

Ask the VMD

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If you have a question you would like to have answered by the team of veterinarians at Valley Animal Hospital, Palmyra, and Dr. Tim Trayer, Denver, send it to "Ask the VMD", Lancaster Farming Newspaper, Box 366, Lititz, PA 17543. Questions will be kept anonymous on request.

Wood Product Problems

A reader asks:

I would like to use wood shavings as bedding for my animals. Is there any risk involved with using wood products.

Dr. Trayer comments:

In the past, the answer to this question was that sawdust or wood shavings, used as bedding for either transportation or farrowing, was one of the better products available.

However, since our knowledge is always expanding, the practice of using wood shavings in the farrowing room or when trucking swine has recently come into

question as a potential disease carrier.

In the farrowing room situation or where you have sows that are lactating or delivering, the problem has arisen of the isolation of gram negative organisms from the sawdust bedding. These particular organisms can cause the whole MMA syndrome (mastitis metritis agalactica syndrome) or lack of milk in the sows and can also cause uterine discharges which are very unresponsive to treatment. They will probably require culturing to identify a specific antibiogram sensitivity. Uterine discharge causes the sows to be predisposed to the MMA syndrome.

This particular gram negative organism was being identified as *Klebsiella*. This particular organism is a bacteria classified according to its sensitivity to antiseptics. *Klebsiella* has a ruthless nature to it. It appears to be in all species, and causes

drastic responses and results when an overwhelming infection is present.

In the dairy industry, it has been known for a long period of time that sawdust or wood products cause the *Klebsiella* mastitis which is a particularly hard mastitis to work against.

So it is not surprising to see that, with this latest information, similar problems with wood product-like organisms could exist in the swine industry, or particularly in farrowing rooms from the use of wood product bedding.

The other side of the coin concerning wood products and the hauling of feeder pigs has been a recent case situation in the Midwest. The case involves a swine producer who was driven out of production because of the increasing number of TB-like lesions being found on his slaughter animals.

In this particular case the only thing that could be identified as the

source of the TB-like lesions was the exposure in the farrowing room to wood products. Breeding stock could not be identified as the source of TB. So by using a process of elimination, they determined the wood shavings to be the only source potential for the TB-like lesions on the slaughtered swine.

As in the past, our knowledge of the origins, sources, and incidences of TB in swine is still very wide open, as is our knowledge concerning the subject and exactly how it is entering into the herd.

The slaughtering of the animals and the identification of positive

animals is still a great economic expense to different producers, and is one area of great concern in the swine industry.

So if one is using wood products as bedding or in the transportation of young feeding stock, producers ought to seriously consider some of the problems or questions being raised about these products. If one has not experienced any farrowing problems or TB problems at slaughter, then the wood products being utilized are suitable. Be aware, however, that potential problems do exist.

Delano visits France

PARK RIDGE, Ill. — Robert B. Delano, president of the three million member-family American Farm Bureau Federation will go to France September 9-11 as a member of the executive committee of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers.

The three-day session in Strasbourg in eastern France near the West Germany border will be the 89th held by the executive committee and will be chaired by Sir Henry Plumb of the United Kingdom, IFAP president.

IFAP, headquartered in Paris, is a voluntary organization of 48

"free world" farmer associations or cooperatives financed and controlled by farmer-members — somewhat analogous to Farm Bureau in their own countries.

The 16-member executive committee to which Delano was elected at the 24th general conference in Argentina last November will review the world's agricultural supply, demand, economic and trade situations and make preliminary arrangements for the 25th IFAP general conference slated for London in the spring of 1982.

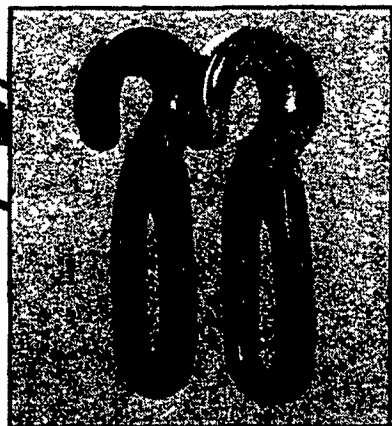
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