

AMBERLEA FARM NEWSLETTER



September 2008

Hello everyone,

Hasn't time slipped by since our last update. We have all had a hard wet winter, no matter what part of the country you live in. Rain, rain and more rain! Hopefully we are on the mend and Spring is just around the corner. It is slightly warmer and the days are a little longer so cheer up everyone and let's look forward to Summer.

Well, you have all had my note to say we were moving farms. Everyone has been asking so I thought I would give you an update on our new farm here in Rotorua.

We have moved to 65 hectares on the edge of Lake Okareka, Rotorua. Lake Okareka is a small lake approximately 11ks from town. So handy but yet tucked away from the hustle and bustle of tourism Rotorua. We have approximately 20 ha of flats, 30ha of hills, 11ha of mature pine trees and the balance is native bush. With boundary being DOC Reserve Bush and a view over the lake from the house this farm is very diverse.

View of Lake Okareka from house



Because the farm is in "Lakes Catchment Sensitive Zoning" we will have to run it a little differently to the past Waikato Dairy country. There are a lot more rules and regulations and environmental issues regarding the lakes. Our goal is to run the farm more economically and environmentally sustainable. The farm has not had any fertilizer for many years, and in some

parts not at all. We will be using natural fertilizers and work towards improving the balance of the soil to improve pasture growth.

The yards were only broken down sheep yards and not suitable for cattle so we have been busy with the help of a fencing contractor to improve the facilities. Thank goodness we haven't had any calving issues to date and have not had to call the vet or we would have been in big trouble without facilities. The rain and mud have not helped with this of course! In general there are lots of repairs and maintenance to be done. Lots of gates that are just tied on with bits of string, and so far we have replaced up to 15 gates and more to do.



New Head bale and yards being built

The animals we brought with us have all settled in nicely and all in all I think we are going to be very happy here.



AMBERLEA FARM



Now you know what we are up to....back to biz.....Vet Issues & For Sales next.....

When to call for calving assistance

One of the biggest dilemmas during calving season is when to call for assistance for a cow or heifer that is calving. The obvious goal is to get a live calf and a live cow, but there is always the worry of how long to wait and when to ring the vet.

Talk to veterinarians who do a lot of beef work and you'll quickly discover the "calling too soon" is something that seldom happens. "If I was only called a few hours earlier" is a typical response from the vet who delivers a dead calf.

So when is it time to give your cow or heifer help and when is it time to call for assistance?

It's fairly easy to see when a cow is coming up to calving. Her udder will swell and get very tight for a week or so before calving. She may even start to drip milk which you should keep an eye on in case she gets mastitis. The bacteria (*Strep uberis*) live in the soil and enter the udder via the teat.

Let the cow find a quiet place and have some peace to calve. She may spend up to an hour doing this and once the contractions start she will lie down and get up a lot, pawing and smelling the ground where her birth fluids have burst. Don't let her go more than half an hour after this initial stage before finding if there are problems. You may be able to creep up on her in the paddock and if not, you'll have to get her into a yard. Again in a normal presentation you should see a nose and two front feet coming like a diver. If not then seek some help.

If you see that the calf is stuck and all it may need is a slight pull of the front feet to extend the front legs, then that's fine. If you find that it is going to take more strength to pull it, then seek experienced help straight away. Beware of enthusiastic and willing amateurs who may offer so-called 'help which turns out to be brute force and ignorance. They only add to the delay of getting the vet. If you feel the problem is out of your league, don't delay and call the vet.



You need to have a good set of yards and race, preferably with a head bail. The vet will require a bucket of clean water. The vet will have all the equipment he needs but there are some items which are handy to have in your own vet cupboard for emergencies....

Rubber Gloves, Lubricant, Disinfectant, Plastic bucket, Iodine for calves navel, some farmers also like to keep Electrolyte and treatments for Metabolic diseases such as calcium (for milk fever), magnesium (for staggers) or ketosis (glucose) but if you have to call the vet they will have all this and give you advice on exactly what you need.

Don't leave the afterbirths on the paddock for dogs or cats to eat - use the offal hole. And get some iodine on all fresh navels immediately after birth.

Make sure a calf gets a minimum of 2 litres of colostrum before 6 hours of life.

You can get quite a bit of animal health information from web pages but don't wait until you cow starts labour to run off to your computer! Do some study before hand so that you know the signs of labour and the signs of any problems.

Interesting links: www.lifestyleblock.co.nz look up under "lifestyle file" and you will find interesting articles on cattle and veterinarian issues.

(Snippets of this article were given to us by Dr Clive Dalton, Vet Articles - www.lifestyleblock.co.nz)

- ***Don't forget your 5N1 vaccinations for calves***
- ***Keep an eye on mum's udder for mastitis. Watch calf to make sure all four teats are being used as this can cause problems if not.***
- ***Mum needs extra feed to produce milk so don't ration the feed as much once she has calved.***
- ***If in doubt ask the vet. Sometimes just ringing for advice can put your mind at rest.***

Enjoy your calving season.

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FOR SALE

Cottle Tinkerbell 00-06

DOB 21.10.00

Tinkerbell is a great mum and has a lovely heifer calf at foot.

She is of lovely dark colour and markings. No previous calving issues and is in good health.

Mum and heifer calf - \$7,000+gst



Esprit Samantha 937

DOB 14.09.07

Great heifer, good dark colour

and eye markings

\$5,000+gst



Cottle Summer 002

DOB 21.05.02

Summer is good and has produced top calves each year. She has good colour and markings. (Does have some horn re-growth) Has lovely heifer calf at foot.

Mum and heifer calf - \$7,000+gst



Esprit Hayley 944

DOB 20.10.07

Hayley is real sweetie, small and quite shy but loves a back scratch and will come running if you have a bucket of multi-nut treats for her. She is a smaller framed heifer and will not be ready for bull this year. Needs lots of spoiling as the other girls bully her.

\$4,500+gst



Akatea Lady Flo 09/0019

DOB 07.12.04

Not calved yet....

\$5,000+gst



MINIATURE HEREFORD BULLS - FOR SALE

Top 2006 born bulls

Tamber Lee 06/30 (DOB 25.06.06)

Lorre Bart Simpson 06/0188 (DOB 17.08.06)

Gladwyn Heights Harvery 06/0014 (DOB 23.09.06)

Gladwyn Heights Henry 06/0012 (DOB 12.10.06)

Gladwyn Heights Harry 06/0013 (DOB 12.10.06)

Kruger Park Lucky 06/0010 (DOB 04.10.06)

Kruger Park Maverick 06/0011 (DOB 09/10/06)

Dalglo Jerry 06/06 (DOB 07/11/06)

All Bulls "For Sale on Behalf"

Ask us about a package..maybe two heifer and a bull... we can check bloodlines and see if they match your girls. Prices vary but be in quick if you want to have a bull for this season.

Ask Helen for more info at helen@amberleafarm.co.nz
We do have photos of the bulls we can email you.

Esprit Mindy 937

DOB 12.09.07

Top heifer, excellent eye markings

\$5,000+gst



Miniature Cattle Tethering Halters

Have you had trouble finding a Halter that fits your Miniature Cattle?

The standard retail Calf Tethering Halter fits your calves,
but the Cow Tethering Halter is too big !

Frustrating isn't it!

We have had some Tethering Halters custom made.
They are sized in-between the calf and cow halter.



Available in Black or Blue Price - \$31.00
(Incl Gst -plus postage/package \$4.30)



Send Order To: C & H Russell
191 Millar Road, Lake Okareka,
RD 5, Rotorua
Bay of Plenty 3076
(or email: www.helen@amberleafarm.co.nz)

Order From: _____
(postal address) _____

ORDER: Tether Halter - Black x _____ \$
Blue x _____ \$
P & P \$ 4.30
Cheque enclosed \$ _____