



The brew crew: BioBrew director Andre Prassinos (left) and BioBrew Otago director Kris Nicol display the probiotic mixture they make for farm animals. PHOTO: DAN HUTCHINSON

Positive test results for animal BioBrew

By DAN HUTCHINSON

A UNIQUE "brew" for farm animals has bubbled out of a Balclutha garage and is being reproduced at micro breweries throughout New Zealand.

The BioBrew concoction, designed to improve the digestive system and overall health of animals, works on the same principle as probiotic yoghurts with humans.

Co-founder and BioBrew director Andre Prassinos said larger premises of a barn near Kaka Point had replaced the original brewery in a garage.

There are also breweries making BioBrew in Canterbury and Waikato.

The brew provides bacteria its creators say can cure all sorts of problems.

Mr Prassinos said there were other "healthy bacteria" products on the market, but when it came to retaining the living bacteria in large

quantities, the brew needed to be fresh.

About 20ml of the brew a day provided millions of beneficial bacteria that helped the fermentation process inside the stomach.

A trial run has just been completed at Telford and its results were celebrated at a function at Telford at the end of last month.

Eighty calves were split into four groups. Two groups were fed the BioBrew supplement.

The trial was run by Kim Phillips, of Telford Farms, and the results compiled by Grant Bennett, of Lincoln University.

The trial found that calves taking the BioBrew probiotics demonstrated improved feed conversion, were easier to handle, and improved the transition from colostrum to warm milk and from warm milk to cold milk better.

They also put on the same amount of weight but required 500g

a day less in supplementary feed.

Mr Prassinos and his Kaka Point neighbour Kris Nicol are joint owners of the Kaka Point brewery, with other franchise owners in Waikato and Canterbury.

Mr Prassinos and another partner also own the parent franchise that supplies its breweries with the necessary ingredients, brewing tanks and other equipment.

He said the product had a shelf life of two weeks and was being fed to animals in a variety of ways including in their trough water and with molasses or other supplementary feeds.

Mr Nicol said the BioBrew was also great for balancing septic tanks and effluent pits.

He said the testing was important to prove the product had a measurable benefit but many farmers were using the product simply because it improved the wellbeing of their animals.

Wife's study led to idea for probiotic product

CO-FOUNDER and BioBrew director Andre Prassinos said the idea for a probiotic brew to improve the digestive system and overall health of animals arose when his wife studied organics at Lincoln University three years ago.

Mr Prassinos had since teamed up with Lincoln scientist and probiotic expert Don Pearson on the BioBrew product.

Mr Prassinos, who has a business and sales background, said it was surprising that a fresh, probiotic product had not been marketed for livestock before, given the recognised health benefits to humans.

The same bacteria could also

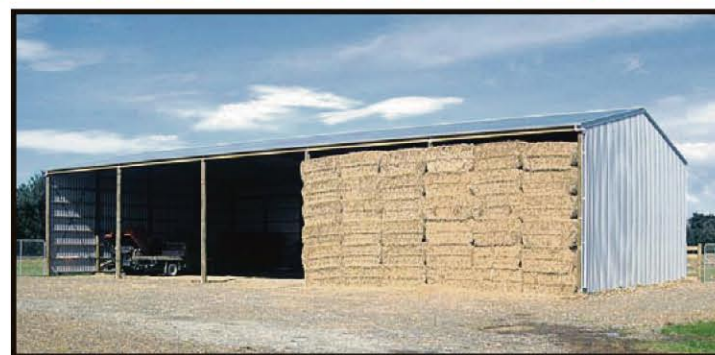
remove odours from septic tanks and effluent ponds and be spread on paddocks to help the breakdown of organic matter in the soil but it was the health benefit to livestock that was the focus of marketing.

Mr Prassinos said farmers were naturally sceptical about the product because there were many claims made by many salespeople vying for their business.

"Their eyes glaze over and they think we are selling the latest snake oil."

"There are very few products where the salesman can rock up and take a sip. Most products, they would die."

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