

Topic of the Month

Calf Scours and Nutrition

A very common pop quiz topic in veterinary school is the causes of calf scours. The first question to ask is the age of the calf because you can almost always predict the cause by the calf's age.

Scours in the first week of life is usually caused by *E. coli* and triggers a discussion of calving practices, sanitation, and colostrum management. Days 7-14 scouring is caused by rotavirus or coronavirus. Because these agents are viral, they do not respond to antibiotics, and so only supportive care is warranted. Some time between one week and one month, *Cryptosporidium* typically rears its head. Parasitic infections such as intestinal worms occur later, and coccidia is common at 4-6 months, though it may appear sooner.

Environmental conditions such as heat and cold can compound the effects of calf scouring. One thing I like to emphasize is that the classic feeding schedule of two quarts of 20:20 milk replacer twice daily is barely enough to meet the nutritional requirements of a calf at 60 degrees. And when a calf starts scouring, one of the biggest mistakes is to withhold milk. These calves need calories. They need to be treated carefully to speed up recovery and minimize long-term morbidity because scouring and pneumonia are the two most costly problems affecting our dairy calves.

Commodity Futures

Prices

As of October 31, 2017

Corn	\$3.46/bu
Soybean Meal	\$311.80/ton
Milk (October)	\$16.72/cwt
Beef (Live cattle)	\$120.50/cwt

Practice News

- Our practice recently purchased an electroejaculator. With proper restraint, this tool can be used as part of a breeding soundness exam. All herd bulls or clean up bulls should be tested to prevent total reproductive failure in a herd. We are also planning to purchase supplemental equipment for breeding soundness exams for rams and bucks.

In the News

- The US and Canada held talks during October to renegotiate the terms surrounding NAFTA. The US made demands that would open the Canadian market to additional American dairy products, effectively ending Canada's supply management, or quota, system. Canadian authorities have deemed the demands unacceptable.
- The head of the Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce says it may be time to remove the "America's Dairyland" slogan from license plates in the Badger State. Kurt Bauer, president of the WI Manufacturers and Commerce, proposed that it would be appropriate to modernize perceptions of the state's economy, shifting the focus from agriculture. Dairy Business Association president, Mike North, points out that agriculture has a \$43.4 billion impact on the state economy, along with tens of thousands of jobs. The slogan has been on WI license plates since 1940.

Upcoming Events

- Our annual winter producers meeting will be coming up in February 2018.