



Grower News

October 2019

WELCOME

Outsourcing - Does it benefit a Heifer Grower?

By Ian Wickham – Chairman of the Board

In recent newsletters we discussed 'Systemisation' and 'Specialisation' as concepts that fit with modern farming operations. Lets now look at how our NZ Dry Stock farmers can quickly and economically gain these benefits, and others, by Outsourcing.

Outsourcing is a business practice in which a company hires another company or an individual to perform tasks, handle operations or provide services that are either usually executed or had previously been done by the company's own employees.

Since starting the concept in NZ over 30 years ago, NZ Grazing Co has become recognised as industry benchmark by dairy farmers and many of them outsource the task of growing their replacement heifers to us. This is due to the professionalism of our systems and high success rate of the heifers entering their herd.

Both our company and those Owners are dependant on this service being provided on a reliable basis by Growers working together with us in a collaborative team effort.

For this to work, and we've proven it does, there needs to be very good reasons for each Grower to decide that it is of more benefit to join our team rather than some other arrangement, or 'going alone'.

In other words, why would a Grower OUTSOURCE? Those reasons may include:

- Finding the right Owner with the right animals - at the right time - at the right price - of the breed you want - and the numbers you require.
- Having an economic simulation calculated from the YouFarm database whereby the Dry Matter requirements are modelled (MDM System) to demonstrate comparative \$

returns on time based (weekly rate) and growth based (weight gain) systems of payment.

- Having help with the definition and planning of the nutrition, health, vaccination, mating and bio-security programs to be implemented.
- Detailed reporting to Owners provided on the same basis that Grower analysis is provided by the company.
- Payment made directly into the Growers bank account - on-time, every-time. Our company carries the responsibility that the Grower is paid on time regardless of when or if the Owner pays their bill.
- Having all recording, analysis and billing procedures carried out on a 'state of the art' IT database that gives Growers an insight to their animal management and economic returns not available elsewhere.
- Really having someone else on your side to talk things over with, and who understands the challenges and stress of farming when many obstacles can seem to get in the way.

Why would a Grower NOT want to OUTSOURCE?

- Having a view that 'the job is straight forward and easy' "I don't need to have someone to tell me how to farm?"
- Having someone else involved just increases costs.
- There are dairy farmers close to me who want to graze their stock on my farm.
- I don't want to be responsible for any stock performance issues - sometimes there is a drought or some animals just want to die!

We would love to hear your views on why you do, or do not, work with us with your dairy heifer grazing enterprise. Have a chat with us, we both may learn more.

In the meantime, wishing you good farming.

Ian Wickham.

Mating Management

by Richard Hammond – Service Manager, Manawatu

During the mating period, and especially during the first six weeks or so, it is most important that you observe what is happening with mating activity. Observation cannot be over-emphasised! What are you looking for?

1. The correct bulls (individuals) are actually with the mob, they have not gone somewhere else and you do not have visitors.
2. The bulls are not lame and do not demonstrate other injury or infection. Do not hurry bulls on a race with sharp/loose stones or use a heel biting dog, the bulls rear feet and legs are important for mounting.
3. The bulls are taking an active interest in "bulling" heifers. If you are present for only a few minutes every couple of days, you may get a wrong impression on this.
4. What you cannot see is the sperm fertility – but don't worry about

that! It is a rare Jersey bull indeed that is not producing vast amounts of sperm on a daily basis – concentrate on seeing that he is delivering what he has in the right place at the right time – because this is what you can see and manage.

5. Make a note when the first three weeks is due and check that the "bulling" activity is diminishing to indicate successful conception rates.
6. In the good old days pre M.bovis good bull management

always focused on rotating bulls but nowadays with M.bovis we don't recommend mixing mobs, so don't rotate bulls from one mob of heifers to another.

7. Remember bulls must stay in the heifer mob for weighing every month
8. Bulls are dangerous – take care of your personal safety.



BULL ARRIVAL FORMS

With this season's bulls arriving on farm it is important at NZ Grazing that all bull movements and records are updated and completed.

In September Bull Arrival Forms were sent out via email and post, please verify and record the NZG or other tag and date of bull arrival for each bull and returned this by post or email.

When bulls have been put "in" and "out" with the heifers please confirm this with your service manager. This can be done by text, email or phone call.



Ian and Jacqui Wickham at CRV Ambreed 50th Anniversary held in Hamilton. Ian was a Director in its early days and also grew the use of AI in the Taranaki year on year for 15 years.

Looking out for Weaner Heifers

By Michelle Cleaver – Service Manager South Island

The process of weaning dairy heifers, followed by subsequent relocation to a grazing property, is a highly stressful period for these young animals. As a grower farmer receiving these un-streetwise dairy weaners, take great care to look after them to your fullest ability from the moment they arrive on your farm, avoiding any kind of stress;

- Keep them fully fed
- Don't re yard them unnecessarily (all weaners coming through the NZ Grazing system have been drenched prior to trucking)
- Shift slowly and quietly without (noisy) dogs
- Have access to quality troughed water

These weaned dairy darlings need you to keep a close eye on them, especially for the first month or two, and you will reap the rewards with good growth rates. Be aware of any looking a little poorly and take action fast, as these may be indicative of a bigger problem. Keep your NZ Grazing manager aware, and your vets can also help you provide the best stress-free growth environment for your weaners (and any assistance to special cases).

Any kind of stress while they are most vulnerable at this young age will predispose them to a number of diseases that older stock are more resistant to, including parasitism (worms), coccidiosis, yersinia, BVD, liver fluke, pneumonia, facial eczema, theleriosis and vitamin B1 deficiency.

Vitamin B1 deficiency (do not confuse this with vitamin B12/Cobalt deficiency as they are different conditions) is a condition that many grazers are unfamiliar with, but within NZ Grazing we have seen at least one case every season and believe you being aware of what to look for will help you proactively manage your dairy weaners. B1 is caused by disruption of thiamine (vitamin B1) production or availability which results in progressive neurological signs, eventually becoming fatal if left untreated. All ruminant species are susceptible, and while it usually occurs sporadically, outbreaks can occur.

The most common scenario that predisposes to B1 deficiency is when cattle change from a rough, high fibre diet to lush pasture. It can also follow a period of food deprivation. Associations have also been observed with high sulphur content of the diet (brassica crops)

or excessive feeding of carbohydrates (pellets/muesli/high sugar pastures).

Weaning is a high risk period.

A continuous supply of thiamine is required for normal brain function – when this is altered brain cells swell and die. Symptoms result from brain damage

- Agitation and anxiety, making the animal difficult to handle
- muscle twitching, holding the head abnormally high and a high-stepping gait
- blindness and head pressing (the animal stands with its head pushed up against a solid object), teeth grinding
- lying down, seizures, paddling (legs thrashing back and forth on the ground) and drawing the head back stiffly
- Coma and then death follows in 24–48 hours.

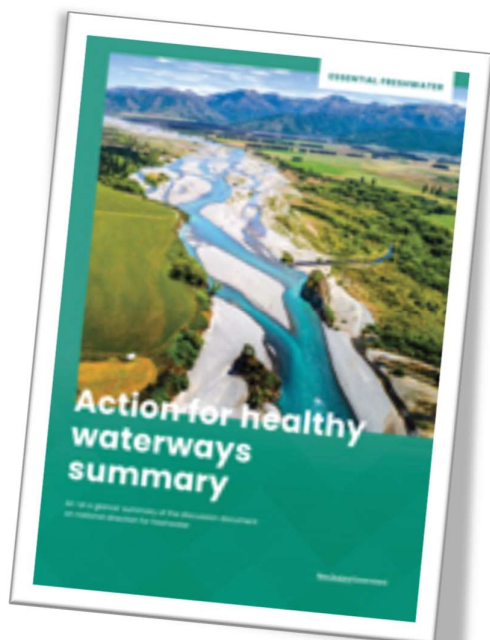
Affected animals often die from misadventure when they are stumbling about. While there is still a chance to save them, so early detection is paramount.

Treatment consists of administering injectable B1, or a multivitamin injection, repeatedly until the animal recovers. Improvement is usually apparent within 24 hours although recovery can take up to a week. Recognising the signs early and acting promptly - call a vet immediately. In outbreak situations oral drenching with B1 has proved effective.

Prevention of B1 deficiency includes:

- Introducing any change in diet slowly
- Provide adequate fibre with high carbohydrate diets
- Avoiding high sulphur diets – limit brassicas and avoid water with a high sulphur content
- Preventative drenching in high risk situations – such as if you have experienced this disease in previous seasons.

Remember – handle your dairy heifer weaners proactively with great care and attention. Within NZ Grazing our experience is very well fed dairy heifers have few health problems. We are looking forward to working with you and the dairy weaners this coming season



New Zealanders want to swim, fish, gather mahinga kai and enjoy freshwater as our parents and grandparents did. We also need clean water to drink and irrigation to support a sustainable economy.

But our water is suffering as a result of urban development, agriculture, horticulture, forestry and other human activities. There is also a lack of robust regulation, monitoring and enforcement.

Or so says the government – have your say:

<https://www.mfe.govt.nz/consultation/action-for-healthy-waterways>

Farmer Wellbeing

by Frank Weterman - Accountant

It was mental health week as we began this newsletter - Wellbeing is a popular topic of discussion throughout many New Zealand industries. Ask any farmer, things look a little different in the world of agriculture than they do sitting behind a desk. There are times when outside help is the best option when it comes to mental health. There are plenty of resources available, which are provided by people who understand the challenges, so we have provided a couple for you.

Doug Avery

Doug has gained a deserved reputation as a speaker – he has had a number of sponsored tours through out New Zealand – and his personal tale is a grounding experience. As his awareness of the extent of depression in rural communities increased, the emphasis of his experiences with eight years of drought on his Marlborough farm shifted to focus on his personal struggles with

depression and his "go-to toolbox" of recovery

And so The Resilient Farmer was born, a website devoted to helping people, backed by professionals and with the public face of Avery's increasingly popular talks

<https://www.resilientfarmer.co.nz/>

Farmstrong

Increasing wellbeing builds resilience to face the many pressures involved in farming. Being more resilient allows you to recover quickly from setbacks and to use these as opportunities for learning and growth. They share farmer-to-farmer tips, supported and informed by wellbeing science.

These will help you increase your wellbeing so you can cope better with the ups and downs of farming.

Farmstrong provides a short questionnaire to check how resilient you are.

<https://farmstrong.co.nz/wellbeing-getting-started/>

Dairy NZ

New Zealanders understanding of and attitudes towards wellbeing are changing... Read more from Jenny Jago at the Dairy NZ website. Includes some great tips to maintain wellness.

<https://www.dairynz.co.nz/news/latest-news/your-wellbeing-lets-talk-about-it/>

GRAZIER SURVEY

We believe in getting better – and want to know how you feel about our service. Towards the end of October you will receive an invite to complete a survey.

This survey should not take you longer than ten minutes and will help us to do a better job for you.

You don't need to wait for a survey. We are always happy to hear from you.

Phone: 0800 10 84 94

FACEBOOK

Find us on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/NZGrazing/>

Like us on
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MICHELLE'S HINT OF THE DAY

MICHELLE CLEAVER, SERVICE MANAGER, SOUTH ISLAND



JUMP ON PROBLEMS
EARLY.... SHARE
THESE WITH YOUR
SERVICE MANAGER