



Willunga Veterinary Services

## JANUARY NEWSLETTER

The new year is already on us (where did the last one go?) and with it will bring new challenges and good times. We all hope you have all had a festive and safe Christmas and New Year and managed to find a bit of time for a bit of rest and relaxation.

We are excited in having had our first Largies Christmas BBQ. A big thank-you to everyone who could make it and we hope you enjoyed the chat and feed! And to those who couldn't make it, we understand your hectic schedules but do hope you can make it next year.



### A REMINDER FOR SATURDAY DRUG ORDERS

And just a kindly reminder for those wanting Saturday morning drug pickups, to avoid having to wait for them to be processed, the best practice is to give us a buzz the day before so they can be all ready to go. We have less staff available on Saturdays compared to weekdays and getting a big drug order ready between phone calls and clients can be a bit of a challenge for the nursing/receptionist staff. We appreciate your help in this request to make things run smoother for both you and us.

As always, if you have any particular topics you would like discussed in the next Moosletter, please feel free to drop us a line at [wvs@willungavets.com.au](mailto:wvs@willungavets.com.au) or give us a call at the clinic on (08) 8556 2075.

### ARE YOU CATCHING DISEASES FROM YOUR COWS?

Unfortunately some of the diseases that your cow can get, you can contract as well! In this month's Moosletter we are highlighting some of the diseases that you can get from your cows, called **Zoonoses**. In regards to other countries, Australia is fairly fortunate in the diseases that are NOT present, but there are still quite a few that can present serious risk to your health.



These diseases can be transmitted to you in a variety of ways depending on the bug involved. Some are transmitted by direct contact with the infected animal through their saliva, faeces, urine, blood or any other contact. Others involve transmission through a tick or mosquito.



### THE DAIRY HAZARD- LEPTOSPIROSIS

Lepto is one of the most common occupationally acquired diseases in the world! The people most at risk of this disease are dairy workers, abattoir works and vets.

Lepto is passed by cows into their urine, so transmission to humans occurs through contact with

urine through eyes, nose or mouth or through cuts/ abrasions. A particularly risky time for contracting Lepto can be when helping a non-vaccinated cow to calve.

Signs of Lepto in cows include abortion, mastitis, drop in production, RFM's, red urine, pale or yellowish gums/ eyes. Cows that have recovered can continue to shed infected urine for a long time.



The signs of Lepto in people are flu-like symptoms including fever, chills, vomiting, diarrhoea,

headache, muscle aches and pains. These signs may last from a few days to weeks with treatment, but without treatment these signs can last months!

Lepto can be controlled in dairy herds via vaccination as well as other control methods including controlling rodents and flow of waste away from water supplies.



## RINGWORM- IT'S NOT A WORM!

Most people would have seen Ringworm on their youngstock at some time or another. A fungus causes ringworm despite its misleading name.



Ringworm is very common in younger animals and recovery generally occurs within 1 to 4 months. Spread of ringworm is very rapid as the spores grow quickly in warm, humid conditions and spores are very hardy (*they can last up to 4 years!*). It is generally passed from animal to animal by direct contact as well as by rubbing on fences, gates, feed troughs and shared equipment in show animals.

Generally no treatment is recommended, as most animals will recover with time. Treatments are generally only attempted on show animals or if the lesions have become infected.



If you have been handling youngstock with Ringworm and develop a circular skin rash on yourself, however, please see your doctor.

## MILKER'S NODULES- Another reason to ALWAYS wear milking gloves

Cows can be affected by a virus called *Pseudocowpox* virus, which causes blisters and scabs on the teats. Generally the cow is comfortable and will not kick the cups off (unlike when they have painful scabs due to photosensitisation on their teats!).

And as expected, humans can get these lesions on their own skin as result of direct contact. On people these look like warts, which become blisters over a few days. These can become secondarily infected but should resolve by themselves in 4 to 6 weeks. So to avoid any very unattractive nodules on your skin, keep those gloves on!



## ARE YOUR BULLS FIT TO WORK?

A reminder about dud bulls. We have seen a few breakdowns with bulls over the season. Many of these problems aren't obvious until preg testing, and by then (pardon the pun) the bull has bolted!

We recommend service testing of all bulls before they go in with cows, especially where there is only one bull in with a mob. If you are leasing bulls it is also worth enquiring if the bull has been service tested prior to his delivery.

Bull testing involves a full physical examination as well as using an electroejaculator to get a semen sample. Bull testing is around \$80 a head plus travel costs. A lot of people who have had the vet out to bull test have commented on finding potential problems early as well as helping them to select bulls more carefully. Considering the cost of a breakdown, testing is good insurance.

**And finally from all of us here at Willunga and Aldinga Vet Services we thank you all for your support throughout 2014 and look forward to an exciting new year in 2015!**