

Wednesday 4 July 2018



Special Newsletter Regarding Pets Day 2018

Dear Parents and Caregivers

Last week over 25 Taranaki Rural Principals met with representatives of Federated Farmers, Rural Support, Dairy NZ, Okato Vet group and TBFE Fed Farmers to consider the response and recommendations around Calf Days for this year following the discovery and move to eradicate, *Micoplasma Bovis* in New Zealand.

The following is a statement from that meeting:-

"After careful consideration of the options it was decided we will not be holding Calf Days in 2018.

We are mindful of, not only the physical restrictions being put in place with regards to the movement of stock, but also the implications this has on the wellbeing of our families should we proceed with a calf day. Although the risk is considered low at this point, the potential consequences of transfer are significant. We do not wish to add additional stress on communities as they head into calving for 2018 and we do not wish to cause further spread of this potentially devastating disease. We urge all New Zealand schools not to hold calf days this year and instead come up with modified events that will bring farming communities together to further support each other during this stressful time."

So, what does this mean for our school?

Our Board of Trustees have met to discuss this issue and agree that the traditional Pets Day scenario will need to change this year and are proposing that our Pets Day would look like this:-

CALVES: Children can still have calves however they will not be brought to school on Pets Day. They will remain on the farm they have come from, and will be judged on that farm, sometime during the latter part of the week before September 22nd. Appropriate measures will be taken at each farm to ensure best possible practise with regard to infection control. Prize-giving will still take place on the actual Pets Day and the children will be encouraged to complete a workbook including photographs of the time they have been working with their calf. These books, organised in a format/style chosen by each child and completed at home with parental help, will be on display on the day.

The following families have very kindly agreed to host children/calves on their farms:- Peter & Brenda Honnor; Alicia & Andrew Lepper & Colleen & Aaron Hodges.

LAMBS & CHICKENS: We will still have lambs and chickens on the day as usual.

Remember there is no 'Gala' on this day, however the Home & School will have a yummy food stall and maybe a raffle or two.

ENTRY FORMS: Animal Entry Forms for calves, chickens, lambs and other small animals will be sent home with each child this week. It is really important they are returned by Thursday 26th July [in the first week of Term 3] so that [1] we can order the required number of chickens, [2] complete our order for ribbons and [3] we know what farm your calf is located on.

I know this has been quite an issue for many of our families and our wider community, and I hope now that this decision gives you clarity and confidence that we are doing the best we can in a unfortunate situation.

Kind Regards

Tony Williams

Principal

Anthea Anglesey

Board of Trustees Chairperson