

Topic of the Month

Getting Back to the Basics

It always pays big dividends to review protocols and focus on areas where small inputs yield big returns. This time of year always brings with it problems like pneumonia, cattle not showing heats, and youngstock not thriving, among others. These problems are real. But focusing on a few basic ideas goes a long way toward resolving them.

When it comes to pneumonia, the difference between good ventilation and a draft is the temperature. We like to shut the barns up tight but the cows don't like that. Instead, open up some hay holes, crack the windows, and let the barns breathe. The cows will breathe easier too.

When it comes to youngstock, focus on nutrition. They need protein and they need fat. Shorting them on either one will cause big problems. And even though 20:20 milk replacer is the biggest seller, it hardly does an adequate job of providing nutrition to calves on milk. Remember, by comparison, cow's milk is about 30% fat. So feeding calves with a 20:20 is likely to deprive them of the nutrition they really need.

Finally, I see many cows and heifers not cycling. I think that is partly related to the poor quality of the feeds made this last year. However, remember that a cow will first fulfill her maintenance energy requirements. If the ration is barely meeting those needs, there will not be energy left over for cycling. If the heifers have been out on pasture through this cold winter, then it will take a few weeks before they begin to show heats after bringing them into a barn or improving the quality of their ration.

Commodity Futures

Prices

As of January 31, 2019

Corn	\$3.76/bu
Soybean Meal	\$310.00/ton
Milk (Class III)	\$14.02/cwt
Beef (Live cattle)	\$124.80/cwt

Practice News

- A reminder that there are multiple options available for ordering vaccines and medications. The best pricing we can offer is through our online pharmacy. Drugs are delivered to your address. This requires you to establish an account and can be set up by calling the office. This option is available even if you do not have access to the internet. We are also able to drop ship medications direct to your farm. In most cases, orders are received within 24 hours. Medications can still be purchased from the office or off the truck, however, the clinic will be keeping minimal inventory in stock.
- You will notice a difference in your billing invoice this month. We have been in the process of transitioning our billing software to interface better with our bookkeeping program. As a result, your invoice will look slightly different.
- In place of a producer meeting, we will be putting on beef quality assurance training sometime around the middle of April. Please stay tuned for more information as we move forward with planning.

In the News

- According to an article from *Dairy Herd Management*, the pilot project initiated by The National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments to look for tetracycline residues in milk has ended. Between October 2017 and September 2018, a total of 304,289 samples were tested, with six positives found, for a violation rate of 0.00197%. The future of tetracycline residue testing is uncertain at this time but the FDA is likely to make recommendations as to whether or not to expand, maintain, or discontinue testing. At present, 1 in 15 tankers is screened for tetracycline residues.