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It's Not Really for the Customer

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The old adage, "I'm from Inland Revenue, I am here to help!" has been bandied about by comedians over many years.

A very similar wry comment could be made with companies when they introduce changes; they are never about assisting the customer, only for the benefit of the company itself.

The supreme example is bar codes.

When they first came on the scene at farm shops the assistant would scan every item individually, slowing the whole process of purchasing but it would increase the efficiency of their bookkeeping.

Later improvement in the process made self scanning possible, but again this was never for the customer but to enable fewer retail staff to be employed.

Now giants such as Microsoft have made the decision to cease supporting formats like Publisher, a very

useful tool but which now requires users to format newsletters in the clunkier Word and/or PowerPoint formats.

No reason was given for such a change but, rest assured, it was certainly not done for customer benefit.

The big danger on the veterinary world is these attitudes being prevalent in practices as the industry itself becomes more and more corporatized.

We already have an article inside entitled 'Things are Dearer at the Vet', but it is not really practices that are the concern.

As well as the widely documented issue of government regulators affecting product availability, there is the danger of drugs being pulled from the market due to actual market size.

In a country of our size at the other side of the populated world we have corporate decisions made in ivory towers that

purely look at profit and loss.

Despite the advances in technology, it could be argued that clinicians of a few decades ago had a greater selection of tools to treat animals.

However, It is not all doom and gloom. Smaller NZ firms utilizing New Zealand technology, such as with the new Manuka Safe spray, featured inside, give Kiwi vets an advantage.

In addition generics that completely satisfy ACVM bioavailability requirements, have proven to be a godsend in this area.

As such Labiprofen 150, also featured inside as a new launch, is European technology at a very affordable price.



Listeriosis

New Zealand Food Safety is sharing some simple guidance to prevent people getting a rare but life-threatening foodborne illness.

"Although listeriosis is rare in New Zealand, vulnerable people die of this preventable disease every year, so we want to share some practical steps people can take at home to avoid getting sick," says New Zealand Food Safety deputy director-general Vincent Arbuckle.



Listeria monocytogenes is a rod-shaped, gram-positive bacterium that resembles a spider. It is commonly found in nature and is present in soil, water, and the intestines of many animals, including humans.

Listeriosis is caused by eating or drinking food that has high levels of *Listeria*.

Listeria is invisible, has no odour and, unlike most bacteria, can continue to grow when food is refrigerated.

"The most recent Annual report concerning Foodborne Diseases in New Zealand shows that there was a single death from listeria in 2024, down from 6 in 2022 and 7 in 2023.

Can't Win

John thought this would be a 'marriage of the times' – equal roles for equal partners. So, the first morning back from their honeymoon, he brought Jill breakfast in bed.

"But even one death is one too many, so that's why we are continuing our efforts to get those most at risk – pregnant women and older people – to better understand the dangers of listeriosis and what to do to decrease them."

Infections in healthy adults are unlikely to be severe, but listeriosis during pregnancy can cause miscarriage, premature labour, stillbirth, or disease in the newborn baby.

As you age – and particularly over 65 – your immune system gets weaker. This means foods you safely ate in the past may no longer be safe for you to eat.

"Some people may not be aware of this. So, we're highlighting higher-risk foods while sharing some food-safety advice on how to make them safe to eat," says Mr Arbuckle.

Higher-risk foods include:

- ready-to-eat meat products (like deli meats and pâtés)
- smoked seafood (especially cold smoked fish)
- soft cheeses (like brie, camembert, and paneer)
- unpasteurised dairy products (like raw milk and cheese)
- leafy greens and bagged salad (like mesclun and spinach).

To lower the risk of getting listeriosis, you can:

- choose safer foods
- heat food to piping hot (over 75°C) before eating
- when eating raw fruit and vegetables, wash and dry thoroughly first
- only eat food that was recently prepared
- refrigerate leftovers quickly and avoid eating leftovers that won't be reheated
- wash and dry your hands thoroughly and follow good food hygiene practices.

"New Zealand Food Safety requires food businesses to manage *Listeria* in the processing environment and to have strict measures in place to eliminate its presence in products," says Mr. Arbuckle.

"If something goes wrong, we support food businesses with their consumer-level food recalls. In 2024, there were 4 consumer recalls due to the possible presence of *Listeria*.

"But there's also something you can do to protect yourself and others.

If you make or buy food for vulnerable people, or are vulnerable yourself, please sign up to our food recall alerts.

"Also look out for our current awareness campaign so you can share it with people who may not know the life-threatening risks. Let's work together to not lose another person to listeriosis."

Jill wasn't impressed with his culinary skills, however.

She looked disdainfully at the tray, and snorted, 'Poached? I wanted scrambled!'

Undaunted, the next morning, John brought his true love a scrambled egg. Jill wasn't having any of it. 'Do you think I don't like variety? I wanted poached this morning!'

Manuka Safe

The Science

Unlike other honeys that rely on hydrogen peroxide, for many years the active ingredient of Manuka Honey was thought to be bacteriocins, but this is not the case.

Bacteriocins are ribosomal-synthesized, proteinaceous toxins produced by bacteria to inhibit the growth of similar or closely related bacterial strains. Although active at low concentrations, bacteriocins typically have low in vivo stability, being susceptible to degradation by proteolytic enzymes.

Manuka honey possesses potent, broad-spectrum antibacterial properties primarily driven by high levels of methylglyoxal (MGO), a compound derived from dihydroxyacetone (DHA). Methylglyoxal (MGO) is not considered a bacteriocin, but it is a small, highly reactive organic dicarbonyl compound ($\text{CH}_3\text{C}(\text{O})\text{CHO}$).

It is formed as a side product of glycolysis in many organisms and is a potent, broad-spectrum antibacterial compound.

MGO acts against bacteria by causing cellular structural changes, making it effective

against resistant strains like MRSA.

Its efficacy is rated by the Unique Manuka Factor (UMF) scale, which measures MGO, DHA, and leptosperin. UMF 10+ or higher is generally considered therapeutically active.

MGO alters the shape and size of bacteria, preventing them from replicating. It can also destroy bacterial cell membranes through lipid peroxidation.

Due to its complex, multi-faceted attack on bacteria, it is difficult for bacteria to develop immunity to Manuka honey.

Research suggests efficacy against *Campylobacter*, *S. aureus* (including MRSA), and *C. difficile*.

The Practicality

There are several Manuka products on the market, but most are creams or gels. Manuka safe is the only spray available on the market.

Creams, pastes, and gels are not always ideal.

With pastes, the wound usually needs to be covered with a bandage to allow the body to warm/melt the honey into a liquid form.

Covering the wound can sometimes be counter-productive, or is simply not practical for areas such as legs, high elbow wounds, the head or abdominal wounds.

Ease of use is a key advantage of Manuka Safe.

The spray is a focused jet that can be targeted directed accurately to the affected area.

This is a highly effective practical product with wide range of indications across everyday veterinary use.



Genealogy

Fred came home from university thinking he was adopted. "Mum, am I adopted?"

"No, of course not," replied his mother "Why would you think such a thing?"

Fred showed her his genealogy DNA test results. No match for any of his relatives, and strong

matches for a family who lived the other side of the city.

Perturbed, his mother called her husband. "Honey, Fred has done a DNA test, and... and... I don't know how to say this... he may not be our son."

"Well, obviously!" he replied.

"What do you mean?"

"It was your idea in the first place" her husband continued. "You remember, that first night in hospital when the baby did nothing but scream and cry and scream and cry. On and on. And you asked me to change him?"

"I picked a good one I reckon. Ever so proud of Fred."

Ketoprofen Dispensing

In human medicine some NSAIDs are readily available across the counter. For over a century now the late-night doctor's adage of, "take an aspirin and see me in the morning," has been thought of as a general panacea.

Nowadays aspirin has been superseded by the drug acetaminophen, also known as paracetamol, as the go to for pain relief. Other NSAIDs were still readily available on prescription for more severe problems.

With the strong modern push for animal welfare a good case can be made to have a similar set up in the veterinary world, for farmers especially, to have NSAIDs on hand for painful problems that do not really require veterinary input, e.g. footrot or mastitis.

Just as paracetamol fills this niche in the human field, it appears that ketoprofen would be the best for farm animal use.

When ketoprofen first hit the market some decades ago it

was extremely popular. This popularity waned over time with the development of newer chemicals, but it has seen a resurgence in recent years because, although action is mainly limited to 24 hours, it has zero milk withhold.

The half-life of ketoprofen is only 2.7 hours. This is shorter than that of flunixin! Science Direct lists the half-life in cattle as 0.42 hours, making it less attractive as a pre-emptive anaesthetic. In addition, although ketoprofen can be used to effectively manage postoperative pain, there may be a propensity for post-op haemorrhage.

In short, there are veterinary indications where other NSAIDs, such as flunixin or tolfenamic acid, may be more appropriate to the clinician but ketoprofen is still an extremely valuable weapon in the armoury of the farmer to have on hand to treat complaints such as footrot, difficult calving and mastitis. This is analogous to the human situation whereby paracetamol

is a great little drug to have on hand in the home, but the doctor can prescribe another for different indications.

Ketoprofen fills that role of paracetamol in farming situations and ensures that animal welfare is addressed.

As well as animal welfare being a major issue in modern times, animals not in pain will be putting milk in the vat much sooner; it is quite logical to consider production as part of the cost of treatment.

For ease of use, ketoprofen is rapidly and extensively absorbed via either i/m or i/v injection, and the extra strength 150 mg/ml concentration of Labiprofen means it has a very convenient dose rate 1mL / 50kg / day (3mg/kg ketoprofen) for 1 to 3 days.

This translates to 10ml per animal for the average cow. Clever end user marketing to farmers, including a focus on lameness has helped drive demand.

Billy-Bob's New Job

Billy-Bob walks into a bar and says, "Bartender, one round for everyone, on me!"

The bartender says, "Well, seems you're in a really good mood tonight?"

Billy-Bob says, "Oh, you can bet on it! I just got hired by the city to go around and remove all the money from parking meters. I start on Monday!"

The bartender congratulates him and proceeds to pour the round.

On Monday evening Billy-Bob comes back into the bar and says, "Bartender, two rounds for everyone, on me!"

The bartender says, "Well now! If you're so happy just over having this new job, I can just imagine how happy you'll be when you get your pay cheque!"

Billy-Bob, with a wondrous look on his face, pulls out a handful of coins from his pocket, and says, "You mean they'll PAY me too?"



Farmers Pain Relief 6-Pack

In line with the previous article advocating that ketoprofen could be utilised in farm animals in much the same way as paracetamol in humans, i.e. to have as 'on hand' pain relief while leaving other options available to the medical professionals, we now have a farm friendly presentation of ketoprofen in the form of the Labiprofen 150 Farmers Pain Relief 6-Pack.

Labiprofen 150 is a strong concentration (150 mg/ml) presentation of ketoprofen, the high potency formulation resulting in an extremely expedient low 10 ml dose per animal.

In these troubled economic times price is very important

to consumers and, with Labiprofen 150 we have a high-quality product at a very affordable price.

In addition, the unique 60 dose farmer pack means that, at retail level, the total outlay is not at a jaw dropping price.

Everything needed is all in one bucket and extras include a V-Grip bottle mount injector, and 6 x 21-gauge 1-inch needles, thus supplying all the needs for clean sterile injections without risk of air contamination in the practical 100 ml vial.

In the bucket there is also 1 x 6mL SteriGEL hand sanitiser to ensure further hygiene is safeguarded.

With a nil milk withholding period and being indicated for mastitis, lameness, difficult calving and down cows, the Labiprofen 150 Farmers Pain Relief 6-Pack is an ideal tool to aid farmers in general animal welfare.



Fuel 1

When the current fuel crisis began Tony said, "These prices are awful. They just keep going higher!"

Nagy replied, "It doesn't affect me at all. I always put in just \$50 worth."

Fuel 2

Sweating when you are putting petrol in your car?

Feeling sick when you pay for it?

Then you've probably caught the 2026 strain of the carownervirus!

The Donor

One Sunday morning, the pastor announced that the church was trying to raise some extra funds and asked everyone to give whatever they felt to give.

He added, "And whoever gives the largest offering today will get to choose three hymns."

When the ushers brought the plate back, the pastor spotted an envelope containing \$1,000.

His jaw nearly hit the floor. Delighted, he told the congregation he wanted to

personally thank the generous donor.

A sweet elderly lady in the last row slowly lifted her hand.

Smiling, the pastor invited her to come forward and praised her kindness.

"Now," he said, "as promised — you get to select any three hymns you want."

Her eyes sparkled as she looked around the church.

She pointed at three of the best-looking men in the room

and cheerfully said: "I'll take him, him, and him!"



Things are Dearer at The Vet

The headline in the NZ Herald made sobering reading. “Vet shock: Pet owner extends mortgage by \$20,000 to pay bills,” as did the initial line of the article, “In the face of astronomical vet bills that can leave pet owners in shock, some question whether owning a companion animal is now a luxury many can’t afford.”

This, coupled with several articles in the Guardian recounting seemingly horrific veterinary charging schemes in the UK, was not great promotional material for the veterinary profession.

A few decades ago, there was a common mantra among the farming community that everything was dearer at the vet. While this was a myth it was still widely believed but everything changed when veterinarians were finally permitted to advertise in the very late 70’s. This really opened up the retail field and practices competed very successfully with the farm shops, so much so that they soon had more than 50% of the animal health market. The myth had, in effect, been busted. People soon realised that veterinarians did not own the biggest houses in town.

In the meantime, there had been a push in the profession for more ‘realistic’ pricing as it

was seen that many practices relied heavily on retail sales rather than professional services. This approach, to value professional services more highly, was entirely justifiable and made common sense.

As pointed out in the Herald article, bills are high because they reflect the cost to vets, including, running clinics, many of which are as sophisticated as small hospitals, specialist vets and staff, hi-tech equipment like X-rays, CT and MRI scans and ultrasound, and unlike humans, who may enjoy subsidised or free medical treatment and drugs, nothing in the animal world is subsidised.

Many vet practices have become more sophisticated, offering “human-grade” technology and specialist treatment in areas like oncology. But those treatments come at a higher cost, and expectations are higher.

This, of course, is all very well but does not solve the client issue and the article justifiably queries how an elderly person on superannuation could afford to keep a pet.

One answer is pet insurance, but it has drawbacks as, like with all insurance, repeated

claims result in higher premiums.

Unlike the articles in the Guardian, which heavily criticise the corporate nature of the veterinary profession in the UK, the Herald article recognizes the demands of the profession but its most damning criticism is about the huge variance in fees.

One client was charged \$400 by a specialist city vet for a consultation and quoted \$8000 if an operation to fix a stifle joint was needed.

Seeking a second opinion, he drove 50 minutes to a rural vet who charged \$95 for a consultation and quoted \$4000 for the operation. However, after an examination and X-rays, that vet concluded the operation wasn’t needed.

The advice from the profession was to shop around but, when quotes for simple procedures such as vaccination and routine dentals vary immensely it is not easy for a lay person to appreciate this fact.

In short, the general trend of all these articles is negative publicity for the profession. While most practitioners are more than reasonable, the minority profiteering do not help dispel the old myth that things are always dearer at the vet.

Marriage

On their 50th wedding anniversary and during the banquet celebrating it, Susan was asked to give her friends a brief account of the benefits of a marriage of such long duration.

“Tell us Susan, just what is it you have learned from all those wonderful years with your husband?”

Susan responds, “Well, I’ve learned that marriage is the best teacher of all.

It teaches you loyalty, meekness, forbearance, self-restraint, forgiveness — and a great many other qualities you wouldn’t have needed if you’d stayed single.”

Irresponsible Use

Despite the best efforts from veterinarians in both side of the Tasman in the issue of antimicrobial stewardship, other sectors in the world of agriculture can undo the good work. Recent florfenicol use in the Australian fishing industry has caused some deep concerns.

Florfenicol has been used in some salmon growing areas of Tasmania in recent months to help with control of piscirickettsiosis, a disease of salmon caused by the intracellular bacterial pathogen *Piscirickettsia salmonis*. The organism causes increased mortality, loss of appetite, emaciation, lethargic swimming and circling, and may be accompanied by progressive skin lesions, ascites,

peritonitis and other clinical signs.

To address animal welfare and food security concerns caused by the disease, an emergency licence to use the antibiotic in salmon was granted by the Australian Medicines and Pesticides Agency (APVMA) in November 2025. Florfenicol is the only drug proven to be effective against the disease in the salmon industry in Chile and the Northern Hemisphere.

However, the emergency licence was revoked after traces of the antibiotic were found in aquatic wildlife, including abalone, whelk and lobster, when The Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies carried out testing for Tasmania's Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

Apparently, it was detected in wild fish 10km away!

There is no evidence relating to welfare or health impacts of these residues on aquatic wildlife. This absence of evidence has been interpreted by some as “unacceptable risk”.

The decision to suspend the use of florfenicol in salmon in Tasmania because of the ‘unacceptable risk’ the antibiotic poses to other species has been termed an ‘indictment of the industrial fish farm companies and their complete disregard for the marine environment’.

We thought the days of antibiotics being seen as a panacea were over, apparently not in some circles.

Vows

During the wedding rehearsal, the groom approached the pastor with an unusual offer:

“Look, I’ll give you \$100 if you’ll change the wedding vows.

When you get to the part where I’m supposed to promise to “love, honour and obey” and “be faithful to her forever,” I’d appreciate it if you’d just leave that out.”

He passed the minister a \$100 bill and walked away satisfied.

On the day of the wedding, when it came time for the groom’s vows, the pastor

looked the young man in the eye and said:

“Will you promise to prostrate yourself before her, obey her every command and wish, serve her breakfast in bed every morning of your life, and swear eternally before God and your lovely wife that you will not ever even look at another woman, as long as you both shall live?”

The groom gulped and looked around, and said in a tiny voice, “Yes.”

He then leaned toward the pastor and hissed: “I thought we had a deal.”

The pastor put a \$100 bill into the groom’s hand and whispered: “She made me a better offer.”





Animal welfare is our business



Lost Keys

After a meeting several days ago, I couldn't find my keys. I quickly gave myself a personal "TSA Pat Down."

They weren't in my pockets. Suddenly I realized I must have left them in the car. Frantically, I headed for the parking lot.

My husband has scolded me many times for leaving my keys in the car's ignition. He's afraid that the car could be stolen.

As I looked around the parking lot, I realized he was right. The parking lot was empty.

I immediately called the police. I gave them my location, confessed that I had

left my keys in the car, and that it had been stolen.

Then I made the most difficult call of all to my husband: "I left my keys in the car and it's been stolen."

There was a moment of silence. I thought the call had been disconnected, but then I heard his voice.

"Are you kidding me?" he barked, "I dropped you off!"

Now it was my turn to be silent. Embarrassed, I said, "Well, can you come and get me?"

He retorted, "I will, as soon as I convince this cop that I didn't steal your car!"

