



The Vet Centre

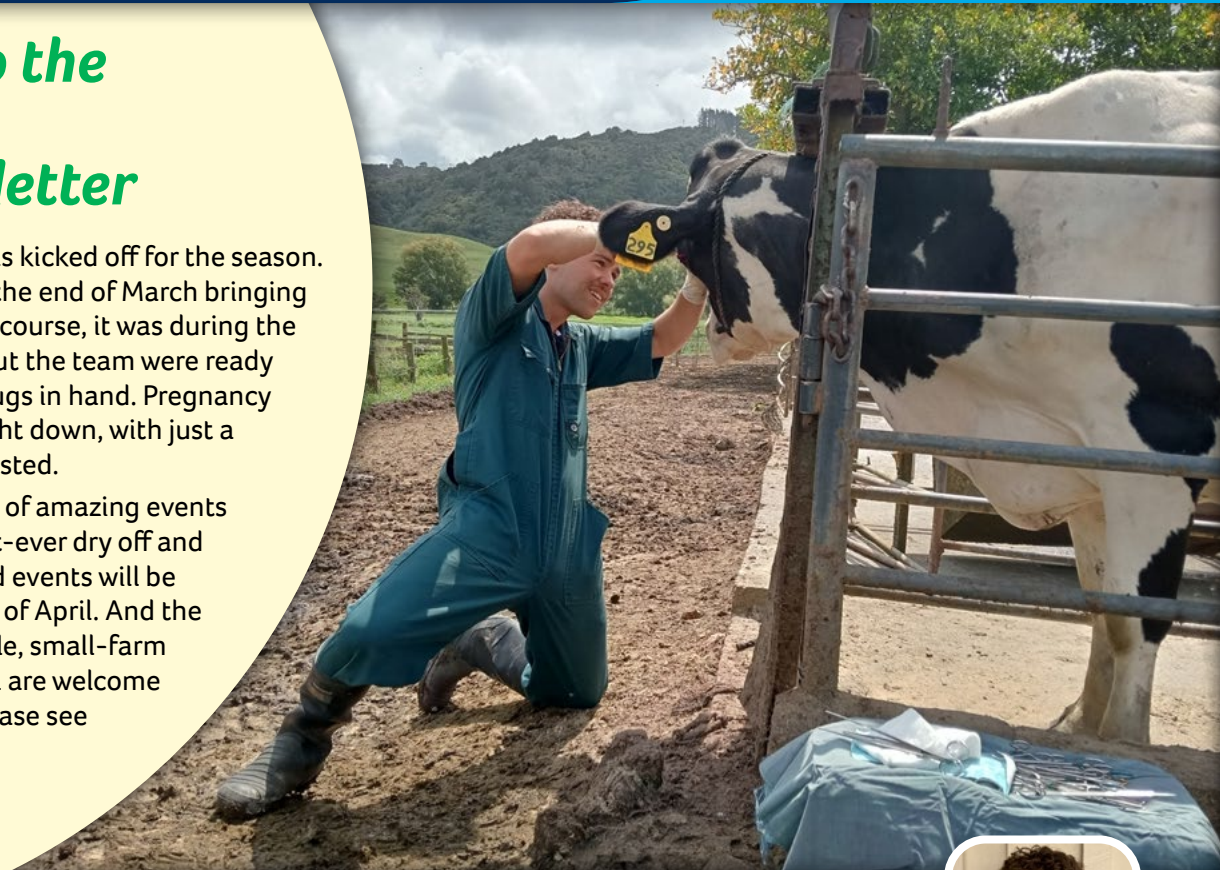
WAIPU | RUAWAI | MANGAWHAI | MAUNGATUROTO | RUAKĀKĀ

April/May
2026

Welcome to the April / May Farm Newsletter

Autumn calving has kicked off for the season. With one day at the end of March bringing four calvings, of course, it was during the curly weather we had. But the team were ready with calving kits and drugs in hand. Pregnancy scanning has slowed right down, with just a few heifer mobs to be tested.

We have set up a couple of amazing events for our farmers. Our first-ever dry off and teatseal farmer-focused events will be held in the second week of April. And the second event is a lifestyle, small-farm information evening. All are welcome to these free events. Please see the invites within this newsletter for details and RSVP if you're attending.



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STAFF UPDATE

What does new grad vet Dr Cam have to say about settling into life at The Vet Centre?

"It's been an awesome start to my career at *The Vet Centre*. Two months in and I have had a couple key moments that stand out – first solo eye enucleation on a dairy cow (pictured above), an unexpected breech calving, and many good chats with farmers who've warmly welcomed me to the area. Hoping to continue to get out and get my hands dirty as the autumn calvings keep rolling in."



Dr Cam Nahill
BVSc
Farm Vet



What's a horse's favourite song?

ANSWER
ON PAGE 10



Boost young cattle performance this autumn with MultiMin

As autumn sets in across New Zealand, young cattle face a critical transition period. Pasture quality begins to decline, trace mineral levels can drop, and growth rates often slow. This is the time to act – and MultiMin injectable multivitamin and trace mineral is the smart solution to keep your stock thriving.

Why MultiMin this autumn?

- **Supports optimal growth** – Delivers essential trace minerals like zinc, selenium, copper, and manganese directly into the animal, ensuring maximum absorption when it matters most.
- **Strengthens immunity** – Helps young cattle stay resilient during seasonal stress, transport, and changing feed conditions.
- **Improves feed efficiency** – Get more from your pasture and supplements by supporting better nutrient utilisation.

- **Convenient and reliable** – Injectable delivery bypasses pasture variability and ensures every animal gets the right dose.

Perfect for:

- Weaners and rising young stock, less than two years old.
- Cattle entering finishing systems.
- Animals facing autumn pasture decline.

Don't let hidden mineral deficiencies hold your cattle back this season. A simple MultiMin treatment can make a measurable difference in health, weight gain, and overall performance.

Talk to your favourite vet about adding MultiMin to your autumn animal health plan.

Healthy cattle. Better growth. Stronger returns.

**GET YOUR HERD
PERFORMANCE
READY**





Jenna Frazer
Vet Tech



Spring first aid – ARE YOU READY?

As we come into our quiet time of the year for the dairy side of things, we are preparing mentally and physically for the busiest time of the dairy calendar as well! Being prepared and ready to go allows

for a smoother transition into the busy calving period and shows confident farm management. Delegation is key, where appropriate!

Remember, your friendly veterinary team is here to help with free farm deliveries in some areas, during spring to ease the load and get you what you need weekly over this period.

| PENS | COWS | CALVES | YOU |
|--|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean pens prior to fresh bedding going in, by water blasting and spraying with a disinfectant such as Vetsan • Clean bedding that is free-draining • Check pens are draught-free and well-ventilated to prevent ammonia build-up and keep calves warm and dry • Water troughs and feeders scrubbed with disinfectant. Use gloves! • Meal/fibre ordered • Whiteboard for recording treatments • Boot disinfectant bins at calf pen entry | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calving first aid bucket and lid for easy transport on the go • Metabolics, i.e. Milk fever treatment, Tri-Cal plus, Starter Plus • Lube • Towel and soap to clean hands • Red spray paint if using medications that have withholds • Gloves • Torch • Iodine for spraying navels (not teatspray) • Calving ropes/chains/handles, etc • Halter • Oxytocin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gloves • Thermometer • Iodine spray (not teatspray) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1x for pens 1x for trailer • Multimin injectable • Clean feeders and teats • Colostrum feeder • Electrolytes (Enerlect) • Elastrators and rubber rings • Ear tags and NAIT tags ordered | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yellow recording book • Spare warm clothing/wet weathers • Energy snacks at the shed for those extra-long mornings you don't make it home in time! • Your key vet contact on your mobile phone |



Thomas Traill
Farm Vet

Will blanket dry cow antibiotics lower your SCC?

Blanket antibiotic dry cow treatment (ADCT) has long been a common tool on New Zealand dairy farms. However, recent research suggests it may not significantly reduce your bulk tank somatic cell count (BTSCC) in many herds.

Current evidence shows the biggest gains in udder health come from:

- Good practices during lactation
- High hygiene standards at dry-off
- Effective management of cows after dry-off

Recent New Zealand analysis indicates blanket ADCT is most likely to reduce BTSCC when:

- Average BTSCC (July-February) is over 200,000 cells/mL, and
- BTSCC increases by over 40,000 cells/mL from January to February

Even in these herds, the expected improvement is modest – on average, a reduction of 16,000 cells/mL the following season.

For a 200-cow herd, this equates to roughly \$1,500-\$2,500 in value, which is similar to the cost of treating about 100 cows (50% of the herd) with ADCT.

Can you achieve the same result with less antibiotic use?

In many cases, yes.

A strong *within-lactation udder health* plan will have a greater impact on reducing BTSCC and mastitis, while also lowering antibiotic use and improving team engagement. No matter if your average BTSCC for the season is 80,000 cells/ml or 320,000 cells/ml, key areas of focus (see table below):

The bottom line

Blanket ADCT still has a place in some herds, particularly those with higher or rising SCC. However, for many farms, greater gains can be made by focusing on management and prevention during lactation.

Each season, we work alongside farmers to tailor dry-off strategies to their herd – aiming to improve udder health, reduce costs, and ensure antibiotics are used only where they truly benefit udder health and milk quality.

| AREA OF FOCUS: | ACTION: |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Hygienic dry off technique | Train staff with your local vet tech or vet |
| Early identification of mastitis cows | Follow “MRS T” (Mark, Record, Separate, Treat) |
| Teat end health | Teat end score early and mid-season |
| Milking machine function | Regular milking machine technician checks |
| Clean teats (reduce mud and faeces) | Focus on the yard and exit races of the cow shed |
| Teat spray coverage | 20ml per cow per milking, full teat coverage |
| Know your bacteria | Regular Mastatest or milk cultures |
| Teat sealant use | Used in all cows (review its benefits in heifers) |
| Culling strategy | Remove repeat mastitis cases or cows with high SCC on either side of the dry period. |



The Vet Centre

The Vet Centre invites you to join us for a practical, hands-on session on best-practice administration of teat sealant and dry cow therapy.

Do you – or members of your farm team – want to learn how our vets and techs do it? This farmer-focused, free training session is designed to build confidence and improve technique.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- *An informative overview of dry cow and teat sealant products.*
- *How to prepare, apply, and carry out safe aftercare for cows and heifers.*
- *Hands-on techniques, tips, and hygiene practices to help you work efficiently and to a high standard.*



FREE event!

DATES & VENUE

East: Thursday 9th April @ Bruce Paton's farm 2454 State Highway 1, Ruakākā DSN 12768.

West: Friday 10th April @ Carla & Nic Preston's, Twelve Bovine, 3495 State Highway 12, Ruawai DSN 14230

Time: 10am – 12pm.

WHAT TO BRING

Help protect our industry. Please arrive with clean boots and a clean shed apron to prevent the spread of disease, pests, or weeds.

Morning tea is provided. Let us know if you have any dietary requirements

Please **RSVP** for catering purposes:

Email:

maungaturoto@thevetcentre.net.nz

Phone: 09 431 8318



BVD in NZ dairy herds

Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) remains one of the most costly infectious diseases on New Zealand dairy farms, affecting both production and reproduction. The good news is that BVD is a disease we can control and even eliminate from individual herds with a clear, consistent plan.

Why BVD matters on your farm

- A high percentage of New Zealand dairy herds show evidence of exposure to BVD.
- BVD reduces in-calf rates, causes early embryo loss and abortions, and can lead to weak, stunted calves.
- Infected herds see lower milk production and higher levels of other diseases due to suppressed immunity.
- Nationally, BVD is estimated to cost tens of millions of dollars each year in lost production and control costs.

What is BVD?

BVD is caused by a virus spread mainly through close contact with infected cattle. The biggest risk comes from persistently infected (PI) animals – these are cattle infected before birth that continually shed virus throughout life. They often look normal but silently infect others, especially at calving, mating, and during calf-rearing.

The key driver: PI animals

The main source of BVD virus on farm is the persistently infected (PI) animal. These animals are born infected, shed huge amounts of virus for life, and never clear the infection. If a pregnant cow or heifer is infected early in gestation, her calf can be born PI and keep the cycle going.

BVD control

A BVD monitoring and eradication plan may include:

- Annual bulk milk testing.
- Use bulk milk PCR and antibody ELISA testing each season to check if the milking herd is being exposed to BVD.
- Work with your vet to interpret results and decide if further investigation is needed.
- Test all replacement heifer calves.
- Blood or ear-notch test heifer calves as early as possible to find any PI animals.
- Cull confirmed PI animals promptly so they cannot infect herd mates or enter the milking herd.



Dr Michelle Stodart
BVSc
Farm Vet

- Tighten biosecurity at the boundary.
- Double-fence boundaries where cattle have nose-to-nose contact with neighbours.
- Quarantine and test all new cattle, including service bulls, before mixing with your herd.
- Use vaccination strategically.
- Vaccination protects pregnant animals from becoming infected and producing PI calves.
- Follow label directions and ensure heifers have completed their primary course before mating, with annual boosters for mixed-age cows.

Staying BVD-free

Once clear, continue annual bulk milk screening and calf testing to pick up any reintroductions early and prevent costly outbreaks.

If you'd like help designing a tailored control plan or scheduling testing, talk with one of our vets or tech team members.

BVD Monitoring and Control Options

| AREA | KEY ACTIONS FOR NZ DAIRY FARMS |
|-----------------------|--|
| Herd monitoring | Annual bulk milk PCR and antibody ELISA testing to track infection and exposure. |
| Calves/replacements | Test heifer calves early; cull any PI animals. |
| Breeding cows/heifers | Vaccinate before mating; annual boosters for mixed-age cows. |
| Bulls | Test and vaccinate breeding bulls; quarantine until cleared. |
| Biosecurity | Test all incoming stock, strengthen boundary fencing, and manage shared grazing. |



Deworming in horses:

What every owner should know

Intestinal parasites (worms) are an unavoidable part of a horse's life. Every horse grazing pasture will pick up parasites at some stage. In small numbers, they may cause little harm, but when burdens increase or when young or stressed horses are affected, worms can lead to real health problems.

What problems can parasites cause?

Intestinal parasites can affect horses in different ways depending on the species and the number present. Often, the signs are subtle at first – a dull coat, loss of condition, mild, recurrent colic, or reduced performance. Some of the most important include:

- **Small strongyles (cyathostomins)** – the most common parasite. Larval stages can encyst in the gut wall and emerge in large numbers, causing severe diarrhoea, weight loss, colic and even death.
- **Tapeworms** – linked with spasmodic colic and irritation at the junction of the small and large intestine (ileocecal colic).
- **Ascarids (roundworms)** – mainly affect foals and young horses. Heavy burdens can cause poor growth, respiratory signs during larval migration, or intestinal obstruction.
- **Bots** – the larval stage of bot flies attach to the stomach lining and can contribute to gastric irritation.
- **Pinworms** – well known for causing intense itching around the tail head. Horses may rub their bottoms on fences or trees, leading to broken tail hair and skin irritation.

Why we don't worm as often as we used to?

In the past, horses were commonly wormed every 6 to 8 weeks. Unfortunately, this has led to widespread resistance to wormers, meaning some parasites now survive treatments that once worked well.

Modern parasite control focuses on targeted treatment, using testing and seasonal planning to protect both horse health and the effectiveness of available products.

A faecal egg count (FEC) is a simple test performed on a fresh manure sample. It tells us how many parasite eggs a horse is shedding onto the pasture.



Horses with clinical cyathostominosis can be thin despite a good appetite, and have diarrhoea and low protein levels.



Ascarids removed from the intestinal tract of a foal

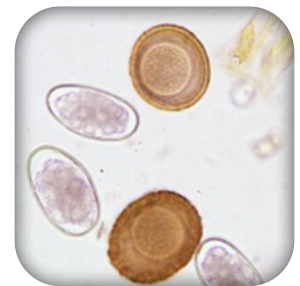


Dr Chloe Traill
BVSc
Farm Vet

This helps us:

- Identify horses that genuinely need treatment
 - Avoid unnecessary drenching in low-risk horses
 - Monitor whether wormers are still effective
 - Build a parasite control plan tailored to your property
- Some adult horses naturally carry very low burdens and may only need minimal worming each year.

Even with targeted programmes, most adult horses benefit from one key treatment in autumn. Products containing moxidectin and praziquantel are commonly recommended at this time. This seasonal treatment helps reduce parasite build-up over winter.



Strongyle and ascarid eggs seen on FEC under the microscope

What can you do at home?

Good pasture hygiene can significantly reduce worm exposure:

- Regular manure removal from paddocks
- Avoiding overstocking
- Rotating grazing where possible
- Quarantining and testing new arrivals

- Seeking veterinary advice for young horses or those losing condition

Frequent routine drenching is no longer best practice. Targeted worming guided by faecal egg counts, combined with at least one well-timed autumn treatment, is the most effective way to protect horse health and preserve the usefulness of worming products.

We do FECs. Ask us.



Nicole Hill
Vet Tech

Talk to your
vet or tech
today about the
best option for
your farm.

Why you should drench your cattle for liver fluke

Liver fluke (*Fasciola hepatica*) is one of the most underestimated production killers in New Zealand cattle systems – especially in regions like Northland, where warm, wet conditions favour its lifecycle. Strategic drenching with effective products such as Reflex F, Icon F, or Flukecare is essential to protect animal health and farm profitability.

The Hidden Cost of Liver Fluke

Liver fluke is a parasitic flatworm that lives in the liver and bile ducts of cattle.

It feeds on blood and damages liver tissue, leading to:

- Reduced weight gain and poor growth (“ill-thrift”)
- Lower milk production
- Reduced fertility
- Liver condemnation at processing
- In severe cases, death

Even low-level infections can quietly drain performance. In some cases, you may not realise fluke is the issue until losses are already significant. Northland conditions are ideal for fluke to flourish. They require a mud snail host found in wet areas (drains, swamps, dams). They thrive in warm, moist climates – common in Northland and coastal regions – and stock are exposed when grazing wet paddocks. Fluke infections can occur year-round in northern regions, making control even more important. The biggest damage often comes from immature fluke, not adults. An immature fluke migrates through the liver, causing severe tissue damage. Heavy burdens can cause sudden death. Adult flukes contribute to long-term blood loss (up to 0.5 mL per fluke per day). This is why choosing the right drench matters – not all products kill early stages. Drenching is not just treatment – it is prevention and lifecycle control.

When Should You Drench?

Autumn / early winter: target immature fluke.

Late winter / early spring: remove adult fluke and reduce pasture contamination.

Pour-on option: REFLEXF is recommended for young stock and beef units. Spring treatments are especially important to break the lifecycle before snail activity increases. In high-risk areas (like Northland), additional treatments may be needed.

Using proven products like:

- **REFLEXF** (broad-spectrum pour-on) – on special at *The Vet Centre* – 20% off until 30th September 2026. 5L now \$964.71, usually \$1205.89 including GST. 2.5L now \$532.26, usually \$665.33 including GST.
- **Icon F** (injectable for adult fluke)
- **Flukecare** (oral, all-stage control) ... ensures you're targeting the parasite effectively at every stage.

**20%
OFF**
until
30th September
2026





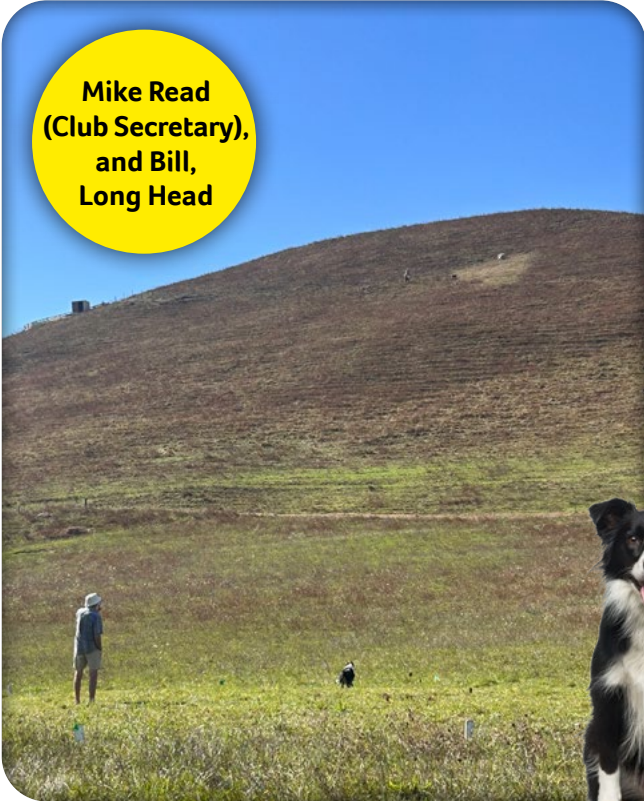
Club house view



Graham Robertson (Club Patron), and Trip, Short Head



Mike Read (Club Secretary), and Bill, Long Head



Tony Comins (Club President), Short Head Pen



Otamatea Sheep Dog Trial Club's annual trial

The Vet Centre sponsored the local Otamatea Sheep Dog Trial Club's annual trial on 21st and 22nd March, providing support and a wonderful gift basket as a prize for the club. One of the oldest clubs in Northland, running for over 100 years, it's located in Marohemo on the White Rock Hills property, owned by Quentin and Tracey Robinson.

The two-day trial is made up of four events: two for heading (or eye) dogs, the short head and yard, and the long head. Two for

huntaway dogs, the zigzag and straight hunts. Fog delayed the start of the trial on both days; this didn't hamper things too much, with over 50 runs in the heading events and 30 in the huntaways, with competitors travelling from Waikato to the Far North.

Some of *The Vet Centre* team came to check out the event with their families, gaining a better understanding of the sport, which many of our clients are involved in around the region. Vet Rosie managed to find herself a job on

the huntaway course, joining the team as liberator. Her task was to ensure the sheep started to walk up the hill as the huntaway dogs began their run. Well done, Rosie. We hear you're welcome back any time.

If you're interested in sheep dog trials around the region, *The Vet Centre* is supporting another local club, Molesworth (Kaiwaka), on 17th & 18th April for their annual trial.



Rural events in the region

The Vet Centre - Lifestyle Evening event.

Date: Wednesday 15th April at Mangawhai Domain, 73 Moir St, Mangawhai Heads, Northland 0505

Time: 5.30 – 7pm

RSVP by 8th April 2026 to maungaturoto@thevetcentre.net.nz or 09 4318318

The Vet Centre - Best practice administration for test sealant and dry cow therapy.

East - Thursday 9th April at Bruce Paton farm 2454 State Highway 1, Ruakākā DSN 12768.

West - Friday 10th April at Carla & Nic Preston, Twelve Bovine, 3495 State Highway 12, Ruawai DSN 14230

Time 10am – 12pm

What to bring –

Protect our industry: please arrive with clean boots and a shed apron to prevent the spread of disease, pests, or weeds.

Morning tea provided.

Please let us know if you have any dietary requirements.

Please **RSVP** for catering purposes to maungaturoto@thevetcentre.net.nz or 09 4318318.

Dairy NZ

Ararua Discussion Group.

Wednesday 15th April 2026.
11am – 1pm. Vendt and Shaw Farm. Lindquist Rd

Lifestyle small farm Info

Did you know about the feed supplement **Multifeed + Zinc Nuts** in 20kg? Enriched with a registered zinc oxide to support the risk of facial eczema in cattle, sheep, and goats. These are designed to be fed individually to cattle, sheep, and goats to improve condition and productivity in ruminants when nutrient demands are high or during periods of critical feed stress. Ask your local clinic about this versatile product.

Goats – Goats are herd animals and love company to live with. They enjoy open pasture, giving them the freedom to explore, play, and roam to satisfy their inquisitive nature. Their company does not have to be other goats either; they will quite happily get along with other species.

Sheep – Ensure you have a lambing kit at the ready for any unplanned emergencies. Minimum needs are: in a bucket, long gloves, lube, colostrum, teat and bottle, thermometer, lamb milk powder replacer, wool jacket for lambs. You can get all this equipment from your local Vet Centre. Be on the

lookout for pregnancy toxaemia, also known as pregnancy disease, sleepy sickness, twin lamb and ketosis. Caused by low blood sugar (glucose). This occurs because the ewe cannot meet her energy requirements during late pregnancy. The best preventive measure is to ensure the feeding of high-energy concentrates and grains during the last month of pregnancy.

Cattle – Change in season can be a stressful time for cattle, especially young stock (under 2 years old). With the temperature change, this can mean the cattle are using more energy to keep warm. So, ensure you have enough good-quality feed on hand to keep your cattle well-fed during this transition.

Alpaca – We have seen a few chilly mornings this autumn, which means the alpacas will be feeling chilly too. Ensure your alpaca has shelter so they can stay warm and avoid dipping into their energy stores. Ensure there is enough good feed, and talk to your local vet about a vitamin D supplement for your young stock (less than 3 years old).

A new vaccine, Bovilis Cryptium

A new vaccine, Bovilis Cryptium, is now available in New Zealand to help manage *Cryptosporidium parvum*, a very common cause of calf scours. Crypto can be frustrating to control, even with good hygiene and existing treatments, so this vaccine offers another tool for some farms. It works by stimulating the cow to produce antibodies (targeting the GP40 protein of the protozoa), which are passed to the calf via colostrum. These antibodies help reduce the protozoa's ability to attach to the gut lining. As with Rotavec Corona, success relies on calves receiving enough high-quality colostrum as early as possible after birth – and yes, Rotavec Corona and Bovilis Cryptium can be administered at the same time.

The potential benefit of vaccination is its ability to enhance newborn calves' resistance to infection, thereby reducing the severity of illness in those affected by Crypto. An initial course consists of two doses, with the last dose given at least three weeks before calving, followed by an annual booster. Injection site swellings may occur, and accidental self-injection can cause severe reactions.

As every farm system is different, we recommend discussing whether this vaccine is an option for your farm with your local vet.



ANSWER
Purple Rein.



**The
Vet Centre
invites all
lifestyle farmers
to this free
event.**

Dream Big, Farm Small, The Vet Centre can help you do it all

Join us for an evening of tips, discussion and expert vet advice.

Want to know more about keeping your lifestyle farm animals happy and healthy?

FARM FOCUS FOR AUTUMN AND WINTER:

- Alpaca – Vitamin D requirements
- Preparation for farm animal spring emergencies
- Introduction to our new horse lifestyle plans.



Date: Wednesday 15th April

Time: 5.30 – 7pm

Venue: Mangawhai Domain
73 Moir St,
Mangawhai Heads,
Northland 0505

**Nibbles
provided**

RSVP by 8th April 2026 to
maungaturoto@thevetcentre.net.nz
or 09 4318318

Waipu Clinic

53 The Centre
Waipu
P 09 432 0693

Opening Hours

Monday-Friday:
8.00am-5.00pm
Saturdays:
9.00am-12.30pm

Ruawai Clinic

23 Jellicoe Road
Ruawai
P 09 439 2506

Opening Hours

Monday-Friday:
8.00am - 5.00pm
Saturdays: CLOSED

Mangawhai Clinic

36 Moir St
Mangawhai
P 09 431 4535

Opening Hours

Monday-Friday:
8.00am - 5.00pm
Saturdays:
9.00am - 12:30pm

Maungaturoto Clinic

184 Hurndall St
Maungaturoto
P 09 431 8318

Opening Hours

Monday-Friday:
8.00am - 5.00pm
Saturdays: CLOSED

Ruakākā Clinic

385 Marsden Point Road
Ruakākā
P 09 433 4916

Opening Hours

Monday-Friday:
8.00am - 5.00pm
Saturdays: CLOSED