

**devoted  
vets**

*for your animal's life!*



**for your  
herd's health**

**12 Normanby St, Warragul, 3820 Phone: 5623 2525**

**Spring 2018**

*Hi there!*

With the disastrously dry Autumn and increased fodder costs in Winter, budgets have been really tight for dairy farmers this Spring.

With that in mind, we have been looking at ways to improve farm profitability for you out there in dairy land—read on!

We also look at an outbreak of blackspot in heifers to highlight how multiple factors are often involved in disease outbreaks.

### **Do your young stock really need worming?**

**Thousands of dollars are spent each year on wormers, but are they really required?**

It's true that if you wait for cattle to look wormy, then you are leaving it too late, and weight gain and production are already lost.

But equally true, cattle can be treated with wormers when they are carrying such a light burden that it isn't a problem. Their own immunity copes quite well with the few worms they carry.

There are other factors to consider too. Ideally, the use of wormers should be minimized to reduce the development of resistance to treatment. Resistance develops if one or two worms survive a treatment, and then pass their protective genes to subsequent generations of worms. Bear in mind, it only takes three

weeks for a worm egg to develop into an egg-laying adult, so the capacity to "pass on their genes" is staggering!



**So how do you tell if your stock really need worming?**

The answer is "a Pooled Worm Egg Count". In this laboratory test, five to ten manure samples from a group of animals are pooled into one, with 5 grams from each sample mixed. Obviously each sample has to be equal by weight so this has to be done at the laboratory - not on the farm!

The worms eggs are then counted in bulk to produce an average across the group.

**Advice can then be given to answer the question, "Do my stock really need worming, or can I save my money?"**

**We are supporting this test with a 50% discount—making the price \$66.60**

**And we are extending this 50% discount to include analysis of calf scour samples too, reducing the price to \$43.70 per test.**

**Don't waste money needlessly worming your stock!**

**50% off worm egg counts!**

**Find the bugs that cause scours in your calves too.**

**50% off calf scour analysis this spring!**

**Many factors causing an outbreak of teat end disease in a heifer group.**

## An outbreak of “black spot” in heifers:

Clients milking a herd of 250 mixed breed dairy cattle purchased a group of in-calf jersey heifers. The problems started soon after the heifers entered the milking herd.

As you can see from the photo below, they developed sores on the teat ends, with dark, hard scabs that are difficult or impossible to remove. The rest of the herd were OK!



The problems didn't stop there, because the normal defence mechanisms of the teat end that prevent bacterial invasion of the udder are disrupted, and a number of the heifers went on to develop mastitis. The mastitis also proved difficult to treat, taking multiple treatments with different antibiotics.

**The underlying cause of blackspot is usually a milking machine problem. So why were the rest of the herd OK?**

The machines functioned perfectly well for the rest of the herd, but the jersey heifers had a different teat shape and length. This increases the vacuum pressure “load” on the teat end. Teats with a pointy end are particularly prone to blackspot, again because the teat end is subject to a greater vacuum load than a flatter ended teat. Check out the shape of the right hind teat...

### So how do we treat the heifers without upsetting the rest of the herd?

- We advised the vacuum level be adjusted down to a level that was still OK for the herd, but provided some relief to the heifers. We may only be talking about a 5% reduction, but at the teat end, it can make all the difference.
- Get the machines off the heifers fast! Shorter milking times will again reduce the vacuum load on the teat end.
- We did the sums and found the liners were well past use-by date. The whole herd would benefit from new rubberware, but a more flexible liner will provide better relief from the vacuum for the heifers.
- We increased the % of glycerin in the teat disfectant from a standard 10% up to 20%, delivered to the heifers with spray bottles. Glycerin increases skin moisture, and moist skin heals quicker than dry skin. Unfortunately this level of glycerin cannot be maintained forever as it tend to inactivate the iodine, but it's great as a short term fix.  
**Consider increasing the level of glycerin to 20% for dry, cracked or injured teats using a spray bottle for individual animals.**
- For this group of heifers, strip the teats each milking so mastitis is detected early! The sooner the mastitis is detected, the greater the chance of rapid cure.

As is so often the case, multiple factors are involved in this disease outbreak, including possibly genetics! We need to address as many factors as possible to gain improvement.

*Devoted vets... fast response, professionalism, great value!*

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Phone: 03-5623 2525 Fax: 03-5623 2892

Email: info@devotedvets.com.au Website: www.devotedvets.com.au

#### Clinic Hours

Monday and Thursday: 8am to 7 pm

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 8am to 5pm

Saturday: 9am to 12 noon