



Leon Riegel

Ask the VMD



Synthea Maas



Tim Trayer



Edgar Sheaffer

A reader asks:
How effective are foot baths in preventing hoof diseases in dairy cattle? In a free stall/parlor operation of 100 cows, what would be an adequate solution and how often should it be changed?

Dr. Riegel comments:
The care of the foot and legs of dairy cattle rank high on the list of things of importance in a successful dairy operation.

Excellent production records are secondary to healthy feet and legs. As it is said with professional

athletes, when the legs go it's time to hang it up.

For although a cow may have the capacity to produce 70,000 pounds of milk, she will not realize these expectations if she is unable to walk to the feed bunk and be able to stand long enough to eat the required amount of feed to live up to her capability. In addition, she still must be able to stand long enough to be milked.

Breeding for a "perfect conformation" is a big step toward alleviating feet and leg problems.

Also foot trimming is an important operation to achieve healthy feet, but in addition to this, foot baths can help enormously in preventing foot problems.

The most important thing to consider in construction of a foot bath is to construct one in which the cows have to walk through at least once a day.

In a milking parlor operation, this would be in the exit alley from the parlor. In stanchion barns, a foot bath should be placed where the cow exits and enters the barn to

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exercise lot or pasture. It should be at least six feet long and 4 inches deep, leaving no ledges along either side where the cow may walk on instead of walking through the bath. The reason for this type of construction is because the bath solutions are astringent and do sting a cow's feet and after she walks through it once or twice, she will avoid it if at all possible.

As far as the solution in the baths, my personal preference is a 5 percent of Copper Sulfate. These baths need not be used year round, but their use is most important during the wetter times of the year, especially in the spring.

The baths should be cleaned periodically as they become soiled and solution added when necessary.

Mall exhibit winners named

READING — Winners were chosen for the 4-H Exhibits Contest, the Egg Decorating Contest, and 4-H Rabbit Show during the 4-H Days promotion and fund raising event held last Friday and Saturday at Boscov's North and Fairgrounds Square Mall.

Winners in the Exhibit Contest and the categories were: club exhibit — Tilden Community Club; floor exhibit — Oley Saddle-ites; electric exhibit — Kids with Kids Goat Club; individual exhibits sr. winner — Jamie Batz, Rehreburg Club; individual exhibits jr. winner — Heidi Schlegel, Eastern Berks Dairy Club.

Winners in the Egg Decorating Contest were: first place — Carl Fronheiser; second place — Karen Ludwig; third place — Marcia Sonon; fourth place — Michael

Landis; fifth place — Sairta Balani; and sixth place — Therese Landis.

Receiving Honorable Mention in the Egg Decorating Contest were: Patty Smith, Michelle Uber, David Sonon, Lester Sonoh Jr., Beth Emore, and Sandra Emore.

The Rabbit and Guinea Pig Contest enlisted many entries. The winners and respective categories were as follows: Grand Champion rabbit was a New Zealand White owned by Kendel Taylor, and the Reserve Grand Champion was a Netherland Dwarf owned by Tracey Weaver. The Grand Champion guinea pig was an American Breed owned by Claudette Smith, and the Reserve Grand Champion was a Crested Cavy owned by Melissa Dunford.

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