

## What's Up Doc?

- Ryan Olesen

Love is in the air.

Spring mating is in full swing as the herd becomes inseminated for the next season. Pre-mating has concluded and any cows that have not come on-heat should be identified. Non-cycling, or no visible oestrus, cows should be seen by a vet for a possible hormone injection to promote ovulation.

As cows are getting jumped on, this is the season for dislocated and broken hips. This mainly occurs when an animal comes on heat and loses its balance when being mounted - doing the splits as it falls.

Signs of a dislocation involve dragging the hindlimb or not weight bearing, however, some cows may show only mild lameness. Therefore, any suddenly lame cows (especially ones that have just shown a heat) should be seen by a vet to reduce the hip back into place.

Make sure your animals are not on slippery ground and keep any affected animals isolated from the rest of the herd to avoid them being jumped on continuously.

### What's happening on-farm?

- ✓ Spring mating
- ✓ Non-cyclers
- ✓ Calf vaccinations
- ✓ Trace elements in calves

## Wishing you a successful mating

- Bruce Hunter

There was a significant range in our clients' mating performance last season and, despite the reduced use of CIDR's, the mating results actually showed a slight improvement - as they did right across the country. Nevertheless, there are still gaps in most mating programmes that can always be improved upon.

Here are some of the basics to focus on this mating:

### Attention to detail

- Dedicated heat detection and monitoring (experience counts here);
- Accurate execution of synchronisation protocols;
- Proper and sanitary administration of product.

### Well researched tools

- Avoid products that lack scientific basis;
- Choose reproductive tools with a proven track record (CIDR's, wearables).

### Early non-cycler identification

- Monitor pre-mating heats;
- Move quickly for intervention;
- Non-cyclers can lead to lost milk and higher cull rates, reducing herd longevity.

### Proper nutrition and management

- Ensure cows are well transitioned into calving;
- Minimise condition loss – lighter cows have a lesser chance of getting in-calf;

- Reduce stress into calving, particularly on the younger cows;
- Update the feed budget to ensure all cows are fully fed;
- Focus on pasture management to optimise energy in the grass;
- Ensure trace elements are balanced;
- Up to date disease protection - keep the vaccination programme current to protect against reproductive disease and abortion risk (e.g. BVD).



# WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?

- CYCLING PRE-MATING**  
75% by 10 days prior PSM
- SUBMISSION RATE**  
4%+ per day
- 90% SUBMISSION RATE**  
90% within 3 weeks

## Optimising non-cycling cow programmes

- Ryan Olesen



Synchrony programmes play a key role in helping you improve reproductive performance and animal efficiency and reduce on-farm emissions. Treating non-cyclers is one tool in the toolbox.

Over the last 12 months, new studies have looked at tweaks to the standard non-cycler programmes, adding some confusion around what the best programme looks like.

Profitability from using non-cycling programmes comes from getting your cow in-calf early, through:

- Generating more days in milk;
- Increasing the length of time your calf has to grow until weaning;
- Allowing the cow a longer recovery after calving until the next mating.

Investing in a synchrony programme this season enables you to see returns from these benefits in following seasons.

Most New Zealand non-cycling cows are actually “no visible oestrus” cows (NVO) rather than truly anoestrous.

They have follicle waves before or after ovulation, but don't show heat - this includes missed heats, poor heat detection and cows in a negative energy balance after calving.

The problem is that, when we treat non-cyclers, we don't know where each cow is in her cycle, so a synchrony programme has to cover all of the options.

### A look at a DIB/CIDR programme:

**Day 0:** Insert Progesterone (P4) slow releaser (CIDR/DIB) and administer GnRH injection.

**Day 7:** Remove P4 releaser and administer Estrogen (EcG) and Prostaglandin (PG) injection. Any animals should be inseminated on their detected heat from this point.

**Day 9:** Inject any cows that haven't come on heat with GnRH.

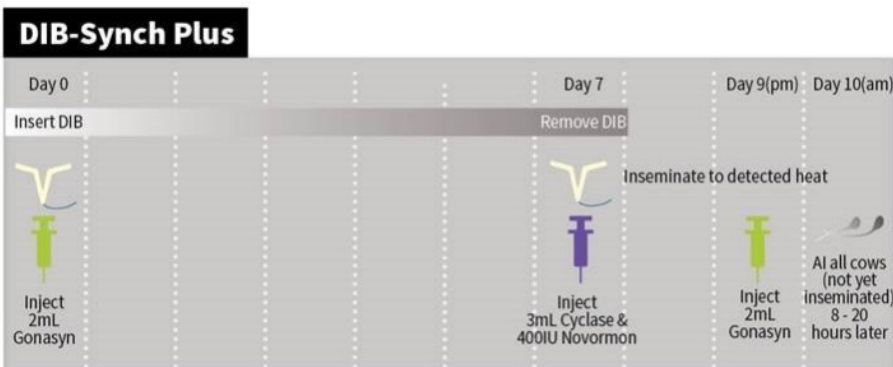
**Day 10:** Inseminate remaining cows in synchrony programme.

According to AgriHealth, recent studies have suggested that:

1. Using a **pre-synch** (an injection of PG to “reset” the follicle wave so more cows respond to the first GnRH in the programme) may increase conception rates by 5%;
2. A PG injection on **day 7 and day 8** of the programme may increase the conception rate by **4%**. AgriHealth has done similar studies showing that increasing the prostaglandin dose to 3ml on day 7 increased the conception rate by 3%.

However, any incremental increase in conception rate achieved by using more PG needs to be weighed up against the logistics, human health risks and increased chance of mistakes in the programme if they become more complex.

One part of the programme that they recommend should always be included is **Novormon eCG**. It is described as the ‘supercharger’ and is ideal for New Zealand non-cycling cows, as it results in bigger, healthier follicles and improved conception rates.



\*Image credit: AgriHealth. Note: Concentration in injectable drugs may vary.

Physiologically, Novormon works differently to prostaglandin and the effects are likely additive (to that of more prostaglandin), resulting in a **6-7% increase in pregnancy rate over the standard programme without eCG.**

AgriHealth believes that the DIB-Synch Plus programme (CIDR), using a 3ml dose of Cyclase (PG) and Novormon (EcG) on day 7, is the optimal programme for New Zealand non-cycling cows.

If you'd like to discuss cow synchrony programmes, give your KetVet a call for some advice on the best option for your system.

*Reference: AgriHealth*



## Using technology to combat antibiotic resistance

- Charlotte Glass

Antibiotic resistance is becoming an increasing concern in both human and veterinary medicine. Since many drugs are used in both sectors, it's crucial for all of us to use antibiotics responsibly.

To help guide treatment choices, antibiotics are classified into three categories, based on their risk of resistance and importance to human health:

1. Green - first-line choice
2. Orange - second-line choice
3. Red - last resort.

For most cases of mastitis, penicillins like *Intracillin MC* are usually effective. However, if you find yourself regularly reaching for red drugs such as *Mastalone* or *Tylovet*, it's important to consult with your vet. Milk cultures are essential to determine if resistance is present on your farm, justifying the use of these last-resort antibiotics.

### Dry-off time

Dry-off time is another key opportunity to reduce unnecessary antibiotic use. While blanket dry cow therapy is still allowed in certain cases, the industry is strongly moving away from this practice. Be prepared for the possibility of future regulations prohibiting blanket treatment.

Herd testing is the best way to assess the individual cow's need for dry cow therapy. We recommend 3-4 herd tests throughout the season, with the final one done a few weeks before dry-off. You can contact LIC or your KeyVet to get started.

### Dairy antibiograms

Dairy antibiograms are also a valuable tool to monitor herd health. A bulk milk sample is cultured to identify resistant bacteria and assess resistance genes against commonly used antibiotics.

This helps you make informed antibiotic choices for both mastitis treatment and dry-off, and can alert you to any emerging resistance issues on your farm.

### Technology advancements in-clinic

In addition to antibiotic stewardship, keeping pace with rapidly advancing technology is essential to providing the best care for your animals.

At our clinic, we are committed to staying at the forefront of innovation. Recently, we installed a full suite of in-house diagnostic tools, allowing us to perform comprehensive blood work for your farm dogs and cats right here in the clinic.

While large animal diagnostics are not yet available on-site, advancements in this area are on the horizon, which will mean quicker turnaround times for results.

We have also introduced an AI-powered microscope, providing fast and objective analysis for investigating lumps and skin issues in pets. Looking ahead, this same technology will soon be able to perform faecal egg counts for dairy calves, delivering same-day results to help manage parasitic burdens more efficiently.

The dairy industry is no stranger to evolving technology, and there's a growing range of tools available, from wearable health trackers to inline mastitis detectors.

We stay up-to-date on the latest dairy tech innovations, so, if you're interested in exploring these advancements for your herd, have a chat with your KeyVet about the best options for your farm.

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