

Local Veterinarian Offers Feedlot Health Tips

BRICKERVILLE, Pa. — Local veterinarian, Steve Foulke, D.V.M., of Ag Vet Associates of Manheim, gave producers a crash course in Feedlot Health 101 during an annual cattle feeders meeting here in August.

The good news, he said is that prevention is the key. Identifying animals early, is essential because Dr. Foulke has found that most problems arise from lack of prevention. He told producers the most important tool in their medicine cabinet is their eyes. "Know what to look for and

how to look for it, and never be afraid to ask questions."

"Things don't happen overnight," Foulke continued. "Walk the pen, and take the time to do it right. Make the cattle move. Watch the way animals walk away, or even if they walk away. Listen. Movement can produce the cough if it's there." He gave the crowd of 110 cattle feeders this observation checklist:

- look for reluctance to come up to the feed bunk or water trough,
- gaunt appearance,

- reluctance to move or rise,
- lameness,
- crusted muzzle,
- sunken eyes,
- rough dry coat,
- diarrhea,
- coughing, sneezing, nasal discharge,
- increased respiratory rate,
- drooped head and ears,
- arched back, and signs of straining to urinate.

Once you identify them, you need a "pull pen" he said. And proper handling facilities are critical. "If in doubt, take the animal's temperature. If an

animal dies, have a necropsy performed by your vet or the state lab, or you can be trained to do it yourself," he stressed.

"That dead animal holds the key to avoiding losing dollars on treatments that do nothing and till haven't solved the problem." He told producers to "know what you have on your farm. That helps me make a targeted recommendation."

"Keep records," Dr. Foulke urged. "This is the most overlooked piece of equipment on the farm. In the future you will need to be able to document

treatment records. Plus it tells you valuable information that we can look at to find patterns and solutions."

The meeting was sponsored by Agri Basics.

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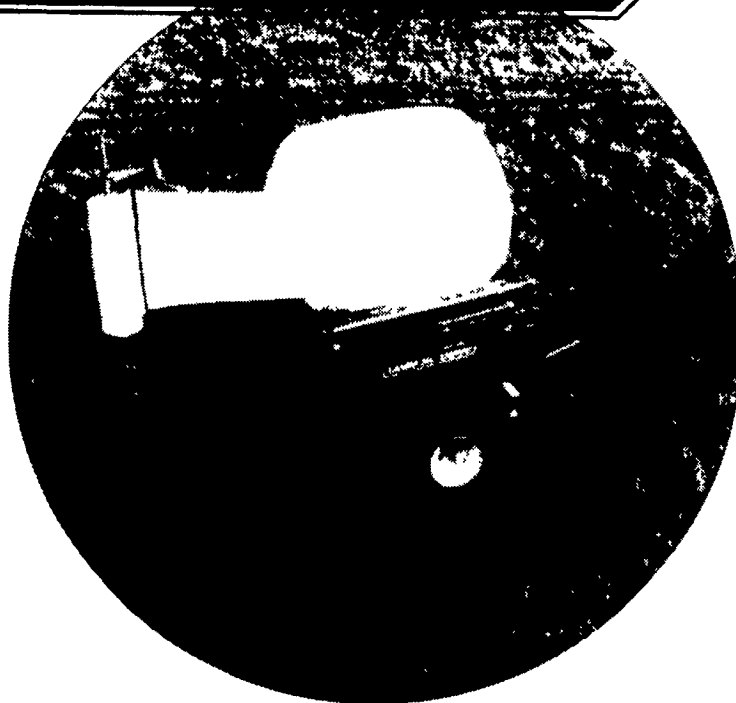
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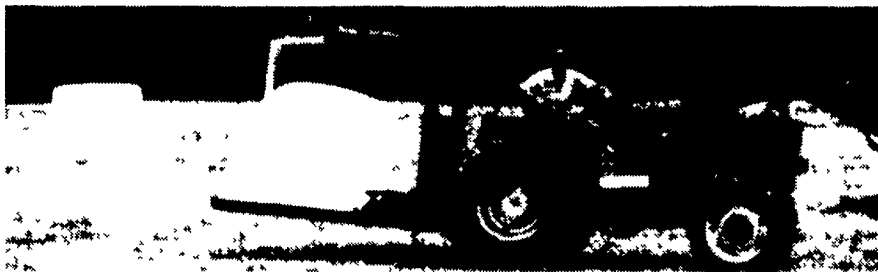
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