



# Large Animal Newsletter December 2022



## CVC CLINIC NEWS

Welcome to the last CVC Dairy newsletter for 2022! Thank you to everyone who joined us for our client Christmas BBQ on Monday. It was nice to see you all out of overalls. To all those we missed, we hope you all have a lovely Christmas and manage to have some reprieve from the dairy life over the holiday period. This issue is short and sweet, providing a little information of woody tongue, heat stroke and blue green algae.

## Camperdown Veterinary Centre

Ph: (03) 5593 1077

Hours:

8:00am – 5:30pm  
(Monday – Friday)

9am -12pm Saturday

**Merry Christmas and a  
Happy New Year  
from all the team at CVC.**

**We thank you for your  
continued support in  
2022!**

## Christmas and New Year Period Opening Hours

Saturday December 24th 2022	Christmas Eve	CLOSED— Emergency only
Sunday December 25th 2022	Christmas Day	CLOSED— Emergency only
Monday December 26th 2022	Boxing Day	CLOSED— Emergency only
Tuesday December 27th 2022	Christmas Day Public Holiday	CLOSED— Emergency only
Wednesday December 28th 2022	Boxing Day Public Holiday	CLOSED— Emergency only
Thursday December 29th 2022		CLOSED— Emergency only
Friday December 30th 2022		CLOSED— Emergency only
Saturday December 31st 2022	New Years Eve	CLOSED— Emergency only
Sunday January 1st 2023	New Years Day	CLOSED— Emergency only
Monday January 2nd 2023	New Years Day Public Holiday	CLOSED— Emergency only
Tuesday January 3rd 2023	Normal hours	8:30am—5:30pm

## BLUE-GREEN ALGAE TOXICITY

We all know you shouldn't swim in Lake Bullen Merri when the blue-green algae is in bloom but did you know it can cause illness in your cattle and dogs? Blue-green algae can produce a range of toxins including neurotoxins, liver toxins and allergens.

Poisoning will depend on toxin levels present in the water, amount ingested, and amount of feed in rumen/stomach to dilute the toxin.

Clinical Signs include, dead livestock, muscle tremors, staggers, convulsions, ill thrift, scouring, photosensitisation and jaundice (yellow colour around eyes and in mucus membranes).

There is no specific treatment for blue-green algae toxicity but if you are concerned about your cattle, remove from affected water source immediately, call the vets and give them ad lib access to hay to help dilute the toxins.

Prevention is key. Ensure cattle have access to fresh water and prevent drinking from stagnant water sources which may be contaminated.

**Please note the clinic will only be open for emergency visits over the Christmas and New Year period.**

**If you are planning to dry off over this period, please call now to order your dry cow treatments and Teatseal. Also remember to check any other on-farm medications to ensure you have enough to get your herd through the holiday period!**

**Special orders need to be placed by Friday the 16th of December to ensure adequate time is allowed to receive your order before the Christmas period.**



## WOODY TONGUE

Woody tongue is a disease caused by the bacteria *Actinobacillus lignieresii* which leads to abscesses in the soft tissue of the mouth. This bacteria is found world wide and we see many cases occur in and around Camperdown. *Actinobacillus* is a commensal bacteria of the upper respiratory and gastrointestinal tract in cattle which means it is naturally found in many cattle. Disease occurs when there is damage to the soft tissue in the mouth, generally in the form of abrasions from rough feed, allowing bacteria entry.

Infection commonly occurs in the tongue making it swollen, painful and inflexible but it can also occur in the lymph nodes, lips and mouth cavity. Since cows use their tongue to pick up feed, woody tongue can stop the cow from being able to eat normally so you may notice weight loss or ill-thrift in affected cattle. Other clinical signs include increased salivation, inappetence, swelling bellow the jaw, increased bellowing or agitation and sometimes infected cattle will make chewing motions as if they have something stuck in their mouth.

### TREATMENT

If caught earlier enough, woody tongue can be treated and generally has a good prognosis. Veterinarians will treat with antibiotics and iodides via intravenous injection as well as anti-inflammatories to help bring down swelling and provide pain relief. Resolution of the disease can take a few days but cattle are usually back eating again with 48 hours.

### PREVENTION

It is very difficult to prevent woody tongue in your cattle as it is naturally found in their mouths. Therefore, early detection is key to improving prognosis.



*Other disease which may present in a similar manner are grass seeds or foreign bodies in the mouth as well as lumpy jaw (immobile hard masses along jaw).*

## HEAT STRESS

While we have had a very slow start to summer it is important to be aware of and on the look out for heat stress in your cattle. Heat stress occurs on warm days when cattle can not dissipate heat once their body temperature elevates above normal.

Heat stress most commonly occurs when it is hot and humid.

### Clinical Signs

Initially heat stress leads to reduced feed intake and production losses however, when severe it can cause organ damage resulting in death.

- Open mouth breathing / panting
- Increased salivation
- Unusual behaviour
- Lack of coordination
- Increased respiratory rate
- Drop in milk production
- lethargy
- Cattle with comorbidities (other illnesses) have reduced ability to regulate heat.

### Predisposing Factors

- High ongoing minimum and maximum ambient temperature
- High humidity
- No cloud cover or shade
- Sudden increase in temperature
- Dark coloured cattle. Cattle with lighter coloured coats tend to be more tolerant of heat
- Cattle in higher body conditions are more prone to developing heat stress

### Prevention of Heat Stress

Always having access to fresh, clean water supply. Where possible, have multiple water sources and avoid making cattle walk long distances to access water.

On hot, humid days, keep cattle in paddocks with ample shade, avoid moving cattle during the hottest part of the day and reduce time standing in yards in the heat.

