



The Vet Centre

WAIPU | RUAWAI | MANGAWHAI | MAUNGATUROTO | RUAKĀKĀ

October/November
2026

Welcome to the October / November Farm Newsletter

SPRING IS HERE: A New Season on the Farm

As spring settles across Northland, the farming calendar shifts into a new season. Longer days, warmer temperatures and fresh growth bring plenty of optimism – along with a busy time ahead.

From getting stock ready for spring herd mating, premating mineral testing, body condition scoring, autumn herd pregnancy testing, thinking ahead to who to dry off first, and booking milk quality consultations with your favourite vet early. Don't forget the young stock need vaccines to prevent clostridial diseases, weighing before and after weaning, and an oral drench after grazing for four weeks on pasture.

You may have noticed our disbudding teams donning a new piece of health and safety equipment this season. After attending the NZVA conference this June, the team became well aware of the highly toxic gases we are exposed to when disbudding, inside pens or out. The study, conducted by a fellow veterinarian and firefighter, compared clipping and using a respirator with not clipping and not using a respirator. The outcome is that using a respirator and clipping the hornbud before disbudding significantly lowers the risk of inhaling hydrogen cyanide (HCN), along with carbon monoxide (CO) and hydrogen sulphide (H₂S). There is ongoing discussion around the vapour entering the eyes.

Sheep and beef units will be in the swing of docking and vaccinating lambs, drenching the ewes to get ahead of the barber's pole season. Lambs over 15kg and grazing on pasture for 4 weeks or more may need a drench which includes a tapeworm treatment. Beef herds will be getting ready for mating and vaccinating the young stock.

It's always a good time to plan for paddock preparation, pasture management, and making the most of every good weather window; there's plenty happening on the farm. Spring is always a season of hard work, but it's also a time of new beginnings and looking forward to what the year will bring.

Here's to a good spring, plenty of grass underfoot, plenty of sunshine on the farm and keeping the wheels turning.





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Why did the farmer call his pig "Ink"?

ANSWER
ON PAGE 7



Coccidia – The Real Problem Is What You Don't See

Coccidia are tiny parasites that can cause scours, straining, rough coats, and lethargy in calves. But did you know that only 5% of infected calves will show these symptoms? The remaining 95% will fly under the radar with reduced growth rates and be far more financially damaging to your farm than those calves with symptoms.

Calves recently weaned from meal are particularly susceptible to coccidiosis. While most calf meals contain a coccidiostat, these only keep coccidia numbers low rather than eliminating them. So, when calves are weaned off meal, any coccidia that remain can multiply rapidly.

Calves can ingest coccidia eggs (oocysts) from contaminated pasture, feed, water or by grooming each other. Oocysts can

survive in the pasture for up to two years when conditions are cool and wet. In many cases, coccidiosis coincides with other stressors such as mixing mobs, feed changes and transport.

Drench calves at weaning from meal, with Catolyst or Toltrox. These are both effective against coccidia in a single dose because they attack all stages of the parasite in the calf.

Drench calves showing symptoms and all herd mates earlier if clinical signs are observed.

A Massey University study showed that a single dose of toltrazuril at weaning from meal provided 5kg higher liveweight in calves 5-6 weeks after weaning.

Talk to one of our vets if you think coccidiosis could be impacting your calves.

THE FULL REPRO RANGE for superior in-calf rates

DIB-Synch Plus for cows

21
additional
days in milk



33.5 kg
more
milk solids



12% less likely
to be non-cycling
in the next season

more
AB heifer
calves



'Why Wait' for cows

4
more days
in milk



6.5 kg
more
milk solids



**more calves in
first 14 days**
from more cows pregnant
during first 14 days of AB



DIB Co-Synch for heifers

3%
more heifers
pregnant



11
more days
in milk



13 kg
more
milk solids



11
more days
to recover
between calving
& mating

**tighter
calving
spread**
simpler to manage



**more
AB heifer
calves**
faster genetic gain





Gold Standard Heat Detection

Essential for mating success!

Good heat detection is critical to get cows in calf, and timing is everything – if heats are missed, 21 days are lost before the cow cycles again, while mating cows when they are not in heat wastes semen.

One of the best strategies is to start heat detection early. Starting pre-mating heat detection 35 days before the planned start of mating (PSM) lets you practice heat-detection skills, support cows that haven't shown signs of heat (non-cyclers), and anticipate when cows may next come on heat. It's a great opportunity to train the farm team so everyone is confident. The most experienced person can help support other team members in interpreting and recognising signs of heat.

More than 75% of your herd should be seen on heat by 10 days before the PSM. If that's not achieved, heat detection has not been fully effective and/or there are too many non-cyclers.

The Gold Standard for heat detection requires two detection aids for best accuracy:



1. Tail Paint

Preparation – Remove any loose hair or dirt from the tail area and ensure the skin is clean and dry.

Application – Use a brush or applicator to apply a strip of tail paint no more than 20cm long and 5-6 cm wide and thick enough to cover the skin (but still allowing hair fibres to be visible).

Placement – Apply the paint strip along the spine, starting at the tail head and moving towards the cow's front. i.e. strokes should be back to front. If the hair fibres are not visible, it is too thick!

Repainting – Reapply tail paint to cows after they've been in heat to track their cycling and touch up weekly.



2. Heat Mount detector

Preparation – Prepare the area two days prior to application. Remove loose hair and dirt (these disturb the oils in the coat and prevent glue from sticking).

Application – Use glue or self-adhesive as recommended by the manufacturer.

Placement – **Pressure-activated heat mount detectors** - Mount the patch on the backbone, with the top of the patch between the hip bones. Adjust for the size of the cow and aim for a position that

will receive maximum pressure from the brisket of the mounting animal.

Placement – **Scratch-off patch heat mount detectors** – The patches are mounted across the backbone, at the highest point closer to the tail.

Use the tail paint and heat mount detector information along with the previously recorded heat or mating to decide which cows to put up for AB. A high submission rate of the correct cows using Gold Standard heat detection helps achieve the best conception results and maximise your pregnancy rate.

Here's what you can do:

1. Download the Gold Standard heat detection app and review heat detection with your farm team.
2. Start pre-mating heats should have been recorded at least 35 days before PSM.

If <75% of the herd are cycling 10 days before PSM, contact one of our vet team to check the accuracy of heat detection by scanning cows put up for AB and to check non-cyclers.





Equine – Skin conditions

Horses are susceptible to a number of skin conditions, including;

- Ringworm
- Mud fever/rain scald
- Sunburn

Ringworm is actually a fungal disease also known as dermatophytosis. It causes circular areas of hair loss anywhere on the body.

Ringworm is highly contagious to other horses and people and can spread through direct contact or infected equipment. It is usually self-limiting and often resolves on its own over time, but can also be treated with antifungal washes and medications as needed.

Mud fever and rain scald are caused by the bacterium *Dermatophilus congolensis*, which is found in the environment and invades through damaged skin. It is often seen during the wet winter months.

Mud fever affects the lower limb, and rain scald affects the body. The skin becomes red and raw, and scabs develop. Treatment involves removing the scabs gently and washing with antiseptic solutions. More severe cases may require vet treatment.

Sunburn occurs during the hot summer months on pink-skinned, white, thin-haired areas of the body. Apply sunscreen creams and powders to prevent sunburn.

STAFF NEWS

We want to congratulate two of our fantastic Vet Technicians who were nominated for the Large Animal Veterinary Technician of the Year award.

Melanie (Mel)

McKenzie from The Vet Centre Maungaturoto and **Kallum**

Green from The Vet Centre Waipu.

This incredible achievement shows their passion for the job, the connection they have with their farmers, and the peers who nominated them.



HIGHLIGHTS

Late nights at our Waipu and Mangawhai clinics where farmers can pick up essentials after 5pm.

- **Waipu** is open on Tuesdays, 8am – 7pm
- **Mangawhai** is open on Thursdays, 8am – 7pm

Please note: Our large animal team will still finish work at 5pm as usual. The Vet Centre is still available 24/7 for emergencies; however, large animal calls after 5pm will require the after-hours vet to attend.

Yards maintenance

Keeping your yards well maintained is an important part of running a safe, efficient, and successful farm.

A tidy, well-kept yard makes everyday jobs easier, helps keep people and stock safe, and allows equipment and people to move around more efficiently. Regular upkeep also helps prevent small

issues from becoming bigger, more costly problems down the track.

We understand farming is busy, and priorities are always competing. Yard maintenance doesn't have to be perfect – consistent, practical upkeep can make a real difference.

Taking a little time to keep your yards clean, organised, and in good working order is an investment in your farm, your people, and your future. You're doing important work, and looking after the place you work in helps make that work safer and easier for everyone.

Here are some photos of a proactive farmer taking the time to maintain his yards at the calf shed, and the catwalk at the run-off yards is working well and is safe for all. What a big difference a small amount of work can make,



and this work will last a long time. Remember, you can always ask for help or outsource the work if you don't have the time yourself.



Docking Time:

Sheep and Lifestyle Farmers Need to Know

For many sheep farmers, docking time is a routine part of the lambing season. But whether you run hundreds of ewes or keep a handful of sheep on a lifestyle block, tail docking comes with legal requirements and important animal-welfare responsibilities.

Getting the basics right – from deciding whether docking is necessary to checking lambs afterwards – can make the job safer, easier, and better for the animals.

For lambs under six months of age, ideally under 6 weeks, tail docking must be carried out using either a hot iron or a rubber ring. Do not dock the tail shorter than the distal end of the caudal fold.

In practical terms, leave the tail long enough to cover the vulva in ewe lambs and to a similar length in ram lambs. MPI's current guidance also describes the caudal

fold as the point where the two folds of skin meet on the underside of the tail. For sheep six months of age or older, a veterinarian must perform tail docking.

Owners and people in charge of sheep must ensure appropriate equipment, knowledge, training, or supervision is available during the procedure and recovery period. For lifestyle farmers, there is an additional consideration: make sure the lambs are old enough and strong enough to handle, but don't wait until they are unnecessarily old.

Docking time often involves more than tails. Depending on the farm system, lambs may also be castrated, vaccinated, ear-tagged, weighed, and fly prevention applied. Vaccination and fly prevention are particularly worth discussing with your veterinary team; these precautions minimise the risk of clostridial infections associated with painful husbandry procedures.



Keep a close eye on the lambs after docking, looking for lambs that are:

- unusually dull or reluctant to move
- separated from their mothers
- bleeding excessively
- showing signs of significant pain or distress
- swollen or infected around the docking site
- unable to feed normally or becoming increasingly unwell.

If you are ever unsure about anything to do with docking, then *The Vet Centre* is only a call away.

FARM DOG

vaccination run

Time to get the dogs their WOFs

It's the time of year for the techs to get in touch with you about coming out and checking on your four-legged workers; time for the woofs to get their WOFs. Keep an eye out in your email inbox, or sometimes the messages like to end up in the spam inbox, for your farm visit.

It's also that time of year when the parasites like to attack your hard-working furry friends the most. We have some great deals on flea, tick and worm treatments. We also have a great new working dog tucker that you might be interested in. If you are not already part of the dog vaccination run program, please contact your local clinic to get signed up.



Mineral Testing Packages

Prices
exclude farm
visit, mileage,
and any
additional
testing.

The table below outlines the packages along with trace minerals tested and price.

	Testing	Price (including sampling) incl. GST
Transition cow mineral package (10x blood sample)	Calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, Beta-hydroxybutyrate (energy balance)	\$690
Pre-mating mineral package (10x blood sample)	Copper, selenium, Magnesium, Beta-hydroxybutyrate (energy balance)	\$690
Blood trace mineral package (10x blood sample)	Copper, selenium, B12	\$610
Liver biopsy trace mineral package (6x liver samples)	Copper, selenium, B12	\$1070
Cull cow liver trace mineral package	Copper, selenium, B12	\$850





Rural Events in the region

SMASH

Solar is it worth it? Online, register online.
Monday 12th October 12.30 - 1pm

Dairy Women's Network

Practical AI for Farm Admin - LIVE webinar, register online. Wednesday 28th October 12.30 - 1.30pm

Dairy NZ

MilkSmart Hikurangi – Register online.
Jordan Valley Fonterra Farm,
259 Jordan Valley Road, Hikurangi.
Monday 16th November 10am - 2pm.

MilkSmart Ruawai – Register online.
Tokatoka War Memorial Hall,
Wharf Road, Ruawai.
Tuesday 17th November
10am - 2pm.

REMINDERS

- Tick season has arrived. *The Vet Centre* stocks **Bantix**, a pour-on formulation to treat and control the New Zealand cattle tick (*Haemaphysalis longicornis*) on cattle and deer. No withholding period for milk or meat.
- Nuisance Fly treatment. *The Vet Centre* stocks **Delmax Pour-On** to prevent nuisance flies and control biting and sucking lice on cattle. Handy 5L packs, with a nil withholding period for milk and bobby calves, and a 28-day withholding period for meat. Treating the herd with Delmax pour-on early helps prevent spreading of eye infections.
- Prevent flystrike with **Clik Extra**, a ready-to-use spray-on. Apply at docking and 4 weeks post-shearing for up to 26 weeks of fly prevention. That's nearly all summer.



Lifestyle Small Farm Info

Goats – All kids should have a Covexin 10 in 1 vaccine from two weeks old to protect against clostridial diseases. A booster is due four weeks later. Some goats will be shedding their winter coat. To help them get comfy, why not give them a good brush-over, check their hooves, and, to keep their heads down, give them a bucket of multifeed pellet treats. They will think it's Christmas come early.

Sheep – Book your shearer in early; your woollies will love you for it. Drench time for the mob, including weaned lambs from 20 kg - Turbo Triple is a safe option for all your sheep. All lambs should receive a

Covexin 10 in 1 vaccine from two weeks of age to protect against clostridial diseases. A booster is due four weeks later. If you haven't already, now is a great time to apply a fly treatment; Clik Extra is a long-lasting, spray-on preventative.

Cattle – Keep an eye out for ticks this time of year. We have already seen them on the calves we have disbudded. These blood-sucking parasites harm your growing stock and are a huge nuisance, making animals irritable. We have Bantix for tick treatment in smaller bottles for your convenience.

Alpaca – Now is a good time to body condition score your alpacas and assess their grazing needs before the sweet spring grass grows like crazy. Bring us a faecal sample to check on their worm burden; barber's pole doesn't rest in the Northland conditions.



ANSWER
Because it was always out of the pen.





Christmas Ham Sorted

With world-first formulas designed for New Zealand conditions, Alleva has all the parasite control combinations you need on farm this season.



alleva
ANIMAL HEALTH



Purchase TURBO® or BOSS® Pour-On 5L, TURBO® Triple + Tape 20L, TURBO® Triple Minidose 20L or with every 2 x 20L of BOSS® Triple Mineralised Drench for Sheep and receive a ham*



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Waipu Clinic

53 The Centre
Waipu
P 09 432 0693

Opening Hours

Mon-Fri: 8.00am-5.00pm
Tuesdays until 7.00pm
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

Mon-Fri: 8.00am - 5.00pm
Thursdays until 7.00pm
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