

# Adams farmers

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A veterinarian attending the meeting pointed out that when giving a laxative, a farmer should not use a saline laxative because it will draw more water out of the animal. Instead, he recommended an oil laxative be used.

Herberley emphasized anaplasmosis' cost to the cattle industry is too high to be ignored.

"A dairy cow infected with the disease loses 30 percent of her milk production and 25 percent of her milkfat production in one lactation. If she recovers from the disease and stays in the herd, she will be culled one year earlier than her stablemates and will produce 7 percent less milk in her career than those cattle that never contracted the disease."

It was also pointed out that any dairy cow treated for long periods of time with the drug tetracycline will soon be considered a beef animal by the dairy farmer because her milk cannot be marketed.

Not only does the disease affect the milk production of the cow, it can also affect reproduction.

According to Fort Dodge, the microorganism that causes the disease can cross the placenta of the pregnant cow and infect her unborn calf. It can cause abortions, and can also reduce a bull's interest in breeding cows, resulting in his temporary infertility.

In 1965, a vaccine to combat the disease was developed by Oklahoma State University through research funds provided by the National Cattlemen's Association. The university also developed a reliable test to identify carrier cows.

Fort Dodge Laboratories recommends administering this vaccine when cows are open to avoid calf deaths from NI, neonatal

isoerythrolysis.

Herberley explained NI is similar to the Rh factor in humans. "A mother produces antibodies against her calf's blood, transmitted through the colostrum in the milk. These antibodies result in the calf's death."

The vaccine program will require about four doses per cow in her lifetime, said Herberley. This would involve the initial treatments, followed by a booster shot the following year, and a booster every other year thereafter.

He pointed out he did not recommend vaccinating calves because he said he feels it is a waste of money.

According to William High, a field veterinarian for the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, young animals, up to a year old, generally don't have a problem getting over anaplasmosis.

Cattle between the ages of one and two, he added, seem to tolerate the disease better than older animals, where anaplasmosis results in high mortality rates.

The PDA vet told the group that the state first identified anaplasmosis in an Adams Co. dairy herd owned by James Angelaras.

"The attending veterinarian sent two carcasses to our lab for post mortem exams. We found the post mortems to be suspicious so we ran blood tests which showed a positive identification of anaplasma marginale."

After these positive cases were discovered, PDA checked herds within a 3 mile radius of the infected Angelaras herd. High explained that PDA contacted the owners and sampled the herds at the owner's request.

"We sampled 12 herds and tested 568 animals. Out of those tested, there were 54 positives and 13 suspicious."

"We also tested every fifth sample sent in for

brucellosis tests by Adams County farmers—unknown to the farmers or their veterinarians. This involved 37 owners and 357 animals. The results came back 0 suspicious and 0 positive.

"We ran anaplasmosis tests on all of the Adams County owners who applied for health charts. Of these 11 owners, we ran tests on 43 animals, all with negative results."

The PDA vet said they have identified anaplasmosis only in one other herd outside of Adams County. This herd is in Westmoreland County.

"Our testing shows that the disease is not rampant in Adams County, but it is the state's hot spot," High said.

He explained the PDA policy does not require quarantining infected herds, and PDA does not pay indemnity for lost animals.

High said infected animals can be sold within Pennsylvania, but only if the buyer has prior knowledge of the cow's anaplasmosis problem. He noted that the state's health certificate does not mention anaplasmosis, just tuberculosis and brucellosis, so it is up to the seller to inform the buyer.

Interstate sales of infected animals require the prior approval of the state's veterinarian where the animals will be shipped. "Canada and Wisconsin require a negative anaplasmosis report, and many other states have similar policies," High added.

For any Adams County farmer who wants to have a herd tested for anaplasmosis, High told the group PDA will do the testing free of charge. The normal charge is \$1 per head.

He also pointed out that the PDA lab only runs anaplasmosis tests on Thursdays. Samples should be taken so that they arrive right before the testing day. The test results are mailed out Friday, he said, but farmers 'in a rush' can call in for their results.

If a farmer is retesting an animal that had been positive and was treated with tetracycline, High recommended waiting 120 days before sending in a new sample.

If the retest results come back negative, the animal is considered negative for anaplasmosis, said High, and can be sold without any special provisions. But, he pointed out, this animal is once again susceptible to the disease.

Concerning vaccinations, High said, "The state is not too keen on using the vaccine. Once a cow is vaccinated, she tests positive for anaplasmosis—if you want to ship her to a state that requires a negative anaplasmosis report, you might have trouble. We also don't know how long the vaccine gives an immunity for the disease."

The concerned farmers did hear some encouraging information on a new and improved treatment for anaplasmosis.

Herberley told the group there is research now underway to develop a drug called tetracycline L 200 which is four-times stronger than the tetracycline available on the market today.

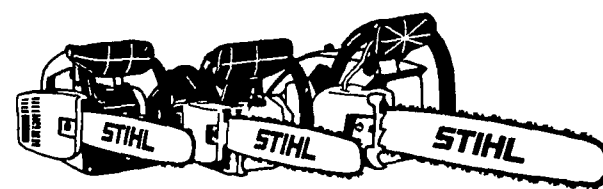
"With the new drug, you'll be able to give 1/4 the normal

dose, and it will last two-times longer. You'll use less tetracycline, which will mean less pain for the animal because you won't

have to treat it as often. Unfortunately, the drug is still under study and is not

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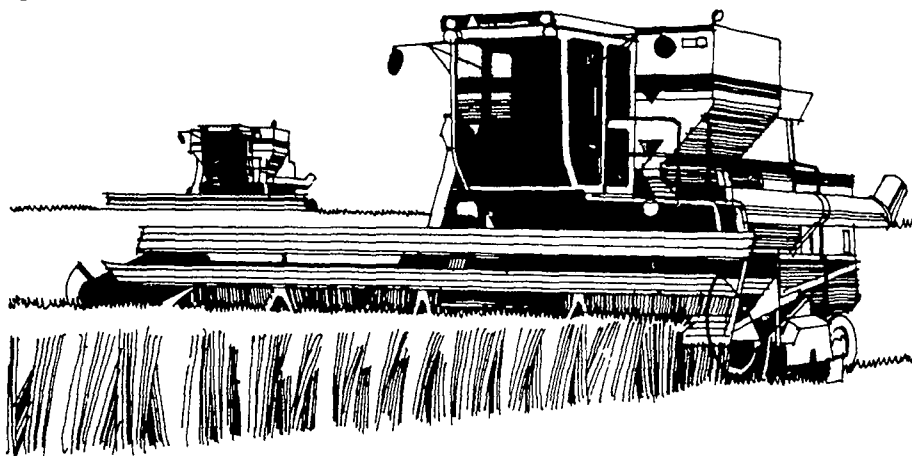
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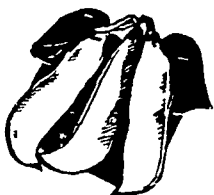
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