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ment schedule, and dosage, as well as about the progression of the disease.

5. If large numbers of animals are becoming sick, use therapeutic levels of antibiotics in the feed or water. This procedure does not eliminate the need to separate and treat animals that show symptoms of illness.

Follow-up health procedures

Booster vaccination for immunization against IBR, PI3, pasteurella, haemophilus, and clostridial diseases, if started postshipment, should be completed two to three weeks after the first vaccination. Stressful procedures such as castration and dehorning, as well as potentially immunosuppressive BVD vaccination, can be completed now, although their advantages should be weighed against a probable reduction in weight gain.

Termination of pregnancy is usually desirable in heifer calves pregnant for less than six months. Veterinarians can abort such pregnancies with appropriate injections, but these animals should be separated until the fetus is passed and they are back to normal.

Diagnosing the problem

Determining the cause of sickness and death in the feedlot is important. Even when there is no way to reverse a problem in the current group of animals, it is worthwhile to prevent these diseases in the future.

An accurate diagnosis is best made by veterinary practitioners working within diagnostic labs. This approach to solving disease problems ensures that the proper samples can be sent to the appropriate location at the best time, and the results can be correlated with a precise evaluation of the animals.

The keys to solving any animal health/performance problem in this manner are good communication and cooperation among the owner, veterinarian, and diagnostician.

State-supported laboratories are located at Summerdale, just outside of Harrisburg, and at State College in Centre County. New Bolton Center of the University of Pennsylvania offers diagnostic services in the Chester County area. These labs all offer services on a fee basis.

Source: Penn State Cooperative Extension, University Park, PA. Author: Thomas Drake.

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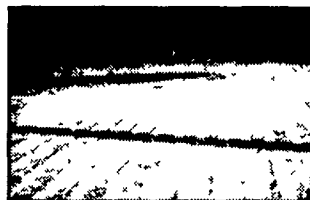
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