

Topic of the Month

National Defense

I attended a meeting last month for the American Association of Bovine Practitioners. One of the speakers made a very interesting presentation highlighting a point that some of us have undoubtedly considered: the role of agricultural producers in national defense.

Graduating from veterinary school in a post-9/11 world, it was instilled in us that we need to maintain vigilance for foreign animal diseases and agents of bioterrorism. In fact, a sure-fire way to cripple the US economy would be to introduce a disease to decimate agricultural production. What should go without saying, then, is that the safe and reliable food supply is at the root of our civilization, not just economically, but at the most basic level.

A veterinarian in the US Air Force, Col. Sam Barringer posed the question, "If your children were starving, would you resort to violence to feed them?". A veteran of multiple conflicts around the world, his answer was, "Yes, people will resort to violence". That violence leads to unrest and chaos and the result is detrimental to an entire people, region, or nation.

Many of us in the dairy industry are looking for a bright spot. And while it might not amount to much for the long run, we can look at our efforts and be proud- not just of the stats we've generated for cow numbers, milk production, and efficiency- but for the unquantified and unappreciated value that agriculture holds for our nation.

Commodity Futures

Prices

As of September 30, 2018

Corn	\$3.56/bu
Soybean Meal	\$305.40/ton
Milk (Class III)	\$16.11/cwt
Beef (Live cattle)	\$113.45/cwt

Practice News

- In case you missed it...Dr. Croushore has published his first book. It is a 250 page compilation of articles he authored in the *Daily American* and is titled, "Oops,...and other Words You Don't Like to Hear Your Surgeon Say". It will be available for purchase for \$16.95 (plus tax) at the office, the *Daily American*, other retailers and at www.madeinsomersetcounty.com. At the risk of sounding presumptuous, signed copies are available upon request.
- Our practice has recently completed training to perform vasectomies in rams and bulls. We will now offer this service. Please call the office if you are interested.

In The News

- The first round of the so-called "bailout" is underway. This policy seems unpopular with everyone. Dairy publications are quick to point out how little it is, while many non-ag publications portray it as a handout without acknowledging any role that government policy has played in foreign and domestic markets.

Upcoming Events

- PennState Extension will hold a number of workshops in the coming months, including a number of free offerings. There will be a free session on Dairy Feeding Practices held October 29 in Berlin, as well as a free session about Troubleshooting Reproduction in Dairy Farms on November 9 in Greensburg. Registration is required, even for free sessions. A complete listing is available on the PennState Extension website at <https://extension.psu.edu/animals-and-livestock/dairy/see-all-dairy/shopby/workshops>