Cow Behaviour, Cow Flow and Lameness

N. Chesterton
Inglewood Vet Services
www.lamecow.co.nz
The Big Lameness Problem

- Surprising cost
  - $$$
  - welfare cost

- What is achievable?

- Multifactorial
Where does lameness come from? It is multifactorial.
Foot wear

- First three months
- Distance walked
- Track surface
- Concrete surface
- Pressure
Excessive Foot Wear

Thin sole

Sole bruising

Sole penetration

Separation of white line
Worn soles + poor track surface

Sole Penetrations

Sharp stones
Preventing sole injuries

• Reduce wear
  • Voluntary flow on tracks
• Maintain tracks
• Prevent gravel from getting on concrete
- sound base
- suitable surface
- compaction
- crowning
- drainage
Worn Soles + impatience or pressure

White line separation

Twisting and turning

White line is becoming the most common lameness seen as herd sizes grow.
Preventing white line injuries

• Reduce wear
• Voluntary flow
• Prevent slipping, twisting and turning
  - good facilities
  - good stock management

Patience!!!!!!!
Poor Cow Flow

Lack of understanding of Cow Behaviour

Pressure

Impatience
Does this person understand cow behaviour?
Does this person understand cow behaviour?

NO!!
Things that he did incorrectly:
Appeared quickly
In front of the cows
Comes out
Too close
Stick
Blind spot
Does this person understand cow behaviour?
Does this man understand cow behaviour?

www.lamecow.co.nz

Yes!!
Balance points
Slow and steady
Results of handling styles

• First video –
  pressure, twisting and turning, cows afraid, LAME COWS

• Second video -
  Calm, no pressure, no twisting less stress
  NO FOOT DAMAGE
Cow behaviour

• What does a herdsperson need to know to improve their stockmanship and reduce lameness?

1. Walking and milking orders
2. Flight distance/balance points
Cow Behaviour

- Walking order and Milking order different
Cow Behaviour

• Like to be close but not too close
• Cows need space

Signs of Pressure

• Sideways pushing
• Cows reversing
• Heads up

Too tight in yard
Cow behaviour

Flight zone and balance points

Cow jumps
Balance points demo
Escuela Veija
Good stockmanship

• Understand cow behaviour

• Work with the cows not against them
Management Guidelines

- Allow the cows to drift on the track.
- Start milking as first cows arrive
- Delay movement of backing gate (at least 2 rows)
- Gate speed – 12 m / minute for round yards
  - 6 m / min for rectangular yards
- Timer switch on gate
- Avoid coming out into yard
- Call cows into the bails.
- All staff use same routines, calls
Thank you