

Transition Cow Workshop Planned For Dairy Producers

SHIPPENSBURG (Cumberland Co.) — Many problems with early lactation cows begin during the dry period. Cows that have a smooth transition from the dry period into lactation are more likely to have high production.

To help dairy producers sharpen cow observation skills, consider nutritional issues of importance and identify problem cows before they become clinical problems, dairy producers are encouraged to attend a transition cow workshop planned for Friday, Nov. 16, in Cumberland County.

The workshop will run from

9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. starting at the Agway-Keystone Building at 510 W. King Street in Shippensburg. Lab sessions will be conducted at Jeff and Michelle Reasner's farm. Advance registration is requested for the session.

Dr. Arlen Mills, regional extension veterinarian, will work with the group sessions along with local veterinarians. Extension Dairy Management Agent Vinton Smith will address human resource management issues and standard operating procedures. Tim Beck, York, will present the transition cow nutrition section for the meeting.

The workshop will focus on skills and methods for detecting problem cows before and after calving. Participants will learn how to quickly recognize when a cow is becoming sick, and to perform a basic examination of the animal. Without proper management, transition cows can be a major cause of lost production and profit on dairy farms. If the people working with cows can quickly identify problem animals, then the speed and effectiveness of treatment will be greatly increased.

Participants will learn to observe a group of cows from a distance and detect those that might have a problem. They will be taught how to recognize common symptoms, and which cows are most likely to have particular diseases. The participants will then examine cows and practice pick-

ing out individuals that might be showing signs of trouble.

The morning program will feature information on transition cow nutrition and management issues and will highlight special consideration for transition cows. A sample transition cow management protocol will be presented to provide participants with ideas on how to set up a management strategy for their own operations in consultation with their veterinarian.

Participants will learn a systematic method for body condition scoring dairy cows that will help them identify thin or over-conditioned cows most likely to have transition cow metabolic problems.


During the afternoon session, participants will divide into small groups of three to five learners and each group will work with a veterinarian. The small groups will have the opportunity to perform a hands-on examination of a cow. The veterinarian will demonstrate basic examination proce-

dures and each participant will practice the procedures. Skills will include listening with a stethoscope to various internal sounds such as the heart, lungs, and rumen; how to "ping" for a displaced abomasum and how to test for ketosis and mastitis.


Workshop participants will be equipped with durable learning materials they can use on their farms to teach their co-workers some of the skills they learned.

Fees for the workshop to cover materials and lunch are \$40/participant. Register in advance by calling the Customer Service desk at the York County Extension Office (717) 840-7408; fax your registration to (717) 755-9657 or get more information and a registration form online at the Capital Region web site <http://Capitaldairy.cas.psu.edu/>. For more information, contact Tim Beck, Regional Dairy Program coordinator, or call your local county Extension office.





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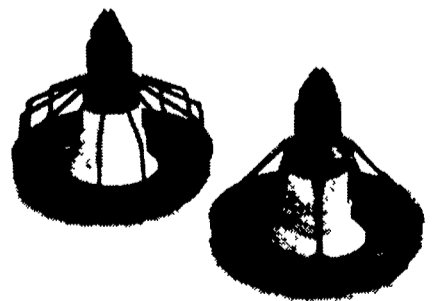
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