

May Dairy Digest

DAIRY SANITARIANS CONFERENCE

The annual three day conference for PA Dairy Sanitarians and Laboratory Analysts is scheduled for May 16-18, 1988. As many as 250 participants are expected for the conference which features a wide variety of topics to help field and laboratory staff be aware of the latest information on equipment, tests, regulations, marketing, promotion, feeding and water and milk quality. Copies of the program are available.

S. E. BARNARD,

Food Sci Ext

DAIRY LABORATORY WORKSHOP

A Dairy Laboratory Workshop is scheduled for July 11-22, 1988 in cooperation with the PA Department of Agriculture. One week will provide instruction and demonstration of all tests used for milk. It is directed towards inexperienced analysts and those responsible for quality assurance programs. The second week will concentrate on the six required regulatory tests and include examination to become a PDA approved Dairy Laboratory Director. Copies of the program are available.

S. E. BARNARD,

Food Sci Ext

MARK YOUR CALENDER

Plans are underway for a conference on Dairy Manure Management and Water Quality to be held in conjunction with the New York State Farm Equipment Show in Syracuse, NY the week of February 20, 1989. Anyone interested in presenting information should contact Marty Sailus, NRAES Riley Robb Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853, or myself at 202 Agricultural Engineering Building, University Park, PA 16802. Details as to exact date and location will be forthcoming soon.

R. E. GRAVES,

Ag Eng Ext

BLOAT CONTROL

ON PASTURE

CONTAINING LEGUMES

Each year some farmers lose animals due to bloating on pastures that contain appreciable clover or alfalfa. Straight legume forage is more apt to bloat animals. However bloat also can occur on grass-legume mixtures, particularly in

early spring or fall and when the forage has been frosted.

Feeding milk cows about 5 to 6 lb of stored forage dry matter daily can help prevent bloat. The stored forage should be split into two feedings. Preferably it should be provided as long hay with a low legume content. A grass or mixed mainly grass hay often is used. Corn silage or haylages could be fed to provide more scratch factor to enhance eructation of gas if no hay is available.

A chemical compound, called poloxalene also may be fed for bloat prevention. It is sold under the trade name of Bloat Guard. The daily dose is 2 to 3 grams of active ingredient per cwt of bodyweight daily. (Example: 26 grams for a 1300 lb cow). It is available from some feed trade suppliers and dealers as a product containing 53% poloxalene. Thus 49 grams of this material may be needed daily for a 1300 lb animal (26 .53 = 49). As an adjunct to treatment for bloat, poloxalene should be administered at a level of 4 to 5 grams of active compound per cwt of bodyweight.

Poloxalene also is available in special supplement blocks designed for pastured animals and in some specially formulated mineral mixtures. If these products are used, care must be taken to see that cattle are eating sufficient amounts to provide an effective intake of poloxalene.

Feeding 3 to 4 oz of vegetable oil per head daily also can help prevent bloat. This could be incorporated in the grain mix or sprinkled on supplemental stored forage. The need for oil might be met by feeding about 1 1/2 to 2 lb of ground soybeans or cottonseed daily. As an adjunct to treatment for a bloated animal, 3 cups of oil may be given via drenching.

Accumulated gas sometimes may be partially reduced by use of a stomach tube. In severe cases an incision may need to be made in the left side of the animal in the area under the lumbar region and between the last rib and the hook bone. However, frothy bloat often occurs and surface tension must be reduced by administration of oils, poloxalene or certain detergents etc. A veterinarian should be called as soon as appreciably

bloated animals are noticed.

R. S. ADAMS

ARTHRITIS

Inflammation of a joint is the definition of arthritis. This is generally the response to a joint injury, although the cause is not always known. The production of fluid helps to lubricate the injured joint but is also responsible for pain and impaired function of the joint. Any joint may become inflamed but some joints are more susceptible than others. Arthritis can be divided into two different forms, infectious and non-infectious or degenerative. Dairy cattle are more prone to arthritis than beef cattle.

Infectious arthritis generally affects younger cattle. Bacterial or viral agents can be introduced into the joint by one of three ways: (1) a puncture wound penetrating the joint can quickly become inflamed, (2) an infection in an area next to the joint may cause swelling and interfere with the joint's movement, (3) or an infection from another part of the body may move to a joint. The best example of this spread from another part of the body is in newborn calves with an umbilical or navel infection. Treatment of this type of arthritis is done by controlling the infection by using poultices and drainage. Since many cases of infectious arthritis can be traced to navel ill, it is a wise practice to disinfect the navels of all newborn calves.

Non-infectious arthritis is a joint disease characterized by degeneration of the cartilage. The area surrounding the cartilage and bone becomes enlarged. Arthritis of this type may be in response to an injury such as a sprain, a dislocation, a fall, or an irritation to the joint when an animal is constantly lying on a hard surface. Weight bearing joints in older cattle are the ones most likely to be subjected to

the greatest stress and become degeneratively arthritic. The natural response to an injury of this type is swelling, pain and altered function of the joint. Swelling from degenerative arthritis should not be assumed to be abscessed. Lancing this swelling could result in a lethal, systemic infection.

L. J. HUTCHINSON

and C. M. BURNS,

Vet Sci Ext

DON'T FORGET PLAN REVIEW

Don't forget about the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's review requirements when planning renovation or building projects at the dairy barn. Paragraph 59.03 of Pennsylvania's Milk Sanitation and Standards states in part: "Plans must likewise be approved before construction or extensive modification of manure storage system; installation of a bulk milk storage tank; installation of a milk transfer system on a dairy farm..." Its always a good idea to discuss any major building or remodeling project that relates to the milking herd with your milk inspector. Your inspector will know if plan submission is necessary and also may have some good suggestions for your project.

R. E. GRAVES

AUTOMATION BIG OR SMALL?

Last year at this time I had never seen a robot for milking cows. In March I witnessed first hand a prototype robot on a dairy research farm in France. I have also met with Dutch scientists and seen pictures and a video tape of a robot in operation milking cows on a research farm in the Netherlands. I am not particularly surprised that these events have taken place. What has been an awakening to me

is the applications that are planned. Up until now I had imagined robots as devices to help big farms become bigger where milking parlors had 10 or 20 mechanical robots working away around the clock. The Dutch milking robot is planned for use by farmers with up to 80 cows. It is being developed by a consortium of public and private organizations.

The milking robot is part of a project to help keep the smaller Dutch farms competitive. The robot is combined with a computer feeding station. Whenever a cow visits the station, her record is checked as to when she was milked last. If its time to milk her again (many cows are milked 4 or more times a day) the robot goes to work. The advantage to the farmer is an increase in milk yield and less labor is required. If successful, the robot will allow a family farmer to handle 60-80 cows with less hired labor. This will make that farmer more competitive.

How many farms will have robots by the year 2000? I don't know. I do know that this experience has served to remind me that labor saving devices, mechanization and automation have the potential for helping keep our family farms in business. We need to remember this as we evaluate various new ideas. On any given day, the mechanical gutter cleaner and silo unloader helps more family dairy farmers than it does large corporate farms. This cooperative effort between government and industry should also remind us of the importance of working together to help keep Pennsylvania and US farms competitive. Its obvious to me that the Europeans plan to stay in the dairy business, world wide!

R. E. GRAVES

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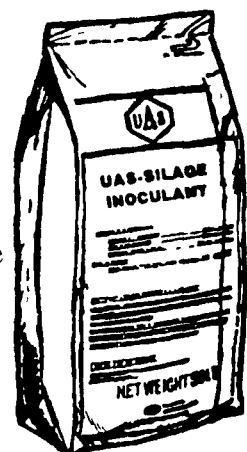
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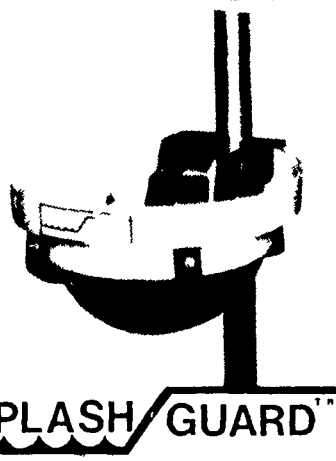
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