

MEDICINE AND MANAGEMENT

By CARL TROOP, VMD



susceptible to more serious organisms, especially at calving time. Coliform organisms reside in wet, sloppy, manure contaminated areas. So a complete dry cow treatment program will have to be coupled with improved environment management to prevent contact of the udder with an overwhelming infection. Just because a treated dry cow develops acute mastitis at freshening or within

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The satisfaction that comes from doing a good job of farming

Mastitis and dry cow treatment

Mastitis management and control has been a long sought after goal in the dairy industry. Unfortunately it has also been an elusive goal. With all of the work and studies and research being done on the problems of mastitis, the incidence of mastitis has not decreased markedly over the past 30 years. Approximately 50 per cent of the cows in our dairy herds are still infected.

In many herds the extent of mastitis control is simply the infusion of a prepared treatment into a quarter whenever there is a flareup. But the most rewarding results in mastitis control and management can be obtained from a properly conducted dry cow program.

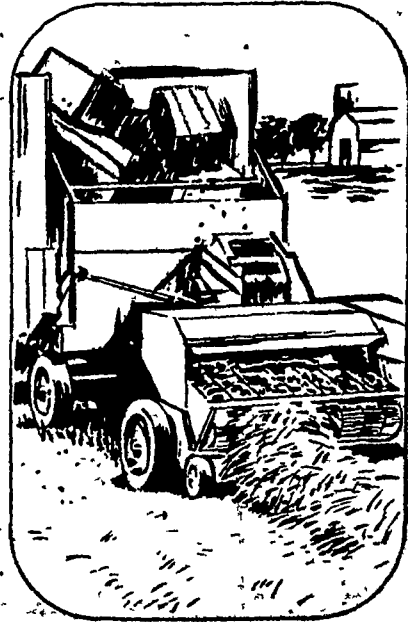
Today, treat or not to dry treat; that has been the much argued question ever since dry treatment was first introduced. There is little argument that at least problem cows should be dry treated. But highly qualified and knowledgeable people will still argue both sides as to whether all cows should be dry treated. Let's examine both sides.

Why dry treat only problem cows? In this case problem cows can be divided into two categories. One way is to treat only those cows which have had actual cases of mastitis during the lactation. The second method goes one

step further, and, as many farmers do, have the cows cultured when they are due to go dry and treat only those animals which show infection at that time. Why not treat all the cows? The expense of the product is one reason but is not a valid argument considering the consequences. "Why bother to treat an animal which does not have a problem? is another comeback. More serious and not yet resolved problems is the possibility that continued and constant use of a dry treatment product in every cow will result in development of resistant strains of bacteria which will then not respond to regular treatment. This is always a possibility but has never proven to be of sufficient significance to be of concern.

Another more serious drawback had been the evidence that dry cow treatment which eliminated the more common, routine, easily treated organisms from the udder, made it more susceptible to the more serious acute coliform mastitis. In some herds it did appear that as 100 per cent dry treatment was practiced and routine cases of mastitis subsided, that there was an increase in acute, coliform mastitis. However, this increase appears to be related to environment and management also. It is possible that the staph and strep free udder is more

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Wheat protein test developed

FREDERICKTON, Canada—A new, rapid test to measure the protein content of wheat has been developed by agricultural engineer Karl H. Norris of USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

The test, a measurement of near-infrared reflectance (NIR), is faster, less expensive and nearly as accurate as presently used laboratory procedures, and it can be used on whole rather than ground grain.

The NIR test takes about one minute compared with 1½ hours for the Kjeldahl test and ½ hour for the Kil-Foss test. There is also less

chance for error with the NIR test since the data are recorded by computer and there is only one step—placing the grain in the computerized spectrophotometer. The Kjeldahl and Kel-Foss procedures both require several steps and data must be recorded by technicians.

Cost of the NIR test would be about \$0.15 per sample, and up to 500 samples per day could be run. The Kjeldahl and Kel-Foss procedures cost about \$.50 to \$1 per sample.

The protein content of wheat, which can vary from

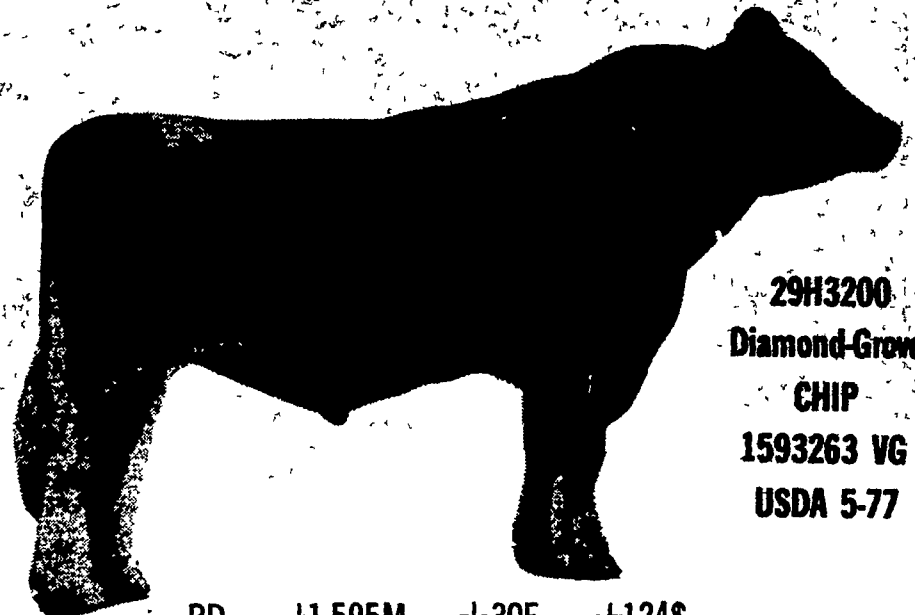
8 to 18 per cent, is especially important to the baking industry. Higher protein wheat makes better bread, and the industry pays a premium for this wheat. Some feed mills also pay farmers based on the protein content of their wheat.

A protein test which leaves the grain intact could also be important to plant geneticists who are breeding wheat for higher protein content. Seeds used in the breeding program could be tested without being destroyed.

Norris presented his research at the North

Atlantic Regional Meeting of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers, here recently.

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