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# TAREE VETERINARY HOSPITAL

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## SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

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The drought is serious when coastal areas are running out of stock drinking water. Unheard of. I remember the late Col Hammond telling me he could remember a flood in every month over his long lifetime. The climate has changed.

We have now had some clients sell their beef herds which is very upsetting for them to say the least. For beef producers, you can have a plan and try to stay ahead of the realities of drought, such as early weaning, agistment and selling stock. For

dairy farmers it's a bit different, with cows calving, cows to be milked, contracts to be filled, people employed. But when feed and water shortages are this extreme the thinking has to change. In effect, dairy cows need to be turned into beef cows.

Less water is consumed per head and nearly half the dry matter intake is needed by a dry cow, and a beef cow, compared to a milker. So empty stale cows are culled, stale cows are dried off and the herd contracted. Milking some cows once daily is also an option. The problem is when the dry cow paddock is also exhausted.

Drought feeding, as long as you have water, is expensive but keeps an income in the future. But be careful what you are feeding. I consulted a herd last week that had been visited by the RSPCA. They were feeding high protein calf feed grain mix to their herd. They didn't realise that the excess protein had to be converted to ammonia and urea by the cow at an energy cost - more weight loss. And they had straw masquerading as hay. Protein drives palatability, and it was little wonder the cows weren't eating it, despite their belief that it would provide necessary roughage. If urea is made available it must be with extreme care, as there must be quality roughage available otherwise urea toxicity can occur.

Over the last few years there have been cases of nitrate poisoning when unadapted cattle are put onto good quality hay. You can't win sometimes. A sudden change in diet is always a bad idea in a rumen.

If the feed you buy doesn't look like the quality it's supposed to be, you can sample

it, as the LLS has some funding to do feed analysis.

The LLS also has drought support subsidies for transport, fodder and infrastructure that are there for you.

This is the last month of the mandarin competition, too close to call at the moment. Never been a tie yet !

Cattle Diseases of the Month  
calvings, some big calves  
eye cancers  
lame cows  
prolapses, uterine and vaginal  
theileria

And in the Horses.....

The warm weather has meant we have mares cycling early, but their body condition isn't great, so it will be interesting to see their pregnancy rate.

With grass being eaten down to the dirt , and often paddocks looking like there's more poo than blades of grass, we have had some cases of intestinal parasites this month. When it rains we will have lots of worms and ticks to contend with. Dog tick collars work well on foals.

We've had one foal fail its IgG test. It was drinking well but the milk from the maiden mare looked too milky i.e. not like there was much colostrum in it. And the foal was to be insured so it had to pass a test. So it was given frozen colostrum and a transfusion.

We had a case of suspected tetanus this month. An unvaccinated, 3 yo, was noticed with a stiff gait, spilling lots of water when drinking, and prominent third eyelids and pricked ears. No wounds were obvious but she was teething and on pretty coarse feed.

Horse diseases of the month  
Cuts and Colics  
lamenesses  
foot abscesses  
locking patella surgery on a pony

Let's hope for better news next month and some early rain.

### **RUN DATES FOR SEPTEMBER**

<b>LANSDOWNE.....</b>	<b>THURS 5TH</b>
<b>OXLEY/MITCHELL'S IS.....</b>	<b>TUES 10TH</b>
<b>HANNAM VALE.....</b>	<b>THURS 12TH</b>
<b>DYER'S CROSSING.....</b>	<b>TUES 17TH</b>
<b>WINGHAM.....</b>	<b>THURS 19TH</b>
<b>LORNE/COMBOYNE.....</b>	<b>TUES 24TH</b>
<b>COOMBA AND THE DEEP SOUTH....</b>	<b>THURS 26TH</b>

