378 2662**

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