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Vet Student Buzz

Welcome to the October 2020 edition of The Buzz. What a year it's been so far! Our

clinics have been busier than ever and we have welcomed some new businesses to the Apiam family. Grampians Animal Health (Livestock Logic and Cox St Vets) in Hamilton, Victoria will be familiar to many of you. ACE Laboratories in Bendigo, Victoria joins the stable offering a fantastic range of diagnostics. Clinical placements for students are proceeding as "normal" within the limitations of border restrictions and Uni schedules. Please contact us if you would like to arrange a clinical placement.

In this edition we have some great info from Dr Justin Schooth of Gympie Veterinary Services and Apiam Feedlot Services. "Farm Etiquette 101" gives some insight into the Do's and Don'ts to help you build a great relationship with farmers, either as a student on placement or a newly graduated vet in your first job. Those who have met Justin will appreciate his down to earth teaching style and sense of humour!

Mark These Dates

28 & 29 October 2020

Virtual Vet Expo 2020

Apiam Animal Health is exhibiting at this exciting new event. We welcome all vet students to attend as our guests. Great topics and speakers including Apiam vets Dr Rob Bonanno and Dr Tony Batterham.

GET A FREE TICKET! Email vetstudents@apiam.com.au to request the code to use for your free ticket.



Farm Etiquette 101

with **Dr Justin Schooth BVSc BAppSc**
(RurTec), Gympie Veterinary Services

In this article, Justin talks about some tips and tricks to help establish your credibility with the farmer when visiting either as a newly graduated veterinarian or as a student on placement. Justin regularly has vet students with him and has seen it all!



1. Introductions

Introduce yourself. Don't wait for someone to introduce you. Go straight over to the farmer or farm manager/workers and introduce yourself. Don't forget the wife/husband/kids. Pre-covid, a firm handshake was the way to go. In the new "normal", a elbow or fist bump. Make some polite conversation before you get stuck into the job. If you have a bad memory for names, after the

visit jot them down along with some notes to remember for next time e.g. farmer Dave's eldest child is just about to head off to Uni and wants to become a vet - you really should remember this for next time so you can ask how they are going!



2. Gates

What can I say! If it's closed, close it; if it's open, leave it open.

Never stand behind a gate. Think about what happens when the 600 kg cow and the weight of the gate hits you at full speed.

Never stand on a gate - it wrecks the hinges. Also if you are standing on it and it happens to swing open and you end up in the dirt/mud/dung, you will look like a big goose!

Many farm gates are barbed wire gates or COD (no, not cash-on-delivery) - Carry or Drag. As a student, make sure you practise opening and closing every type of gate you can. You will look like a complete tool if, as a final year student or new grad, you can't manage a gate. Yes the vet and the farmer are watching you and silently giggling at you struggling away!



3. Car Doors

Having students with me all the time, this is a constant bug-bear of mine. When you are riding shot-gun, you are expected to open the gate - most people already get that....but please can you just wait 30 seconds to open the car door until the dust settles? Some of us like to take kids/wives/others in the car with us on weekends so please wait a second then we don't have to clean the car as much!

Same rule as gates also applies - if the car window is down, leave it down; if it's up, leave it up. Shut the car door when you get out! There's nothing worse than watching the beast escape from the crush and head straight for the vehicle with the open door. I have friends who have had doors taken off the car due to this mistake.



4. Conversation

Farmers love to have a chat! As a student or new grad, one of the things you will frequently be asked is "what are you going to specialise in when you finish vet school?" and whether you are going to specialise in any of the types of animals that the farmer is currently raising. There is only one answer...."mixed practice"even if you are not planning to be an expert in the farmer's chosen species and even if you plan on being a smallies vet. Remember that they are letting you work or practise on their animals so do show your appreciation for this.

Hot tip - farmers are always happy to talk about the weather. So try to keep up to date with what's happening in this space and in their local area BUT try not to get into a conversation about climate change no matter which side of the fence you sit on.

Farmers are also always happy to talk about markets and prices. If you want to go there and not look like an idiot, do your research...make sure you have read the Country Life, looked at online websites etc. to have a bit of an idea of the current market prices.



5. Hospitality

Country hospitality is legendary! When it's offered, make the most of it! A coffee or tea at 2am after a nasty calving will help build a relationship with the farmer that will survive most of the screw-ups that you are going to have. BUT - don't expect to have your half-strength, soy, latte, caramel whatever-the-hell it is, in fact don't even ask. If you are on a dairy farm and you think you need almond or soy milk, NEVER ask for this. Just go for a black tea or coffee! It will save you in

the long run.



6. Animal Handling Basics

Farmers expect (rightly so) that once you graduate you will be able to handle their cattle and other animals at least as well as they do. They don't expect you to get out there and rope and tie like a professional bull roper but they do want you to be able to move their cattle safely and effectively from place to place, handle them safely and do basic procedures such as intramuscular and subcutaneous and intravenous injections - the sort of things that they can do themselves but you should be able to do at a much higher level. So take every opportunity offered to you as a student, to get some hands-on practice.

Dr Justin Schooth is the senior large animal Veterinarian and feedlot Veterinarian based at Gympie Veterinary Services, Qld. He started as a vet later in life after a career working in Papua New Guinea growing coconuts and cattle and then in Queensland working on beef, dairy and sheep farms. Post graduation, he was a mixed (mainly large) animal and feedlot vet for 2 years before moving to Gympie to become a 100% large animal vet. 2 years after that he became a partner in the practice and then 10 years later the clinic joined the Apiam family.

Justin's top career tip for new grads is to "get as much experience as you can across all species when you graduate. Skills in one species will transfer to others. Don't specialise too early as you will pigeon-hole yourself potentially into a life of boring vaccinations and skin rashes! There are so many opportunities out there for vets who have true mixed practice skills!"



Graduate Jobs

We are currently accepting applications from 2020 graduates for the following clinics:

Victoria:

- [Border Vet Clinics](#) (Vic / NSW border region): Mixed role 70% SA, 30% LA
- [Fur Life Vet, Bendigo](#): 100% Companion animal
- [Grampians Animal Health, Hamilton](#): true mixed.
- [Gippsland Veterinary Hospital, Maffra and Sale](#): Mixed x 1 and 100% SA x 1

Tasmania:

- [Scottsdale Veterinary Service](#): true mixed.

All new graduate veterinarians working in Apiam clinics benefit from our [Graduate Development Program](#) which supports your transition into practice and early skills development.

If you are interested in a particular clinic or location which is not listed here, please express your interest to [Dr Leisa Denaro](#).

STOP PRESS

The [Apiam Animal Health website](#) is undergoing some changes. The Careers section will have a new portal for vet student resources. You will be able to find grad-friendly jobs, previous newsletter editions, info about scholarships, request a clinical placement and more. Check it out in the next couple of weeks!



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