Reducing Environmental Mastitis Cases Can Add Up To Increase Savings

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NEWARK, Del. - Just when you thought you knew all about mastitis - its many different forms, outcomes and treatments along comes another new term: environmental mastitis. This differs from contagious mastitis, which is caused by Streptococcus agalactiae or Staphylococcus aureus and is found mainly inside the cow's udder.

Environmental mastitis is caused, instead, by bacteria such as E. coli, Klebsiella and some other Streptococci that live mainly in manure, in bedding, on concrete floors and in the soil. Infections from these organisms typically last only a short time, possibly two weeks, while contagious infections may last much longer. Elevated somatic cell levels, if they stay up a long time, indicate contagious infections rather than an environmental problem, and vice versa.

Many environmental infections begin at the start of the cow's dry period, but without proper treatment they can also recur in the second half as well. Don't expect dry cow treatment to be effective longer than two or three weeks. Cows that lie on wet and dirty barn alleys, in infrequently bedded free-stalls and which come into the milking parlor with manure and dirt caked to their teats and udder have a high risk of exposure to environmental mastitis.

Why not avoid the problem by providing them with dry, clean free-stall floors, alleys and holding grounds on which cows may rest. Most people change the sheets on their beds at least once a week.

Why not give our cows similar consideration? When we kept them tied up in old-fashioned staunchion barns, we changed their bedding at least once a day!

Moving them into free-stalls was supposed to be progress -less labor, less bedding expense, more freedom for the cows. But do we keep their udder environment as neat and clean as it was under the old system of fresh daily strawbedded staunchion stalls? I wonder and so do others, and that's the reason for the new term: environmental mastitis. Wouldn't it be cheaper and better to prevent this problem, rather than trying to

Clean, dry bedding and grounds are the keys to success in mastitis control. Besides preventing mastitis, providing these conditions will also reduce barn flies and their reproduction, and this in turn will reduce some fly-carried mastitis infections, too. Clean, dry bedding should also keep udders clean and dry so when cows enter the milking parlor we'll be able to use dry, rather than wet, udder preparation for milking. Dry preparation tends to result in lower bacteria counts in the milk

So you see, dry and clean bedding has several benefits to repay you for the extra labor. Besides that, recent research shows that vitamin E and selenium supplements, in addition to vitamin A and zinc, help strengthen resistance and thus prevent losses from environmental mastitis.

Ohio State University recommendations are for 1,000 international units of vitamin E per dry cow per day, plus three milligrams of selenium plus 50 milligram selenium injected three weeks before calving. For milking cows 400 to 600 units of vitamin E and six milligram of selenium are recommended per head per day. Blood samples drawn by veterinarians can be analyzed for selenium sufficiency in many laboratories, including that at Pennsylvania State University.

In any case, the milk from each cow should be tested monthly for somatic cell count at a state lab or through the DHIA system. Then we'll known whether we have a problem and, if so, whether it's environmental or contagious. We'll also know what to do about it - for better profits on our dairy farm.

State Beef And Veal Promotion In Gear

(Continued from Page A1)

The popular annual Pennsylvania Beef Cook-Off Contest copntract was awarded to Mary Wilson of State College. Mrs. Wilson will conduct the contest this June in Shiremanstown. The Pennsylvania contest, which generated the 1985 national winner, is sponsored by PBC in cooperation with MOPAC and the PA Department of Agriculture.

Mary Wilson was also awarded a contract to place special teaching kits for both elementary and secondary grade teachers to provide factual information on cattle, beef products and sound nutrition. Course material will be offered on a pilot basis to 25 school districts throughout the state.

Becky Painter of Elkland, the 1986 PA Cattlemen's Queen and a 1987 graduate of Penn State, will serve as contractor for the Pennsylvania Beef Queen and the new Pennsylvania Fancy Veal Queen programs. The Cattlemen's Queen and twelve princesses, along with

the Veal Queen and two princesses, will conduct beef and veal promotions throughout the year and will be available for countysponsored events.

Presently in the final negotiation stages are contracts for producer information newsletters for those who invest in the Check-Off to know how their investment is being used. Also a special newsletter will be geared toward nutritionists, dietitions and home economists. Radio advertising proposals which? supplement both state and national campaigns are being reviewed for signing.

Another contractor, soon to be selected, will demonstrate a unique promotional tool-video 'Meat Features"- in at least 200 retail supermarkets. Placed right at the meat counter, video tapes illustrate how to prepare and serve cuts of beef, and show recipe/nutrition programs daily. Beef sales have increased substantially in midwestern retail markets where video was first

"Our job is to make certain

retail stores are aware of this new marketing technique by demonstrating it in as many places as possible," said Heffner. "We have purchased four units for this purpose," he added, "and currently have 28 requests for demonstrations."

The program also includes a new veal recipe contest, billboard and radio advertising, and special 'media blitz" for several cities.

The PBC staff has been actively promoting beef through attendance at special food shows and

supermarket events prior to the awarding of official contracts.

"BIC is producing excellent educational and promotional information with beef, dairy and veal Check-Off dollars and it's up to our Council to see that it's given to as many consumers as possible," said Heffner.

For more information on how your beef Check-Off dollars are being put to work for you, or for more details on specific contracts, contact Bob Coleman, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Beef Council, 4714 Orchard Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110, 717/545-6000.

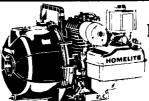


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