

# Tips offered to improve breeding

By DIETER KRIEG  
LANCASTER - In attempting to remove the placenta from fresh cows, one must be extremely careful, cautions Dr. Robert Gutzwiller, whose veterinary practice is limited to bovine reproduction. Sometimes it's very difficult or even impossible to get uterine infections cleared up. It may take months.

Speaking to groups of dairymen in the County last Spring, the well-known veterinarian offered advice and suggestions on how dairymen might be able to improve their breeding records.

Heavy infestations of lice, for example, will cause a lot of stress on cows. Cows may become anemic as a result of it and that "can really foul up breeding programs,

production and waste a lot of feed," says Gutzwiller. Cows will stand to be mounted just to get some relief from the itching. A tell-tale sign of lice infestation is the bare tailhead - one from which hair was rubbed off very easily without skin abrasion. "Even a pregnant cow will stand if she has an itchy tailhead," Gutzwiller commented.

The Lancaster County veterinarian believes it's almost impossible to know when a cow is to be bred by just turning the herd out once a day. "You really have to watch for other signs too," he suggests. Not only are individual cows different, but heat periods of the same cow may differ. He urges dairymen to pick a quiet time when they're watching the herd for signs of heat.

The environment can be a real factor in heat detection. Cows are afraid to mount, for example if floors are slippery. The effect of lice has already been mentioned. Another factor is the place the cow is bred. A quiet, cool place may improve settling rates, Gutzwiller points out. Also, make sure you don't have the cow tied directly behind a post. "If the cow is in a difficult place to breed, it will pay you dividends to help the inseminator by putting the cow in a place where she can be bred more easily," the veterinarian continued.

A discharge after calving is completely normal, Gutzwiller lectured. During the first week it's bloody, after that it's white. Most cows will clear up after three weeks if they're in really good condition. "I can't see

putting a lot of boluses into a cow just because of a discharge - you could do her more harm than good," says Gutzwiller, adding that foreign organisms could be introduced into the uterus each time medication is administered.

A dairyman who is having trouble getting his cows bred is advised to try breeding them a little earlier than he normally would because he can't afford to miss too many heat periods. Another suggestion Gutzwiller has for problem herds is to keep a cow around which seems to be really good at catching other cows in heat. Even if she's not a good producer, she could be worth keeping for heat detection purposes.

According to Gutzwiller, cows are much more resistant to infections during heat than at other times.

Infections may be stirred up if the cows aren't actually in heat.

Stressing the importance of good breeding records, the Lancaster County veterinarian urges they be used as a management tool to improve breeding efficiencies. A farmer may want to alter the breeding pattern on problem breeders since that helps sometimes, Gutzwiller suggests. If breeding to a low fertility rate bull (it's not recommended) then breed later to increase the chances of the sperm being alive at the time of ovulation.

"Accurate and consistent records are very good, but too often things are written up and not checked on afterwards anyway," Gutzwiller observes. He says there is no set rule for examinations since cows and



Dr. Robert Gutzwiller

farmers are individuals and problems vary from place to place. An observation he makes with a high degree of finality is that "no cow is safe with calf."

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## Livestock market

### St. Louis Cattle

June 2, 1977

Receipts this week 6600; Week ago 7600; Year ago 7200

As compared with the previous week's close, slaughter steers and heifers weak to 1.00, mostly .50-.75 lower. Cows firm to .50 higher. Bulls steady. Supply mainly mixed good and choice 2-4 1000-1150 lb. steers, 30 per cent heifers and 10 per cent cows.

**SLAUGHTER STEERS:** Mixed Choice and Prime 2-4 1050-1225 lbs. 40.75 early, not tested late. Load Choice 2-3 1075 at 41.00. Bulk Choice 2-4 950-1300 lbs. 39.00-40.50, closing 39.00-40.00. Several loads 3-4 1150-1350 lbs. 39.00-39.50 early. Mixed Good and Choice 2-4 900-1250 lbs. 38.00-39.50. Good 2-3 35.50-38.50. Few loads and lots good 2-3 1100-1250 lb. Holsteins 35.50-36.00. Standard to Good 2-3 1100-1275 lb. Holsteins 33.00-35.50.

**SLAUGHTER HEIFERS:** Mixed Choice and Prime 2-4 900-1025 lbs. 38.00-38.75, few closing sales at 38.00. Choice 2-4 800-1050 lbs. 37.00-38.50 closing 37.00-38.00. Mixed Good and Choice 2-3 700-1000 lbs. 35.50-37.50 good 2-3 32.50-36.00.

**COWS:** Utility and Commercial 2-4 25.50-27.50. Boning Utility 1-2 27.00-27.50, few 28.00. Canner and Cutter 1-2 23.00-26.50. Low Dressing Canner 20.00-23.50.

**BULLS:** Yield Grade 1-2 1000-1700 lbs. 30.00-33.00, Yield Grade 1 1400-1800 lbs. at 34.00.

**FEEDERS:** Including around 1400 at Thursday Auction. Feeder Steers steady to 2.00 lower. Feeder Heifers 2.00-3.00 lower. Demand Moderate. Supply mostly Good and Choice 400-800 lb. Steers and 400-700 lb. Heifers.

**FEEDER STEERS:** Choice 300-500 lbs. 41.00-43.00; 500-600 lbs. 39.00-42.75; 600-700 lbs. 38.50-41.00; 700-800 lbs. 37.50-39.50. Few lots fleshy 800-950 lbs. 38.75-39.50. Mixed Good and Choice 350-600 lbs. 37.00-39.50. Good 375-600 lbs. 32.00-36.00.

**FEEDER HEIFERS:** Choice 350-500 lbs. 33.50-37.00, Mostly 34.50-36.00; 500-700 lbs. 33.50-36.25. Mixed Good and Choice 300-600 lbs. 31.00-33.75. Good 300-550 lbs. 27.00-31.00.



## Dairy promotion plan okayed

NEW YORK, N.Y. - A plan whereby dairy farmers contribute money for milk promotion activities of the American Dairy Association and Dairy Council of New York, Inc., was again approved last week by Thomas A. Wilson, market administrator, New York - New Jersey Milk Marketing Area. These milk promotion activities include advertising, nutrition education, publicity for dairy products, marketing and product research, and informational services.

Noting that New York State has a mandatory milk promotion plan, the market administrator stated that no dairy farmer will be subject to deduction under this program if he is making mandatory contributions under a state plan.

Wilson said that today's action allows handlers regulated by the marketing orders to send "positive letters" to their dairy farmer suppliers.

A dairy farmer who receives a letter will be considered to approve for one year deductions of five cents per hundredweight from his monthly milk

checks, unless he notifies his handler in writing that no deduction should be made.

Moneys deducted from payments for milk delivered on or after June 1, 1977, will be paid directly by the handler to the American Dairy Association and Dairy Council of New York, Inc.

The market administrator explained that participation is voluntary for both handlers and producers, and a participating producer may have deductions stopped at any time by notifying his handler. A producer who does not want to participate and who receives no letter need not notify his handler since no deductions will be made.

In approving the plan for the coming year, Wilson pointed out that there has been no substantial opposition to the use of the positive letter procedure by producers.

Use of the positive letter approach was requested by Dairy Cooperative Inc., Eastern Milk Producers Cooperative Association, Inc., and Northeast Dairy Cooperative Federation, Inc.



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