

## Heifer Teat Sealing — Preparation Guide & Tips for a Safe, Successful Visit

Heifer teat sealing can be a challenging procedure; however, heifer preparation can make a significant difference to the safety of our team, the heifers and the efficiency of the job. The following recommendations are designed to help you get the best outcome for your heifers while ensuring our veterinary team can work safely and efficiently. A little preparation in the weeks beforehand makes a significant difference on the day.

### Shed Familiarisation & Training

**1**

#### Start training well in advance

- Begin running heifers through the shed two weeks before the date - earlier is better.
- Heifers should be accustomed to walking into and moving through the shed without excessive pushing or noise.
- Don't leave training to the last few days. Animals that are only just getting used to the shed on the day of treatment can be a significant hazard.

**2**

#### Make shed runs a positive experience.

- Run heifers through calmly and quietly — avoid yelling, dogs, or rushing animals.
- If possible, offer a small amount of feed (e.g. palm kernel) at the end of each run through to create a positive association.
- Repeated low-stress exposures are more effective than a single rushed training session.
- Have a small mob of cows within the heifers to demonstrate good behaviour.
- When moving heifers in the row/bail, let them stand for a period and touch the udder area to desensitise them to being touched.
- Tail trimming can be done in the training period before, not during the teat sealing job.

### What 'ready' looks like

- Heifers walk into the shed without significant force.
- Animals stand reasonably quietly without constant kicking or spinning.
- Heifers are fed well a few hours before yarding.
- Heifers move through the shed at a steady pace without bunching or backing up.
- The mob is manageable by your regular yard staff without excessive effort.

### Staffing on the Day

**3**

#### Have enough people on hand

- A minimum of three experienced farm staff should be present.
- Roles to fill: one person holding a heifer in the shed; two people to assist our team.
- If your herd is large or your heifers are known to be lively, consider more farm staff.
- Make sure your staff know what the procedure involves so they can assist effectively.

**4**

#### Brief your team beforehand

- Ensure staff are aware of any individual animals with known temperament issues so these can be managed or excluded.
- Have a clear plan for removing an animal from the pit quickly and safely if needed.

## Facilities & Yard Preparation

### 5

#### Check your shed function

- Good lighting in the shed pit is important for the procedure. Check bulbs are working.
- Ensure hot water is turned on.
- Have a big rubbish bin or sacks available for after-job clean-up.

### 6

#### Yard and mob management

- Keep the mob calm during yarding. Do not let dogs move up heifers.
- Identify any known 'problem' animals before the day.

## On the Day of the Procedure

### 7

#### Timing and conditions

- Wet, muddy conditions increase both infection risk and slip hazards. Ensure the yard is clean of mud and faeces.
- If weather or conditions on the day are significantly adverse, contact us in advance to discuss whether rescheduling is appropriate.
- Keep background noise to a minimum (radios, machinery) while the vet team is working.

### After the procedure

- Walk heifers away calmly.
- Ensure paddock is as dry as possible for two days following administration.
- Watch for any signs of discomfort, swelling, heat, or abnormal discharge from the udder daily following treatment, for 2 weeks.
- Contact The Vet Centre promptly if you have any concerns.

#### Maungaturoto

184 Hurdall St, Maungaturoto  
Phone 09 431 8318  
maungaturoto@thevetcentre.net.nz

#### Waipu

53 The Centre, Waipu  
Phone 09 432 0693  
waipu@thevetcentre.net.nz

#### Mangawhai

36 Moir St, Mangawhai  
Phone 09 431 4535  
mangawhai@thevetcentre.net.nz

#### Ruawai

23 Jellicoe Rd, Ruawai  
Phone 09 439 2506  
ruawai@thevetcentre.net.nz

#### Ruakākā

385 Marsden Point Road, Ruakākā  
Phone 09 433 4916  
ruakaka@thevetcentre.net.nz

*We care, pets, people, community*

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