

LIVESTOCK

Pain relief blocks draw funds

BY PENELOPE ARTHUR

AN AUSTRALIAN researcher is one of three scientists to receive a major grant through Bayer's new Care4Cattle program.

The three recipients were announced during Bayer's Future Farming Dialogue being held in Germany and the Netherlands last week.

Dr Dominique van der Saag was selected for her research into novel ways in which calves can self-administer pain relief after husbandry practices such as de-horning or castration.

Together with her team of five scientists, Dr van der Saag uses medicated lick blocks to provide a constant level of pain relief in a way that limits the handling of the cattle, therefore improving welfare outcomes.

"Whilst studying my bachelor in animal and veterinary bioscience at the University of Sydney, my interest in livestock and animal well-being really grew," she said.

“This could be a strategy to improve cattle well-being.

Dr van der Saag

"I began to see how improvement of livestock welfare through the use of pain relief was extremely important."

Dr van der Saag said that in many countries, it was not mandatory to use anesthesia or analgesia for painful procedures performed on cattle.

"However, there has been a shift in recent years, with producers wanting to take on pain relief practices so long as they are feasible to implement," she said.

"This is the first step towards something that could be much bigger. Currently there are no practical options for long-lasting analgesia in livestock, which is necessary

not only for surgical husbandry procedures but many painful conditions."

"If we can show it has the potential to be effective, this could be a strategy to improve cattle well-being. We would really like to see this grow into something bigger.

The Care4Cattle initiative was launched by Bayer in March this year and attracted more than 100 entries across 37 nations. Each of the three winning projects will receive grants worth just under A\$50,000.

The initiative aims to recognise forward thinking livestock professionals who have created new ways to advance cattle well-being.

The other winning projects include a study by Brazilian Professor Mateus Paranhos da Costa on the effects of different weaning methods on beef calves and an initiative from Reuben Newsome at The Cattle Lameness Academy in the UK to support farmers in dealing with the rising threat of lameness.



WELFARE: Dr Dominique van der Saag is researching the use of lick blocks to self-administer pain relief after husbandry practices such as de-horning or castration.

USERS FINDING THAT BLUE TRISOLFEN GEL IS ALSO WORKING ON HORSES



WHEN Gin Gin horse enthusiast Shonnay Smith (pictured) took possession of a new almost unhandled Paint mare there was one small problem.

The almost-two-year-old was sporting a gash on her offside front leg, leaving a credit card-size flap of skin.

"It looked very nasty and painful," Shonnay said.

"I called our vet, Andrew Marland who cleaned up the injury and prescribed Trisolfen for pain relief."

"I was pretty worried about how I was going to treat the mare. She hadn't been handled much at all and previously we had treated wounds with honey and bandages. That can be pretty dangerous when trying to handle a young horse and certainly can be very messy."

Shonnay said the application of the blue Trisolfen gel was simple.

"I literally just squirted it on the open wound once

a day and that was that," she said. "I felt safe and the mare wasn't bothered at all. There was no getting down trying to put bandages on what would have been a very sore wound.

"I did not have to put myself in a position where the mare would kick out or strike me. The gel coated the wound, letting fresh air and sunlight do its thing."

Shonnay said best of all there had been no development of proud flesh,

which would have meant the expense of repeat visits from the vet.

"What was a very nasty wound has healed beautifully, leaving only a very small amount of scarring."

Initially developed to provide pain relief for lambs after mulesing, Trisolfen is a pain relieving and wound healing formulation that has short term and long term analgesia, antiseptics, reduces blood loss and coats the wound.

PAIN RELIEF

Trisolfen is proving effective for treating wounds on horses.

- Trisolfen is a pain relieving and wound healing formulation developed in Australia.
- Marketed by Bayer, the gel based product has short term and long term analgesia, antiseptics, reduces blood loss and coats the wound.

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