

# M. bovis

## CALF CLUB DAYS

**No one wants to ban calf days; we know how much children and adults love the day. In this heightened time of biosecurity risk, the risk of *Mycoplasma bovis* being spread from animal to animal must be considered. Ultimately if animals don't come into contact, then the risk of spread is low.**

**The question that needs to be considered is how likely it is that animals won't come into contact.**

**DairyNZ and MPI agree that mixing young animals and then returning them to their home farm, is not worth the risk under the current state of heightened biosecurity in New Zealand. Kids and animals don't always stick to plans!**

**We recommended that, while the *Mycoplasma bovis* eradication programme is underway, schools and those managing calf days, look for alternatives to calf day. It could become a 'pet day' with other pets and animals, or you could use technology to provide an innovative compromise.**

If you still want to carry out your calf club days and are planning to manage the risk of animals coming into contact, then please make sure you apply the following:

- Calves from farms under movement restrictions will not be allowed to come to school, and children from these farms should be allowed to bring an alternative pet.
- Some farmers will not want calves from their farms going to school and returning home, and an alternative pet should be allowed under these circumstances.
- All calves (and other animals) coming to school must be healthy on the day of the calf club. If in doubt leave them at home.
- All calves must be correctly identified with NAIT tags.
- All animals must arrive clean with no mud or faecal material on the animal's coat or feet.
- All children (and adults) must come with clean footwear and clothing. Footwear should be cleaned and disinfected before returning home.
- Each calf must have its own:
  - halter and lead rope and these are not to be shared with other calves
  - drinking bowl or container
  - its own feeding bottle or bucket if it is going to be fed
  - calves should be kept separated as much as possible.
- Children should be encouraged not to handle each other's calves without washing or sanitising hands between calves, this is particularly so if children's fingers have been inside a calf's mouth. Care should also be taken to prevent calves sucking clothing.
- Judges should sanitise their hands after handling each calf, and calves should be prevented from mouthing clothing and any other items.
- If milk is brought from the farm for feeding calves this milk must only be fed to the calf from that farm and not to any other calves. If there is a concern about milk, then milk replacer should be used.