HOOF HEALTH & LOCOMOTION SCORING
GIPPSLAND DISCUSSION DAYS

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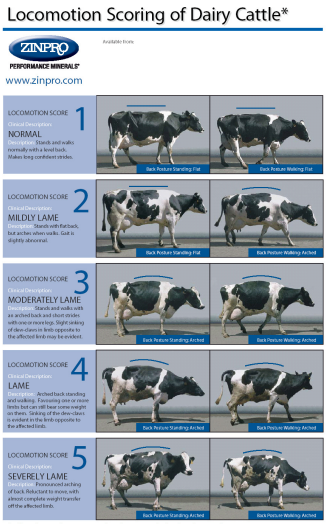


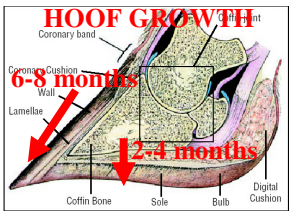
Hoof Health & Locomotion Scoring is an important part of modern herd management

Reid Stockfeeds Gippsland recently held discussion days on herd hoof health management. The days began with a farm overview then moved into the importance of not only treating clinical lameness, but preventing mildly lame cows from progressing to clinically lame with proactive trimming. Professional Trimmers Aaron Buck and Peter Cantwell gave demonstrations on correct trimming techniques and Hugh Archibald from Zinpro gave figures on the underlying costs not just of clinically lame cows, but the effect on your profitability that sub-clinical lameness or mildly lame cows can have.

Farmers present looked at cows chosen from the herd and scored how they walked (on a scale of 1-5) giving them a locomotion score. The group learned that a cow with Locomotion score 3 (mildly lame) will be producing 5% less milk, with 10% loss from a score 4 cow and up to 15% milk loss from a score 5 cow (clinically lame). Any cow with a locomotion score above 2 will have increased open days, a higher BMCC and can have a reduced Dry Matter Intake of up to 15%.

There are many causes for lameness, ranging from:

- Genetics (hip-pin angle, corns, claw shape & size)
- Physical Damage (track condition, pushing the herd)
- Bacterial (foot rot, dermatitis)
- Laminitis (lack of fibre, sole ulcer, mould, acidosis, heat)



Hoof Trimming Steps: (back feet)

1. Trim the toe to 7.5cm
2. Flatten the inside claw, taking as little as possible.
3. Match the outside claw
4.
5. Specific steps to fix any problem, best left to a professional.

The hoof grows in a similar manner to our finger nail, with layers of keratin forming at the top of the hoof and gradually progressing down to the sole. So an incident (such as acidosis or illness) can take 2-4 months on the sole and up to 8 months on the wall to reach the bottom of the hoof. So good record keeping is critical to analyzing the causes of your herd's hoof problems.

If the hoof becomes soft = **stop**
If you see an interesting spot ***don't just dig***
Put a block on the **good hoof** not the damaged one.