

HERD INTRODUCTIONS - WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

If you have purchased new stock, the heifers are returning home from grazing, or if you are combining herds from different locations, then the following tips may be useful.

Pregnancy

Not all animals show that they are empty by cycling. Some will even appear pregnant through the 5-week guarantee period and only show up as a non-calving cow sometime later.

Finding empty cows in August/September can be an expensive exercise. If purchased stock are arriving and they have not been pregnancy tested by the vendor, then we advise that you test them as soon as possible after they arrive. If they have been pregnancy tested with the vendor's herd sometime prior to delivery - a pregnancy test on arrival could be worthwhile as late and non-observed slips prior to delivery are not uncommon.

Tb

If stock are returning home from Tb endemic areas, Tb testing will be mandatory. Consider Tb testing if you have any doubt about how your stock were grazed on the grazing property. For example, do you know the origins and status of the other mobs of young stock grazing on the same property? Check with your veterinarian. Don't take the risk of introducing Tb to your farm.

Trace Elements

Remember to include newly introduced cows in your trace element programme.

Be aware that if your heifers have been in areas of mineral deficiencies, they may need additional supplements. Pregnant heifers also have a higher requirement for most minerals than the general herd, therefore it is worth considering a mineral programme specific to them.

Leptospirosis

Check vaccination status of any bought-in animals/herds. Ensure the heifers have had their annual booster vaccination. Now is a good time to get the herds annual booster done if they have not already had it.

Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD)

If you are unsure of the BVD status of your herd, then it is worthwhile blood testing any brought in animals to avoid introducing infection. If you have had problems with BVD in the past, consider vaccinating any animals before they join the herd, to minimise the risk of them contracting infection. It is best to discuss this disease and control strategies with your vet.

Trucking Injuries

Often cows will get small cuts on their legs while being trucked. Most of the time these are superficial and heal up with no complications. However, some of these cuts can be quite deep, and penetrate into areas such as tendons and joints. Remember that there is only the thickness of the skin separating these structures from injury. These deep infections can be difficult to cure and some require special antibiotics. If in doubt please call your vet as soon as you notice these wounds, because the sooner treatment is started the better!