

Newsletter of White Oak Veterinary Clinic, PC

Practice News

Topic of the Month

Blackleg and a Vaccination Reminder

With the cooler temperatures and the approaching corn harvest, this time of year often brings to mind a herd problem I worked up several years ago.

A heifer raiser called about a lame heifer. Several hours later, another heifer was lame. The next day, several were dead. It was a classic presentation for the clostridial disease we commonly refer to as blackleg: young stock, herd lameness, sudden death. There were a couple of interesting points about this case, though. The disease usually occurs when there is a history of excavation because disturbing the soil releases blackleg spores. That was not true here. The only possible source we were able to identify was the feed. They were feeding green chopped corn silage. The unstable feed coupled with the heifers ingesting spores from the soil disturbed during harvest precipitated an outbreak.

Blackleg is about impossible to treat, but the vaccine is very cheap and very effective, which brings me to my next point- now is an ideal time to make sure your vaccine protocols are updated. When the milk price is bad, vaccines are one of the first things many producers eliminate. Bad idea. They are one of the most inexpensive management tools we have and eliminating them is literally like tripping over dollars to pick up pennies.

Finally, many producers are running low on feed, but there are many hazards associated with feeding incompletely fermented feed. Approach with caution. Discuss with your veterinarian and be prepared.

Commodity Futures

Prices

As of August 31, 2020

Corn	\$3.48/bu
Soybean Meal	\$304.60/ton
Milk (Class III)	\$19.77/cwt
Beef (Live cattle)	\$104.50/cwt

- Congratulations to everyone who organized, exhibited, and participated in the 120th annual Somerset County Fair.
- Dr. Charles Gardner, a veterinarian, has recently received a degree in clinical counseling. Recognizing the current severe economic depression among dairy farmers, and accompanying emotional distress and anxiety, he has made himself available to any dairy producers who would like to talk. The Center for Dairy Excellence will cover the cost of at least one session, which could be by Zoom meeting or phone. Call the office for more information.
- We have discontinued use of the answering service for after-hours calls. Calls to the office phone outside of normal business hours will be forwarded to the phone of the veterinarian on call.

In the News

- An Oakland, CA based company called Eclipse Foods has launched a plant-based ice cream. According to Bay Area news outlet [mercurynews.com](https://www.mercurynews.com), the company starts with corn, potato, cane sugar, and other ingredients and reverse engineers them to replicate milk on a molecular level.
- DFA has set a goal and committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 30% (based on 2018 emissions) by 2030. This is touted as a move towards sustainability and lines up with the bigger target of the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy of being carbon neutral or better by 2050.