



The Vet Centre

WAIPU | RUAWAI | MANGAWHAI | MAUNGATUROTO | RUAKĀKĀ

August/September
2026

Welcome to the August / September Farm Newsletter

Winter on the farm can be tough. The days are short, the paddocks are wet, the gateways are knee-deep in mud, and every job seems to take twice as long. Summer can feel like a lifetime away when calving or lambing has only started. While you're busy looking after your animals, don't forget to look after yourself, your loved ones and your team. Check in on your neighbour, give a mate a call or stop in for a cuppa. Sometimes a simple "how are you really doing?" can make all the difference. This year, The Vet Centre will not be hosting the farmers' BBQs mid-year, as this is a busy time of year for farmers to come off farm and for the team to go out to farms; therefore, turnout has not been the best in the past. Instead, we will be doing a boost pack drop-off to our dairy farmers.

Farming has never been about facing the hard times alone. We have a great rural community that supports each other and has each other's back when the weather, the workload, and life get too much. You or someone you know don't have to be at breaking point to ask for help.

In the farming community, we also have people who understand rural life and are ready to listen. Here is a list of confidential support you can reach out to for any reason.

- **Farmstrong** - is a nationwide wellbeing programme for the rural community. They aim to help you live well to farm well. Email info@farmstrong.co.nz
- **Federated Farmers** - For work, financial pressure or employment issues that are contributing to stress, contact Federated Farmers

to point members toward the appropriate support.

Ph 0800 327 646

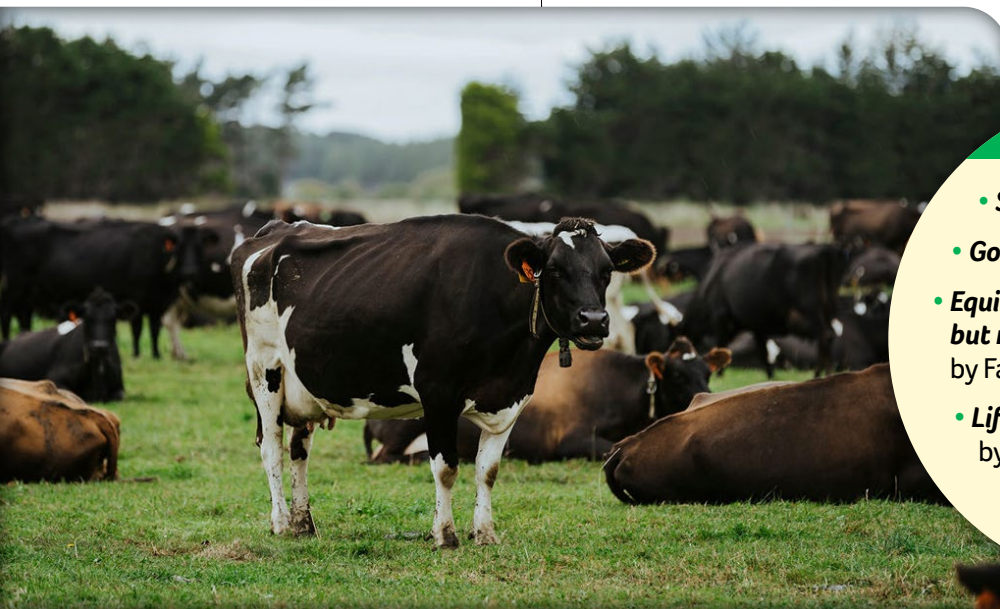
- **Rural Women NZ** - Support, connection and advocacy for people in rural communities.
Ph 0800 256 467
- **1737 - Need to Talk?** Call or text 1737 anytime to speak with a trained counsellor.
- **Lifeline Aotearoa** - **Ph 0800 543 354** or Text **4357** (help)
- **Healthline** - **Ph 0800 611 116**
- **Depression Helpline** - **Ph 0800 111 757**
- **Suicide Crisis Helpline** - **Ph 0508 828 865**

Let's be kind to each other and take a break when you need one, have a chat with someone you trust and remember asking for help is a sign of strength. We all need help sometimes.

The Vet Centre farm team are here for our farmers and the community. On farm, on call and on your side.

IN THIS ISSUE

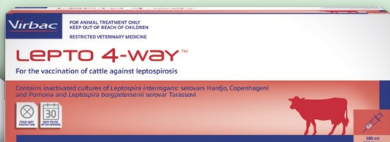
- **Staph cows** - By Farm Vet Dr Sarah Briggs
- **Go-to products to promote calf health**
- **Equine Colic: A serious condition, but not always a death sentence** - by Farm Vet Dr Chloe Traill
- **Lifestyle - A Day on the lifestyle run** - by Veterinary Technician Kallum Green
- **The risk of marking cows' tails with electrical tape**





REMINDERS

- Don't forget if you need to give your animals medications on farm, then you as the farmer – dairy, beef and sheep and lifestyle need to have an up-to-date RVM script. This includes a sit-down consult with your favourite vet and a customised script renewed; this needs to be done annually. If you're unsure of your script's due date, please get in touch with your local clinic to confirm and schedule a consult with your favourite vet.
- Spring deliveries have begun. During spring, our farm team are out and about. If you want your scripted items and some spring calving, autumn treatments, or any products delivered to the farm, please get in touch with your local clinic or vet tech to arrange a drop-off. We are here to help when it matters most.
- Have you booked in your transition cow mineral package testing? Call your local clinic to get these samples taken.
- With calves on the ground, it's a good reminder to take some time to ensure you have given your yards some TLC. It's only a matter of time before the calves will need to be moved and the yards will need to be used. Our farm team will be giving you feedback if part of your setup is not up to scratch. Please don't be offended; we merely want everyone on farm to stay unharmed and get home safely.
- Lepto vaccination on farm – It has been decided that this is the last year we will be offering Lepto 3way vaccine on farm. The superseded vaccine is the Lepto 4way; this vaccine covers four strains of the disease. Most farmers have moved their herds onto the Lepto 4way vaccine with no hassles.



Staph cows

*Have you ever actually thought... why is there mastitis?
How does the bacteria get into the udder?*

It all starts at the teat. Healthy, supple teat condition, like in young cattle, is the main way to reduce the spread of cow-to-cow bacteria such as *Staphylococcus aureus* and Coagulase-negative staphylococci (CNS). As your cows age, so does their skin; like humans, they need some help to keep their skin looking and feeling healthy. Good teats protect against bad bacteria, reducing the risk of cow-to-cow spread. The best way to check if your cows have healthy teats is to teat score at least four times a season. Like with any animal health

issue, the earlier you identify and address it, the faster it heals. The dry season is not long enough to heal months of teat damage. If you notice your teat score is not getting better, remember you are doing four throughout, then investigate management checks of your milking machine and milking practices. Over-milking cows can cause teat end damage. If you have a slow milker holding up the row, don't wait until she is milked out or let her go around the rotary again! Kick her off to ensure overmilking doesn't occur, which can be costlier than a few litres of extra milk.



Sarah Briggs
BVSc, Farm Vet





Purchase a 5L of TURBO® or BOSS® Pour-on and you'll receive a waterproof, breathable and ultra-quiet Hunttech Wet Weather Jacket*.

LEARN MORE

Rain resistant for peace of mind when treating in variable conditions. Formulated using Alleva's DMI-Sorb® formulation system to prevent run-off as well as enhance active-ingredient delivery and absorption.



Alleva Animal Health Limited, 1/116a Harris Road, East Tamaki, Auckland. DMI-Sorb®, TURBO® and BOSS® are registered trademarks of Alleva Animal Health Ltd. TURBO Pour-on (A011722) and BOSS Pour-on (A010817) are registered pursuant to the ACVM Act 1997. See www.foodsafety.govt.nz for registration conditions. *Jacket may differ to image advertised. Available while stocks last.



On farm milk sample testing helps you get on top of any mastitis early. Mastatest machines are a good option for testing on farm. You can get a sample tested and a result in 24 hours; this tells you what bacteria you are dealing with and which antibiotic treatment (if any). Testing done on farm with the Mastatest machine has shown that 23% of cases tested (that's 1 in 5 cows) do not need antibiotics, as the cow is self-curing or the bacteria detected do not need antibiotics to treat.

Tips to manage HiSCC cows;

- If the teats are dirty when the cows come into the shed, gently wash the teats only, not the udder, with a low-pressure hose.
- A good teatspray of 20 mL (close to a shot glass measure) per cow. Covering all four teats until they are dripping.
- Start early in the season. If you are able, teat spray your springer mob to enhance the teat condition before calving and milking.
- Teatspray your colostrum cows before and after milking.
- Strip each quarter three times before milking.
- RMT test with good technique. Start with a clean paddle, add a clean milk sample into each well, ensure a 50/50 mix of milk to solution, and swill for at least 10 seconds slowly. Then read the results. Any white blood cells in the milk will turn the solution gummy.



What do you say to a sheep who knocks at your door?
ANSWER ON PAGE 5

Managing Staphylococcus aureus cows;

- Keep these cows marked clearly.
- Milk the staph cows last (or just run a HiSCC count herd in general).
- Keep your clean cows clean.
- Effective teat spraying reduces bacteria entering the teat.
- Teat score, and then look to repair teat end damage. Don't just think it will come right; intervention is required.
- Only cull them if they are chronic problem cows! Work with your vet to review SCC data.

Staph fun facts

- Contaminates cups for the next five cows (but with good teat ends, actual infection rates are low!!)
- 70% cure rate to dry cow therapy (unless chronically infected)
- Present in humans who can spread it to cows, so wear gloves!

Go-to products to promote calf health

Every season we see calves that need extra attention. We believe that prevention is better than cure. These are some great products we have on hand as farmers' friends to help support your calves' growth and development.

Optiguard is a calf supplement to treat minor cases of diarrhoea, like nutritional scour from a change in diet or water source. It can be added to milk or be given in a trough for calves to self-manage their intake as they need it. Plus, calves usually love the taste, and it is Biogro certified input for organic farmers.



Multimin Evolution and **Multimin 70** – we cannot recommend this enough. MULTIMIN® Evolution is a unique trace element injection for New Zealand dairy, beef and deer farmers. Containing zinc, manganese, copper and selenium, it contains 50% more zinc than any other injectable trace mineral product in NZ. It has been developed to meet recommendations of international nutritional experts for zinc in high-producing cattle. Absorbed into the blood within 2 hours and transferred to the liver within 24 hours.

Calves	up to 1 year	1ml / 50kg
Cattle	1-2 years	1ml / 75kg
Cattle	over 2 years	1ml / 100kg
Deer	–	1ml / 100kg

- **Cows:** 3-4 weeks before calving, mating and drying-off
- **Calves:** At day 1 and weaning.
- **Heifers:** Every 3 months, especially 3-4 weeks before mating.
- **Additional:** Every 2 months in wet conditions.
- **Deer:** Not recommended more frequently than once every 4 months.



Sprayfo Blue – premium calf milk replacer. It is a whey-based milk replacer made exclusively for calves. It contains hydrolysed wheat protein, which is proven to have better digestive properties than other commonly used proteins, offering a safer option for young calves. Can be fed to calves from four days old, dissolves easily, even in cold water, is antibiotic-free, and comes in a handy 20kg bag.





If your horse ever shows signs of colic, **don't wait – call your local vet centre clinic immediately.** It could save their life.



Dr Chloe Traill
BVSc, Farm Vet

Equine Colic: A serious condition but not always a death sentence

Colic. It's the word no horse owner wants to hear – and with good reason. Almost every horse person has a story about a friend, neighbour, or client who lost a beloved horse to colic. It's long been regarded as one of the most feared equine emergencies. While it certainly can be life-threatening, the truth is that the vast majority of colic cases are treatable and end well – especially when prompt veterinary care is involved.

So, what exactly is colic?

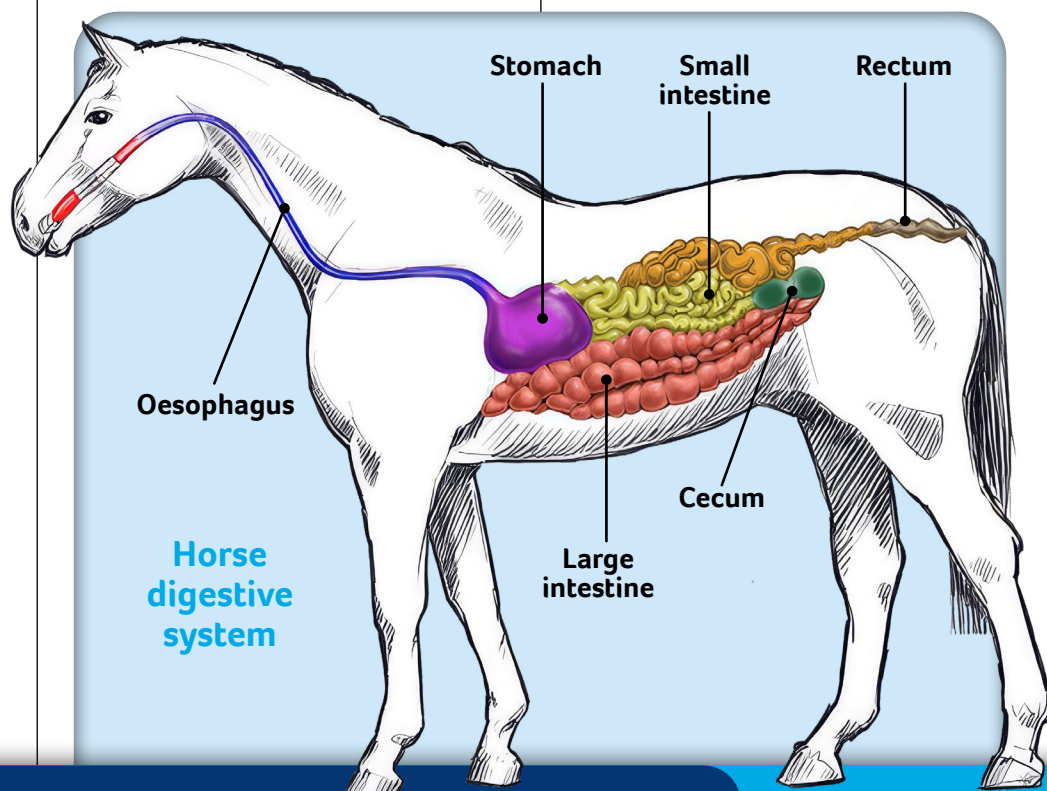
In horses, "colic" is simply a term that means abdominal or gut pain. It's not one specific disease but rather a symptom with a wide variety of potential causes. From a build-up of gas to a twisted bowel, colic can range from mild discomfort to a full-blown medical or surgical crisis. Horses are particularly prone to colic because large portions of their intestines are not firmly attached within the abdomen, allowing them to move more freely and increasing the risk of displacement or twisting. Almost all horses will experience colic at some point in their lives. Fortunately, most of these episodes are mild and respond quickly to treatment.

Knowing how to spot the signs early can save your horse's life. Mild colic might look like a quiet horse that's gone off their feed or just seems a little flat. But as pain escalates, so do the symptoms:

- Looking at or biting their flanks
- Repeatedly lying down and getting up
- Curling the upper lip
- Pawing at the ground

- Stretching as if to urinate
- Dog-sitting (hindquarters on the ground, forelimbs extended)
- Rolling, sometimes violently – risking injury or twisted gut
- Sweating, groaning, or distended abdomen
- Changes (or absence) in manure output.

Colic is undeniably serious – but it's not always fatal. The key to a good outcome is early recognition and swift veterinary intervention. Knowing the signs, having a plan, and managing your horse's health proactively will go a long way in keeping your equine companion safe, sound, and comfortable.





The risk of marking a cow's tail with electrical tape

Using electrical tape on a cow's tail may seem like a quick solution for keeping track and marking during their colostrum phase, but it can create serious animal welfare risks.

Electrical tape is not designed for use on animals. When wrapped too tightly, it can restrict blood flow to the tail, causing swelling, pain, tissue damage, and, in severe cases, permanent injury. The adhesive can also pull out fur and damage the skin when removed, increasing the risk of infection.

If the tape is left on for too long, moisture and dirt can become trapped underneath, creating an ideal environment for bacteria. Cows rely on their tails to swat flies, so restricting the tail can also increase irritation and stress from insects.

If electrical tape is used to mark cows, please double-check the tightness after it has been applied and reapply if needed. Any application should be loose enough to avoid restricting circulation, used only for the shortest time necessary, and removed promptly once the task is complete. Good animal handling practices help protect the health, comfort, and welfare of cattle while reducing the risk of injury.



ANSWER
*Hello,
do I know
ewe?*

STAFF NEWS

A warm welcome back to **Celine**, who has joined us as a full-time permanent mixed veterinarian in the Mangawhai clinic. She was a locum back with us earlier in the year and went away to do some work overseas, and is now back to join the team. She is mainly in the companion animal space, but we will definitely book her in some cloven-hoofed species to visit!



We have a new vet joining our farm team - **Melanie Palmer**, who is a lifestyle and dairy veterinarian with a passion for helping farmers, lifestyle block owners, and the animals they care about. Melanie loves the variety that comes with mixed practice; she will be based out of the Waipu and Maungaturoto clinics, whether working with cattle, sheep, goats, pigs or alpacas. When not out on farm calls, she is usually spending time with her own crew. Melanie shares life

with six Italian Greyhounds and six Nigerian Dwarf dairy goats. Melanie likes to think six is the magic number – enough to keep life interesting without being completely outnumbered (most days!). ➔



Cow fact:
Cows can detect scents from up to 10 kilometres.



← STAFF NEWS

We have said farewell to our beloved companion animal vet, **Din Jayawardena**, who was very much part of the Maungaturoto in-clinic farm team. We wish Din well for her next venture back in the UK and thank her for all she has given to our team and the animals and people we look after.



A day on the lifestyle run

The lifestyle vet technician run happens in July or August to ensure your lifestyle animals are in tip-top shape coming into the birthing season.

The day starts with a strong coffee, a pre-packed lunch and a prayer to the weather gods before we set off to see all your lifestyle animals. On the run, we see all kinds of species from goats and sheep to alpacas and cows. Still, the interventions we make with these different species remain relatively consistent and can be explained using the common acronym BIDFOR.

Body condition scoring

We assess body condition to ensure mothers have enough condition to feed their babies, but not so much fat that birthing becomes difficult and increases the risk of metabolic disease.



Kallum Green
Vet Tech

Injecting a vaccine

We vaccinate the mothers so they produce antibodies to common environmental pathogens that they pass to the babies through the first milk.

Drenching

We give the mothers a drench and check their worm burdens to ensure they can absorb as much energy as they can to feed their babies.

Foot trimming

We give the mothers a foot trim to ensure they are walking as comfortably as possible.

Overall health check

We provide a brief overall check to make sure there are no obvious clinical issues before birthing.

Reporting

After this is done, we provide a report addressing what we did on the visit, what we found and if we have any recommendations.

The lifestyle program caters to both breeding and non-breeding animals, so no matter what animals you have, we have the perfect plan for you.



If you would like to be a part of the lifestyle program or learn the skills to do these procedures yourself, please ring your local vet clinic or email lifestyle@thevetcentre.net.nz

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