

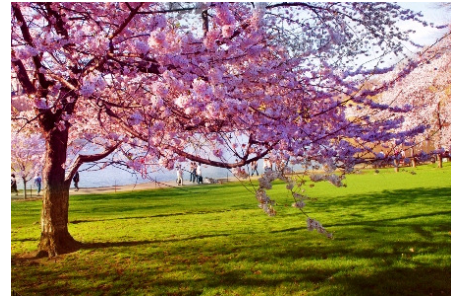
WELCOME TO SPRING!

Spring 2011

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Please enjoy our Spring edition of The Paddock magazine. In this issue we look at the advantages of the Dexter breed for small blocks, discuss vaccinations and then present the various services we offer for small block holders at VETPlus. I look forward to seeing you out there.



".....Dexters are very small very ancient breeds of cattle that originate from Ireland.....,"



".....They are better for the land especially in muddy conditions where they are less likely to poach the ground due to their low body weight..."



Early on in my career I was called to calve a Dexter cow on a smallholding, called Mavis. She was having problems calving, which is not typical for this particular breed. In the end she had the calf by caesarian. This was a surgical challenge because the operation site, instead of being about chest height in the normal cow, was down around my knees somewhere! This novelty highlighted the special features of the breed.

What are Dexters?

Dexters are very small very ancient breeds of cattle that originate from Ireland. Dexters are the smallest naturally occurring British cattle breed. The ancient Celtic breed from which they descend is known to have occurred in Ireland as early as the stone age (5000 years ago!). The first Dexter was brought to New Zealand in 1904, although in the '70s, Dexter semen was brought into the country to expand the national herd to the approximately 5000 head registered today. The continuation of the breed could be considered important because of its ancient lineage, it being a minority breed and also it does indeed have some desirable attributes. Whilst black is the most common colour, they can be red or dun coloured. Typically they are about a metre in height weighing in at around 300 kg.

Why Dexters?

Dexters are suited to both milk and meat. Cows can produce up to 10 litres per day. The meat is reputed to be lean, tender and generally high quality. In spite of my rather unusual tale in the introduction, they usually are very easy calving! They are better for the land, especially in muddy conditions where they are less likely to poach the ground due to their low body weight. They have a calm temperament and are easily halter trained, therefore are particularly suited to for lifestyle blocks.



In

Find out more;

www.dexter-cattle.co.nz

Photos courtesy of Dexter cattle society.



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VETPlus Reporoa 07 333 8707
605 Settlers Road Reporoa
VETPlus Rural 07 348 9587
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VETPlus SPCA 07 348 9589
24 Old Taupo Road Rotorua

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“...Vaccinating stock against common diseases is inexpensive and life saving.....”



“...We can supply small block friendly sizes of product. Alternatively, we can visit your farm and use exactly what you need, saving you having to buy whole packets of product...”

VACCINATING YOUR STOCK

To manage the risk against certain diseases, vaccination can be very useful. On lifestyle blocks, the main risk comes from “ clostridial” diseases. These are bugs that are generally present in the soil or intestines of the animals but under certain conditions can cause nasty infections depending on the bug. The most commonly encountered ones are tetanus, blackleg and pulpy kidney. However there are numerous clostridial diseases caused by various different bugs that show up in a variety of ways usually resulting in sudden death. For example, Tetanus is present in the soil and can infect any wound, releasing a toxin that causes muscle spasms. A cure is very difficult and it is usually fatal. Black leg often occurs in growing animals that get a bruise in the leg. The bugs multiply in the bruise and cause blood poisoning resulting in death. Vaccines will protect against these diseases and a raft of other clostridial diseases. Sheep are usually vaccinated twice 4 weeks apart and then given an annual booster. The annual booster should preferably be timed 4-6 weeks before lambing so that they pass on antibodies to the young in the colostrum, then young stock should be vaccinated twice 4 weeks apart from about 6 weeks of age. Calves are usually vaccinated twice 4 weeks apart from about 6 weeks of age.



AT YOUR SERVICE

The services and products we offer to lifestyle blocks can be delivered according to your needs. We supply a range of key animal health products that you can buy over the counter that will cover most of your worming, vaccination and trace element needs, as well as a great variety of other products that you may require. However, we have a growing number of small blockers that prefer the vet to come on an annual visit. Often we will perform husbandry procedures such as calf dehorning and castrating any stock in addition to vaccinating and administering trace element products. The more we can do in one visit, the more value we can provide for you. If we come for such an annual visit we can draw up an animal health planner with helpful reminders and guidance on when to do basic husbandry tasks. It may be helpful for us to answer any other questions you may have about managing your stock while we are there. Did you know we have a mobile crush for foot trimming or general handling of adult cows? Some small blockers don't have the handling facilities that they would ideally like to have. Why invest large amounts of time and money in a yarding system when we can come with our mobile crush? It is called “the wrangler” and is awesome for lifting feet, avoiding injury to the cow and operator. An additional advantage of a visit is, that we can use our already



opened products so you only pay for exactly what you need. Therefore you won't have any product going off or partly used containers or product sitting around. Alternatively, we have a small range of broken down products, such as 100 ml bottles of matrix drench, injections of ivomec or small bottles of '5 in 1 injection' for vaccinations. These can be purchased over the counter for your convenience. Please get in touch to let us know how we can assist you in whatever way it may be.