

Topic of the Month

Grass Tetany

The onset of warmer weather has produced a rapid growth of pasture almost overnight. These conditions favor grass tetany.

Grass tetany occurs commonly in beef cattle, but can also occur in dairy cattle on pasture. The rapid growth of grass incorporates high water content. This dilutes out the magnesium content in the grass. Without magnesium supplementation, cattle may become deficient.

Signs include cattle that are down, twitching, with upright ears. They are usually within 60 days after calving.

Unlike a cow that is down from low blood calcium, grass tetany requires magnesium to return to normal levels in the cerebrospinal fluid that bathes the brain and spinal cord. This can take time and it is very important to treat grass tetany as soon as possible.

Treatment is with IV fluids containing magnesium, such as CMPK, as well as oral products such as magnesium gel or Epsom salts.

Prevention is key to avoiding this syndrome. High magnesium minerals should be fed to beef cattle calving on pastures in the springtime, or even year round. Other mineral mixes can be made from loose mineral in a mineral feeder, but this approach would be best undertaken with consultation of a nutritionist.

Commodity Futures

Prices

As of April 30, 2019

Corn	\$3.53/bu
Soybean Meal	\$296.00/ton
Milk (Class III)	\$15.96/cwt
Beef (Live cattle)	\$123.75/cwt

Practice News & Upcoming Events

- Elanco Animal Health has announced that Micotil will no longer be available in 100 mL bottles. The product will still be available in the 250 mL size. Because of lack of demand coupled with the potentially lethal side effect of accidental injection, we have decided to no longer stock this product. It will still be available by special order, however, Elanco has requested that producers using this drug undergo their training, which is available online.
- Show season is nearly upon us. In order to expedite the process of veterinary inspection and the completion of health charts, we have adopted a policy that when scheduling an appointment, you will be asked to provide information such as the name and address of the show and official ID for each of the animals. This will allow us to inspect the animals, verify ID, and sign health charts quickly on the farm. This is especially important because state departments of agriculture will flag health charts with incorrect or incomplete information and can potentially quarantine animals.

In The News

- According to dairybusiness.com, the Center for Dairy Excellence will offer scholarships for dairy students.

"The deadline for students to apply for the Student Leader Scholarship is June 1. Individuals pursuing an education in a dairy-related field can apply for one of ten \$3,000 scholarships made available through the Pennsylvania Dairywomen's Association and Center for Dairy Excellence Foundation for the 2019-20 academic year. The scholarships are offered annually to recognize outstanding students in dairy. Undergraduate students and high school seniors entering college in the fall are eligible."

Applications are now available online at centerfordairyexcellence.org/student-leader-scholarships/