



VET PRODUCT UPDATE

Collars are a game-changer

More farmers using cow monitoring technology has been a game-changer this mating season.



That's the message from Headlands business manager Jono Buchly, who says for AfiCollar farms, he's seen more cows cycling, less use of CIDRs in herds, and no tail paint.

"AfiCollars have become an essential tool in helping our farmers improve herd fertility, health and reduce empty rates," says Buchly.

"Our team are able to help analyse the data provided through the AfiFarm software, which is part of the integrated AfiCollar system. This level of data and information far surpasses any other tool we've had available in New Zealand in the past," he adds.

There are many things that impact a cow getting in calf, including eating, rumination, weight loss, and overall health.

Through AfiCollar and AfiFarm sort and weigh, farmers can access this detail in one platform.

AfiCollars seamlessly integrates with the dairy operation, meaning farmers do not have to source data in different places and systems.

"Anecdotally, across our clients, we've seen huge benefits in herd reproductive performance. Six-week in-calf rates have improved,

and farmers have said the AfiCollars are a game-changer for them," says Buchly.

"The system makes mating so simple. If a cow is in heat, she's drafted automatically, and farmers don't have to spend hours in the morning trying to figure out which cows to inseminate. Even for the most experienced farmer, it saves a lot of time and energy, and there's no need to use tail paint or scratchies anymore."

Using a custom-designed 3D sensor measuring the movement, acceleration and motion of the cow's head, the collar can accurately distinguish between rumination, eating and heat detection.

The collar then sends wireless data to the reader, which transfers the information to the AfiFarm herd management software.

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potential health issues and other vital information are available at the farmer's fingertips through an app, so decisions can be made on the go.

"AfiCollar and the AfiFarm system monitors cow weight every day, so post-calving, we're able to identify high-risk and potentially empty cows that have greater than a 5 per cent weight loss in the first 40 days after calving. Farmers can then work through a management solution," Buchly adds.

Likewise, the AfiSort scales monitor body condition scores throughout the year, providing daily reporting to manage at-risk cows.

AfiCollar, distributed by Headlands and developed by Afimilk, is one of the most widely used herd management systems across the world.

The benefit to local farmers is a strong support system here in New Zealand to provide real-time data on cow fertility and herd health.

"From a Headlands point of view, we have exciting products coming to market in the next 12 months including a new CollarPlus software platform, which will seamlessly integrate with the system. Ongoing innovation and development, plus the support and expertise provided on-farm is one of the benefits of partnering with Headlands."

Headlands has become the southern hemisphere's largest dairy consulting company focused on pastoral dairy systems, operating throughout Australia, NZ and South Africa.

It focuses on optimising farming systems to improve profitability, business resilience and sustainability.

Ovis spike sparks worm dosing reminder

The new sheep processing season has started with a spike in sheep measles infections being recorded by processors and Ovis Management says it's a timely reminder to keep farmers on track with tapeworm control for all dogs on their property.

October 2024 processing data recorded a 1.38 per cent infection rate in lambs, compared to 1.13 per cent for October 2023

Likely reasons for the increase include warmer weather and moist conditions helping eggs survive longer, Ovis Management says.

"Farmers also have a lot on their minds and a lot of expenses so worming programmes may have slipped a bit but it is important to keep on top of it because an outbreak costs farms a lot of money in condemned stock.

"The prevalence changes as the season goes on. If we start the season with a high prevalence, then we are likely to end it with a high prevalence too."

Farmers breeding lambs for trading needed to make sure they are taking all necessary steps to avoid sheep measles in their flocks.

"A lot of people dealing with this have inherited the problem. Traders need to ensure they have the same treatment programme in place, to protect the investment of their buyers. This isn't pointing the finger at anyone. It's about making sure everyone is on the same page."

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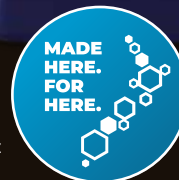
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