

Heifer Monitoring Programme

Investing in your future

Vetlife offers a calf weighing service to monitor calf growth from pre-weaning to pre-mating and post-mating. We are trying to increase awareness of the importance of calf weights and improve the value of your replacement heifers.

New Zealand research shows that only 81% of heifers tagged at birth calve as 2 years old and only 55% of heifers identified as replacements at birth survive to start a third lactation. Poor reproductive performance seems to be a key factor contributing to these high wastage rates.

Live weight and size are more important than age in determining when first heat and conception occur in heifers. At 15 months of age heifers need to weigh 60% of their mature body weight to maximise conception rates and lactation performance after calving.

A poor calving pattern will occur if a proportion of the heifers are too light, resulting in less days in milk, and problems at subsequent matings.

Rearing replacement heifers is a considerable cost to the farm business and needs to be done properly so that maximum value can be extracted from the investment.

Good calf and heifer management can maximise milk production, reproductive performance and longevity.



We can help you to rear your replacements by tailoring a heifer monitoring programme to suit your specific requirements. Visual estimation of the weight of growing heifers is unreliable. Heifers can look in good condition with shiny coats without actually being on target and growing at all.



What is our heifer monitoring programme?

- A programme with a series of regular management events for R1 and R2 heifer calves.
- Vetlife provides two labour units (usually a farm vet and a technician).
- We bring our portable weigh scale to your calves.
- You will need to provide some staff to help with drafting and moving heifers.
- You will receive regular farm reports covering weight gain, mineral status, parasite control and further advice as needed.

Preventative Treatments	Monitoring	Frequency
Parasite control	Faecal egg counts	2 - 3 tests over 2 years
Mineral treatments	Mineral blood tests	2 - 3 tests over 2 years
Vaccinations	Animal health planning	As necessary
	Weights and growth rates	6 - 10 sessions over 1 year
	Body condition scoring	4 or more times in the second year

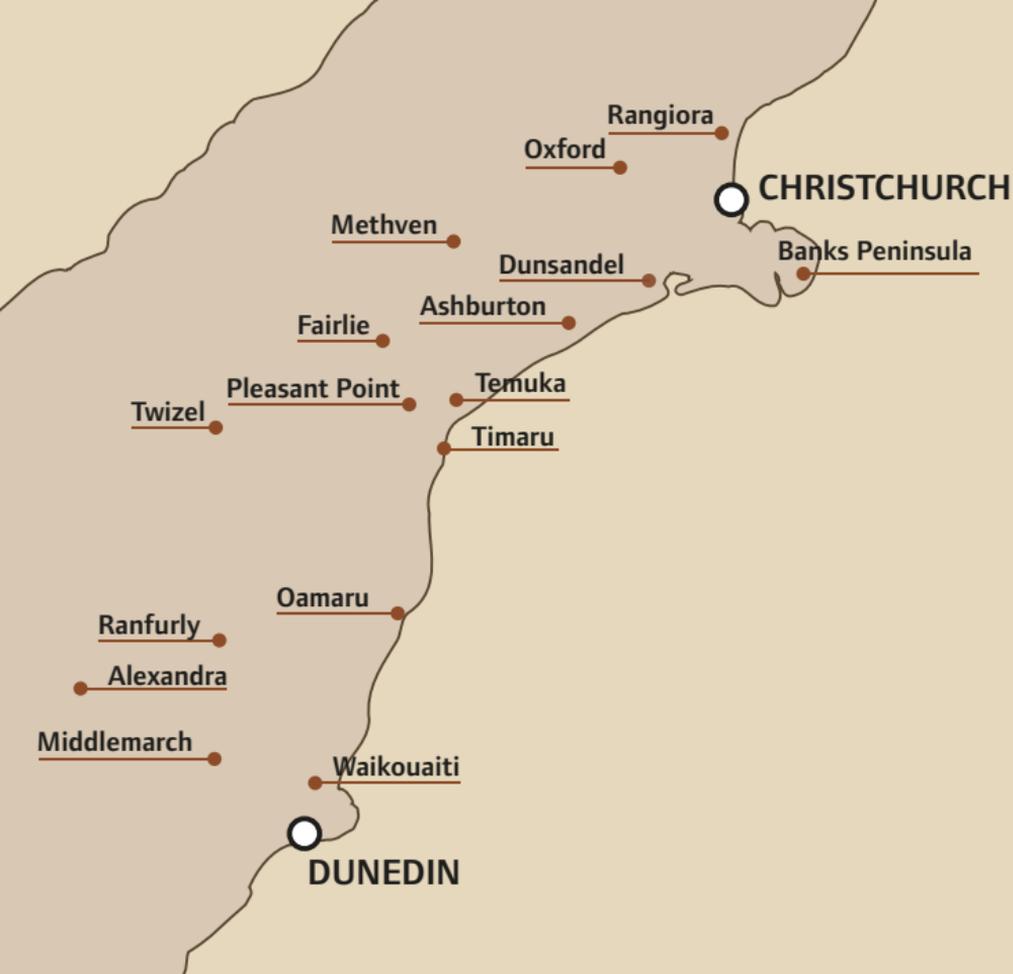
How much does it cost?

- A fixed fee is charged per head of cattle and is dependent on the intensity of programme chosen.
 - All drugs, material and laboratory fees are charged out at the normal rate.
 - The contract year runs from November/December to October.
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How do I find out more?

Contact your Vetlife clinic for further information.





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