

Vet Profile: **Sarah-jane Healey** (van Rossum)



Born and bred on a local dairy farm where her desire to become a vet grew from a young age and she developed her bias towards the brown coloured cows. Over the years she has pulled more than her fair share of weeds and titties and relief milking around the district helped pay her way thru university.

She graduated from Massey University in Palmerston North in 2010 along with her colleagues Kim and Brad. She has been working for Bayvets now for 6 years and plans to stick around for the foreseeable future. She enjoys working mainly with large animals and particularly loves calving cows, surgery, velveting stags and huge abscesses! She recently has become an Accredited Healthy Udder Mastitis Advisor and is more than happy to help farmers out with tricky mastitis cows or investigate a whole herd SCC issue – providing the link for demerit relief through Fonterra.

Her husband Jason is a local self-employed builder (JH Builders) who does both urban and agricultural work. Outside of work Sarah enjoys the outdoors and many aspects the Bay of Plenty has to offer, including slalom water-skiing, wakeboarding, diving, fishing, white water kayaking, snowboarding, hunting (ducks, pheasants, deer, pigs) playing squash and a bit of art work on the side.

This was one of her first caesarians – both cow and calf survived. One of our farmers should recognise the head crush?



The Results are in – What happens now?

Most of you have got your pregnancy results by now. Some are quite good, but some are a little disappointing.

What can we do with this information, to make some improvements for the future?

First of all, if you feel there is room for improvement in your mating results, you need to make some decisions about drying off. To optimise reproductive performance, adult cows need to calve at a condition score 5, and heifers at 5.5. Cows will not put on condition in the month before calving, due to the growth of the calf, so the only opportunity to gain condition is between now and 1 month before calving.

Later calving cows may be able to be milked on for a while, but early calvers and thin cows need to be dried off now to reach targets, unless they are already at the required condition score.

There are many other things that can be done to improve repro results. By reviewing your current situation, we can pinpoint areas for improvement. Areas worth reviewing include (but are not limited to)

- 3 week submission rate
- 6 week in calf rate
- Conception rate
- Empty rate
- Bull Management
- Costs of intervention
- Heat detection
- Heifer management

The most important driver of next seasons efficiency is the 6 week in calf rate. Please see us for a repro consult to discuss how we can set up next seasons mating to get the best out of your herd.

**" You have brains in your head
and feet in your shoes,
you can steer yourself in any
direction you choose! "**

--Dr. Seuss

Drying off in a tight year

Preventing new mastitis infections and treating existing infections over the dry period has been the cornerstone of mastitis control for several decades. Even in a very low payout year, you can't afford not to dry your herd off properly. Yes it costs money now but the consequences of cutting corners at dry off will cost you more time, money, lost production, mastitis and frustration next season.

Dry cow therapy (DCT):

The purpose of using dry cow is to attempt to cure any existing subclinical infections that cows currently have. It will also help treat some new infections picked up in the dry period if they are not also teat sealed. **Older cows with a history of high SCC greater than 250,000 in herd tests and multiple cases of mastitis should be given the longest acting DCT possible to fit in with your dry period.** Some infections will not cure so these cows must be monitored closely next season and culled if they are repeat offenders. Otherwise you risk other cows picking up these hard-to-cure contagious bugs (Staph aureus). Mid-range SCC cows can be given a shorter acting DCT. Below is a table of our products. Remember there is also another 8 milking withhold on top of what is specified.

Teat seal:

The purpose of teat seal is to prevent bacteria from entering the udder during the dry period and to prevent cows leaking milk at calving which poses the greatest risk of environmental bacteria (Strep uberis) invading the udders – especially in a wet muddy winter/spring. It has been proven that at least 20-30% of cows have not formed a keratin “teat plug” by 6 weeks after dry off. These cows have a hugely increased risk of picking up a dry period infection. **Cows with SCC less than 150,000 and have not had a clinical case of mastitis in the current season can be given teat seal only.** But it must be given extremely hygienically or you will end up with dead cows or blown out quarters. NZ trials have shown that teat sealing reduces mastitis over the dry period by 94%, 81% at calving and by 55% within the first 3 months of lactation.

Combination DCT/teat seal:

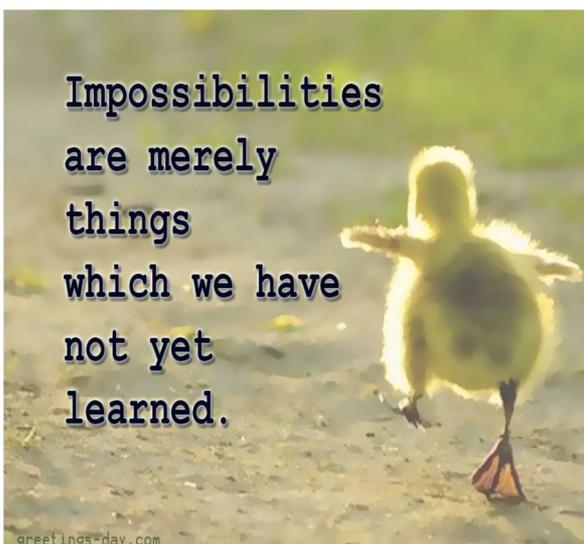
This is expensive but useful if you have a lot of calving mastitis (high environmental risk : mud, feed pads, stand-off/calving pads – Strep uberis) AND a lot of mid-late lactation mastitis/high BMSCC (high contagious risk – staph aureus). Combination therapy has proven to reduce mastitis by 70% within the first 100 days of lactation. **Without DCT or teat seal given at dry off, around 10-20% of your herd is expected to pick up a dry period infection and there is no chance for any existing subclinical infections to cure.** Worldwide, public concerns are increasing about the heavy use of DCT in the dairy industry regarding antibiotic resistance and the increased risk of antibiotic residues in the milk. In future we may need to rely more on teat sealing rather than DCT!

Dry Cow Consult:

To discuss with a vet how to selectively treat your herd. Bring in your recent herd test data (ideally within last 80 days) and a list of all the cows that have had mastitis over the current season and how many times each cow has had it.

Treating dry period mastitis:

Orbenin LA is the best product to use for dry period mastitis. The affected quarters must be stripped at least once daily – ideally twice. Orbenin can be given every day for 5 tubes or every second day for 3 tubes.



Price Drop

The price of oil has fallen significantly and stayed down and may remain there for a while. In light of this we have decreased our mileage charges as our fuel costs have dropped. Hopefully other costs may also reduce due to low oil prices.

We have reduced our mileage charge from \$1.20 per km to 98 cents per km

SAVE THE DATE!

The client thank you night will be on **July 1st** this year
So make sure you keep that date free
As usual expect a great night – watch this space!

Facial Eczema.

We are seeing a steady increase in spore counts and clinical cases of eczema recently. Although the spore counts are not excessively high, facial eczema is a cumulative disease, so continual exposure to moderate numbers of spores can be as damaging as short term exposure to high numbers.

We do advise that that full rates of zinc are being administered, either by drenching, trough treatment or boluses, and that this should be continued until mid-May

Another complication factor we sometimes encounter is high copper levels. This can be due to feeding palm kernel, which is high in copper, or by using copper supplements without checking levels.

High copper levels will exacerbate liver damage due to facial eczema, or may cause primary copper toxicity in some cases. Please talk to us about testing copper levels, and don't just assume that levels are the same as previous years.

At best you may be wasting your money on supplements, and at worst you may be poisoning you cows!

Mineral Levels

The autumn is always a good time to get mineral levels tested.

One of the easiest ways for this to happen is to do liver samples on cull cows at the works.

Getting Copper levels on cull cows is ideal as the liver stores copper and is better than blood tests.

Copper is the most expensive common mineral given. These days we see a lot more over dosing of copper. This could be an opportunity to cut costs if your copper levels are getting too high. There have been cases of poisonings in NZ.

When they do the testing at the works they test 5 cows and they are tested for Copper, Selenium and B12.

They also let you know if there are traces of Liver Fluke, Facial Eczema and Liver Abscess.

The cost of testing 5 cows is \$450.00

For these liver samples to happen you need to send the cows with a request form for liver samples.

Ring Donna at the Edgecumbe Clinic to get this organised.

If this form does not go with the cows it is too hard to get the form to the right place at the works, and the samples never seem to be taken.

Health and safety

The new OSH regulations will affect how we operate on farms. Hopefully the impact will be minimal. Our staff needs to be aware of any dangers. Our biggest area of concern is around yards and safe handling of animals. In some cases we may have to sedate stock to diagnose and treat them.

Travelling on quad bikes is also likely to be a problem and alternative transport may be needed if animals are in difficult places.

Theileria is hitting hard again!

Many farms around the area are getting hit with the 1st larval stage of Theileria. These ticks are almost too small to see with the naked eye (unlike the adult ticks we see in the summer). The ticks insert the Theileria parasite when they feed on cattle blood, causing them to be very weak, slow, down, panting, off milk, weight loss, and abortion and white or yellow fannies and udders. We can blood test cows to confirm. If the cow is stressed and has a huge level of Theileria they can rapidly die, otherwise with some TLC they can recover over a few weeks. Dry the affected cows off and take them out of the herd. Put on cow cover, give jump start/ketol energy drenches and give metabolase injection from the vet.

The ticks are dormant over the winter (May, June, July) so if you have affected cows now then give them a tick pour-on ASAP. If you do it before May then you will knock back the tick population and there will be less around for the 2nd stage come August/September/October. Calving is a very stressful time of year for the cows and if they get hit with Theileria then their chances of survival are significantly less.

Tick pour-on (Bantix) last 3-6weeks so it is recommended to give another dose in 4 weeks' time but do NOT give tick pour-on over May, June, July as the ticks are on the ground sleeping not biting cows! Tick pour-on does not treat cows with Theileria, it helps prevent them picking it up. There is no milk or meat with-holds. Don't forget about your calves! If they are hit with Theileria then their growth will be significantly impacted and also more likely to die. Take care with purchasing new stock as they could bring Theileria onto your farm. Get the sellers to give them a tick pour-on before they leave or when they arrive on your farm and quarantine them for a week. Also monitor stock sent to the runoff as they may pick up affected ticks there. Best to give them a pour-on tick treatment before they return home.

Why teat seal heifers?

Heifers are most susceptible to getting calving mastitis due to excessive bagging up and dripping milk. Heifers that develop mastitis can result in blind or weak quarters causing a reduction in lifetime production potential. The ideal time to teat seal heifers is 4-6 weeks before they are due to calve. You need at least 10-15% of heifers with calving mastitis (coming in with it or getting it within the first week) to be economic but a lot of farmers have been teat sealing heifers with less than 10% previous calving mastitis as they hate losing quarters in heifers. We often find quarters already with mastitis at time of teat sealing which can be treated and prevents coming in with blind/weak/infected quarters at calving. Hygiene is extremely important or you risk getting dead heifers and blown-out quarters. Farmers have been reporting that heifers are much easier to break in and either have no heifers coming in with mastitis or have had a significantly reduced number after teat sealing.

Over the past few years we have been teat sealing more and more mobs of heifers. BayVets has a team that can come out ensures the process is done properly and hygienically. A lot of you have seen how we do it and due to the current financial situation we would hate to see heifers not getting teat sealed this season. We would rather farmers do it themselves than not at all. Please read the DIY heifer teat sealing article. We are also happy to come and get your team organised and started to ensure everyone is on the same page and knows how to do it properly, and then we can leave you guys to it when you are happy and confident.

Repro promo – Get Away

Russel I and Nadine Meade are about to embark on their 5 day get away to Fiji that they won through the Repro promo.

Staff from BayVets hope you have a fantastic break – ENJOY!



No more Mastalone!

Unfortunately for the 2016/2017 season there will be no Mastalone available so we need to temporarily use alternatives. Mastalone is best suited for mid-late lactation mastitis.

Penclox intra-mammary is an equivalent alternative and like Mastalone it is only used once daily. It can actually be used all year round.

Orbenin LA intra-mammary is also best suited for mid-late lactation especially for hard to cure cases. Used either once every 24 or 48 hours for up to 3-5 tubes. It is also the best product to use for mastitis found over the dry period.

Lincocin forte and **Spectrazol** intra-mammaries can also be used all year round.

Tylan or **Tyloguard** injections are also best suited for mid-late lactation, especially if multiple quarters are affected. **Tylofen** is the same as Tylan or Tyloguard but has an anti-inflammatory/pain relief added. This significantly helps reduce swelling and pain, allowing better milking out and a happier cow.

Clavulox, Intracillin 1000, Penethaject, Mamyzin and Masticillin are best suited for the calving season.



Cancer eyes

We are seeing a few cancer eye cases that are being left too long. The cancers have grown so big that they were rubbing on the surface of the eyeball. When they get this big they can no longer get a work certificate to go to the works, and they are very hard to clear up to be able to get the cow to the works in the future.

This is a good time of year to have a close look at all cows. If the growths are small and on the third eyelid in the corner of the eye then we can either cut them out or send them on a truck.

Once these growths become active they can change quite quickly so don't leave them too long.



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