

# Dairy conference

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Identify all treated cows and indicate the proper time when the milk can be added in the bulk tank.

Milk treated cows last. Milking equipment must be thoroughly washed and sanitized after milking a treated cow.

Discard all milk from a treated cow even though only one quarter was infused. Also, discard all milk following intravenous and intra-muscular shots. Assume that a purchased animal was treated and test her milk before putting her milk into the tank.

Do not save milk from a cow which was dry treated for 30 days, even if she freshens early. Following the normal 60 day dry period, withhold all milk for four days after freshening.

Whenever in doubt, have a cow or bulk tank sample tested, using a field kit or official tests. Do not take a chance, as you will probably

get caught. The penalty is dumping milk from your entire herd for two days. Purchase and use your own field kit.

Extension nutritionist Richard Adams outlined a feeding program for dairy heifers.

He cited a recent southwestern Pennsylvania study on 2,400 heifers in 212 herds across 11 counties. Adams found that 40 percent of the animals rated poor in growth or substantially below breed average. Earlier DHIA studies of state animals showed that females that freshened at breed averages for growth may produce 17 percent more milk during their first lactation.

"You would think that down here in this milk market that has a base-surplus marketing plan that it would pay to hold some of these heifers over longer, in order to have them freshen during the base-

making period," he said.

"The best plan is to get the heifers into production at 22 to 26 months of age, irrespective of the milk market."

"Every bit of the time they are not producing is overhead costs," Adams reported.

Adams called for adequate size without fattening.

"Obesity will usually increase the heifer's maintenance requirements for the rest of her days," Adams explained.

The obese heifer may be harder to settle and can experience calving problems due to a fatty reproductive tract.

Another problem, Adams notes, is decreased milk supply. Fat cells will replace the vital milk secretory cells in the mammary gland, reducing the potential to milk. Overconditioning will not only effect the first lactation but lifetime production as well.

"Longevity is lower in these overconditioned animals."

Sexual maturity in heifers is indicative of size. Adams guide for

breeding size follows:

Holstein and Brown Swiss — 750-800 pounds or 64-66 inches of heart girth; Ayrshire and Guernseys 650-700 pounds or 61-63 inches of heart girth; Jersey — 500-600 or 58-60 inches of heart girth. Heifers should gain about 1.5 pounds per head daily from birth to breeding.

At six months of age, heifers should be on a 2.0 to 2.2 percent of body weight hay equivalent daily forage intake

Adams recommended all types of forages including pasture for calves over 6-months-old. Average quality forage often is adequate if sufficient amounts are fed and the ration is balanced properly. High-protein forage is not essential.

Good pasture in ample supply plus free-choice minerals often will provide good growth. Adams suggested a trace mineral salt and a recommended calcium-phosphorus supplement.

Split heifer groups by size, when necessary to enable adequate forage and feed intake by smaller animals.

Concentrate amounts, said Adams, depends upon the forage quality. Forage testing better than 60 percent total digestible nutrients, may only require two to four pounds per head per day of concentrate. Less than 60 percent TDN may warrant four to six

pounds of concentrate per head daily.

The water supply should be present in ample amounts. Fecal coliform counts should not exceed 10 per 100 milliliters.

Undersized herd replacement can result from a variety of factors and Adam's factors are as follows:

Considerably underfeeding forage

Lack of ration balance — especially protein and minerals

Lack of suitable facilities to enable frequent observation as well as ease of feeding and management

Poor pasture management and lack of supplementary feed on inadequate pasture

Lack of water or poor quality water

Additional information on feeding dairy heifers for proper breeding size is available at local Extension offices



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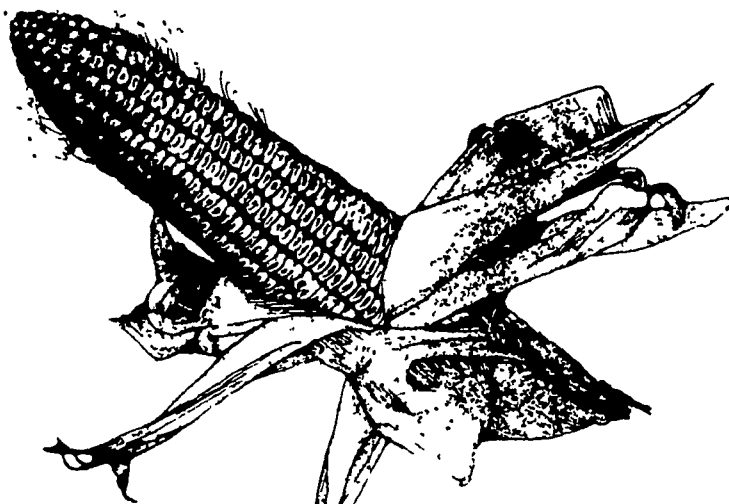
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