



December 2014

Dairy News

Another year has come to an end and we at Dairyland Veterinary Service would like to extend best wishes for a happy holiday season for you and your families. We also would like to thank you for your continual business and support. We are looking forward to 2015 where we will continue to strive to provide the best possible service for our clients!

Winter Weather Affects Calf Growth

We all know it takes more energy to stay warm in winter weather. So how does colder weather affect calf growth?

The thermo-neutral temperature for newborn calves is about 60 degrees. For every 10 degrees below 60 degrees, the average daily gain of a calf will drop by 0.2 pounds if it is not fed more. To prevent this loss in gain, a calf will need a pint extra of milk for every 10 degrees below 60 degrees.

How do you get them to drink this extra milk? For years veterinarians have been saying, "You should feed calves 3 times per day in the winter." And farmers have been responding, "This isn't going to happen."

If this is your response, then you are going to have to live with the results. As colder weather happens, calves will grow less. On really cold days, calves will use energy reserves (body fat) to stay warm instead of using it to keep their immune system going. Bacteria and viruses that normally wouldn't cause disease will start to affect the calves. The first calves that get sick will rapidly multiply the organisms so that other calves will also get sick.

The time and money you saved by not providing an extra feeding will be used treating the sick calves. Your veterinarian will then repeat the mantra you heard before, "You should feed calves 3 times a day in the winter."

A third feeding does not have to be equally spread throughout the day. It can be as little as 4 hours from a previous feeding. The third feeding should be mainly for calves less than 2 to 3 weeks of age. Older calves can eat more starter to make up the energy needs. Older calves will need more water. Figure on giving them 4 times the amount of water as the amount of starter that they eat. This should be warm water.

Talk to your vet about other ideas to keep your calves healthy and growing.



This is a Good Time to Recheck Your Footbaths

Copper Sulfate is used as a disinfectant to control and treat digital dermatitis on many dairy farms. Copper sulfate is also a heavy metal that binds tightly to soil organic particles and accumulates in the upper layers of soil. If this accumulation becomes excessive, it may affect root development of certain plants and reduce plant yields.

One way to reduce copper sulfate usage is to make sure you optimize its use in your footbaths. Products like Hoof-Tec (trademark) sold by Zoetis Animal Health can acidify the copper sulfate solution so that 40% less can be used.

Rechecking your footbath size, mixing protocols, and number of animals that pass through the footbath will insure its use is effective. By monitoring the pH and the number of cows that use the footbath for each time it is mixed, you will insure its effectiveness in controlling digital dermatitis.

Footbath usage can also be decreased by maintaining leg hygiene. Using a scoring system of 1 to 4 and grading cows as they enter the footbath will give you an idea of how frequently you need to use a footbath. Finding ways to keep your cows cleaner will make less frequent use more effective by making the disinfectant properties of the copper sulfate more effective.

Making your footbath usage more effective will allow you to use it less and cut down on copper sulfate buildup in your fields while still controlling foot problems.

Ask your veterinarian to help you evaluate and improve your footbath usage.

-Dr. Bill Koffman

**ALL VACCINES
ORDERED THROUGH
THE DROPSHIP ARE ON
SPECIAL THROUGH
DECEMBER 31, 2014**



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