

# NEWSLETTER

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**New vet Ella**

We are pleased to have Ella Jubb join our team of vets. Ella is a Wagga Wagga graduate and is originally from Bendigo.

She spent quite a bit of time with us as a student, so we were very happy when she agreed to work in Rochester.

Ella is a third-generation vet following in the footsteps of her father and grandfather. She does cross-fit training in her spare time as well as looking after her two-year old daughter.

**Synchronisation Programs**

There is no *'one size fits all'* synchrony. We encourage you to talk to one of our vets about what program might best suit your needs.

Synchronisation programs can be confusing – there are many to choose from and lots of different terms used. We have been using OvSynch programs (and its variations) for many years with reasonable results.

**Presynch**

Presynch refers to a synchronisation program that uses a double PG program to synchronise cows before they are enrolled in an OvSynch or CIDR sync program.

A typical Presynch program looks like:

<b>Day -14</b>	PG
<b>Day 0</b>	PG (start of mating)
<b>Day 11</b>	GnRH
<b>Day 18</b>	PG
<b>Day 19</b>	PG
<b>Day 20</b>	GnRH
<b>Day 21</b>	Fixed time AI

**Seasonal reminders:**

- Vaccinate spring calves with 7-in-1 vaccine from 6 weeks of age followed by a booster 4 to 6 weeks later.



- Bulls should be fertility tested and vaccinated against vibrio and pestivirus (BVD) at least 2 weeks before you plan to use them.
- Autumn born calves may benefit from a fluke drench now. It is not usually necessary to treat spring calves until January.
- If you have used a bull at the end of the autumn joining watch out for the possibility of early spring calving cows and heifers getting pregnant when they have only been calved as little as 3 weeks.

Cows are inseminated from Day 0 (mating start date) onwards as they are detected on heat. Cows not detected on heat before day 11 are enrolled in an OvSynch or CIDR sync program. All eligible cows are inseminated in the first 21 days of mating.

The cost of a Presynch program averages out at about **\$6.80** per cow if we assume that about 75% of cows will respond to the double PG injections. Including a CIDR averages out at **\$10.80**.

The secret to the success of this program is to get the timing right from the second dose of PG to the start of the OvSynch program. Recent work from the USA shows that if the OvSynch program starts 11 days after the second dose of PG that conception rates are considerably higher than earlier or later. This is because more cows are at the right stage of their cycle.

An 11-day gap between the second dose of PG and the start of the OvSynch program also means that all cows are joined in the first 21 days of joining.

## Bull testing

When we test bulls, we find that about one in every five or six fails. The reasons vary but most often are related to poor semen quality. The bulls that we fail usually look otherwise normal.

Sometimes the bulls that we fail have problems that allow them to fertilise a cow but for the pregnancy to then fizzle out. These **non-compensable** bulls are worse than no bull at all as they stop other bulls from getting cows pregnant.

At current chopper prices it makes a lot of sense to get your bulls checked and to turn them into meat if they are duds. There may never be a better time to get rid of bulls that are not able to do their job.

In order to test bulls, the main requirement we have is a good sturdy crush and yards. The job is made

easier if there is some shade where we can set up the microscope to examine the semen.

It is also a good opportunity to vaccinate bulls against vibrio and pestivirus if they are in the crush.

## Bulls and BVD

As we have mentioned in earlier newsletters, we have found that most local dairy herds are either currently infected with bovine virus diarrhoea (BVD) or have a history of BVD.

Bulls usually spend their lives in small groups when they are young where it is unlikely that they will be exposed to BVD. If their first exposure to BVD is while they are first put with a group of heifers or cows, then they will suffer from temporary infertility.

There is not likely to be any obvious outward sign of infection with BVD in a bull. All you will notice is that there are more empty or late calving cows.

We recommend that all bulls should be vaccinated with **Pestigard**. Initially bulls should receive two doses of vaccine 4 weeks apart. After that bulls require a booster vaccination a month or so prior to joining. If you use bulls twice a year, we recommend that bulls be vaccinated before each joining.



## Other bull diseases

We also recommend that bulls should be vaccinated with **Vibriovax**. Vibriosis is a venereal disease that causes early abortions that are usually not detected. It is a difficult disease to diagnose so we are not sure how much vibriosis is about. We think that there might be more vibriosis around than there was previously because more herds are split calving and carrying cows over.

The same rules apply to **Vibriovax** as **Pestigard**. If bulls have not been vaccinated previously, they require two injections followed by an annual booster.

It is probably a good idea to vaccinate bulls with **7-in-1** or at least **5-in-1** at the same time. Don't forget to worm and fluke drench bulls. Now is a good time to do all these things.

## Lame bulls

Bulls are less likely to go lame if they don't go on the concrete and don't eat the milker ration. Because bulls are rotated in and out of the herd, they only get fed grain in bursts and are much more prone to getting acidosis and subsequent feet problems.