Adams farmers hear anaplasmosis is \$100 million disease



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BY SHEILA MILLER

GETTYSBURG Anaplasmosis is a disease that costs the cattle industry \$100 million each year, said William Herberley, of Fort Dodge Laboratories.

Herberley was one of the guest speakers at last Thursday evening's meeting, sponsored by the Adams County Extension. Close to 75 concerned farmers listened intently to an update on the disease.

Anaplasmosis is an infectious blood anemia disease, explained Herberlev.

"Anaplasma marginale, a blood parasite, takes the animal's red blood cells and causes their destruction," he said.

The sales manager for the Midwest company that manufactures a vaccine for the control of anaplasmosis told the group that the disease is spread from in-

fected animals to healthy animals by anything that carries blood. This could be a biting insect, like horseflies, ticks, and mosquitoes, or man, when unsterile techniques are used when giving injections or castrating animals.

Herberley stressed that animals that recover from the disease remain carriers, and their blood is infective to susceptible animals.

This disease affects most ruminants, including cattle, sheep, goats, and deer. But, most of the work has been done on cattle due to their higher cost per head, and the fact that goats and sheep seem to be more resistant to

the disease, he explained.
In their studies of the disease and the parasite that causes it, Fort Dodge has found that the parasite doubles in population in 24 hours, said Herberley.

"Considering there are 7 million red blood cells in a cubic millimeter of blood, it takes 21 days for the parasite to infect 1 percent of the cells. By the 28th day, 68 percent of the cells are infected and by the 31st day, 80 percent are infected."

Sometime after the 21st day, Herberley said, there will be noticeable clinical signs of the disease.

'In dairy animals, you'll notice a falling off of milk production and feed intake.

The skin will also appear

"In a beef herd, where you. don't see the cattle twice a day as a rule, your first clue to a disease problem may be a dead animal."

Fort Dodge recommends that a farmer who suspects a disease problem should check the color of the cow's vulva and udder-if they're pale instead of pink, there may be a problem.

Also, the color of the urine is an indicator. "An animal with anaplasmosis has normal colored urine, where a sick animal with leptospirosis has urine the color of port wine."

The vaccine manufacturer stressed that any infected animals should not be excited or loaded in trailersinstead the healthy animals should be moved out. He added the farmer's main concern should be the health of the rest of the herd.

"If the infected animal is calm, it can be treated with tetracycline. But remember, this drug is only effective if the disease is still progressing.

"If the cow is constipated, give her a laxative. If she is dehydrated, give her water either through a stomach tube or intravenously. In severe cases, a blood transfusion can be givenslowly.'

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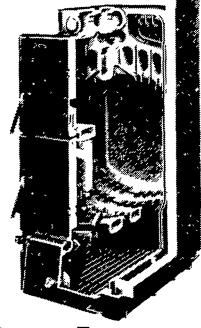
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