



Penn State Cooperative Extension Capitol Region Dairy Team

PREWEANED CALVES AND COLD WEATHER

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We have all realized by now that winter is upon us and hopefully we have reacted properly to meet the challenges of cold weather.

We put on that extra coat, those heavy gloves, or whatever is needed to keep as comfortable as possible while we wait for spring to come.

But what about those calves? Do they notice the cold as well? When temperatures drop below 50 degrees, the young preweaned calf must begin to adjust to its surroundings to compensate for the lowered temperature.

I have visited several farms within the last month because calf deaths had increased. Cold stress was a major factor in each of these and in two instances, no infectious agents were identified. Cause of death was attributed to the cold weather.

At temperatures below 50 degrees, the calf needs extra energy to make body heat. If this extra energy isn't available from the feed, then the calf will begin to break down body tissue. Fat will be used first but, if not available, then muscle mass will be used and the calf rapidly loses weight. Dampness and drafts make the problem worse.

These negative effects of the cold can be lessened by one or all of the following ways:

- Proper housing for calves is important. Calves can tolerate a lot of cold temperatures if they are kept dry, well bedded, and protected from drafts. The "calf blankets" that are available are a supplement to good bedding and not a replacement.

- Calves burn calories to produce body heat. This means that in cold weather, we need to increase the supply of calories to fuel the heater. This can be done by increasing feed intake. Preweaned calves can be fed an additional volume of milk. The goal is to feed the calf at such a level that it will maintain a normal body temperature and have enough reserves left over to grow. A rule of thumb is to increase feeding rate in cold weather by 25 to 50 percent. This means feeding up to three quarts twice daily if two quarts is the "normal" routine. I have seen some recom-



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mend mixing replacer -at a "stronger" rate but I would be cautious in trying this, because it can result in a nutritional diarrhea. Another way to increase the calf's caloric intake is to feed a milk replacer that is higher in fat content. Fat supplies the major portion of the energy for the calf. The fat content of dry whole milk is almost 30 percent while milk replacers vary from 10 percent to 20 percent fat levels. In cold weather, be sure to use a replacer that has a fat content at the top of this level. Also, when mixing replacer, be sure to use water that is at least 110 degrees so that the fat in the mix goes into suspension. Colder water may result in replacer with reduced availability of fat. And feeding cold milk will also drain additional energy from the calf.

- Make sure that you keep a high quality, fresh, dry starter available. The very young calf will not eat enough starter to provide a major amount of energy. The primary function of starter is to develop the rumen of the calf. As the calf approaches weaning age, we hope the rumen is developed enough so that the calf begins to transition from milk to solid food as a source of energy.

Successful calf raising during the winter will require extra energy. This can be done in several ways or in a combination of ways. Start feeding increased energy when daytime temperatures are below freezing. And don't forget to offer water, which will encourage calf starter intake.

And, yes, spring will be here before we know it.

Commodity Classic To Offer Profit Opportunities

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — Commodity Classic, Feb. 27-March 1, in Charlotte, N.C., will be an exceptional opportunity for soybean and corn producers to gather information and knowledge that will help them increase their future profitability. Based on individual interest, growers will choose sessions they want to attend from a two-day schedule of concurrent sessions on many topics. In addition, because of the importance, all growers will have the opportunity to attend a stand-alone "Marketing Session."

Commodity Classic, the eighth annual convention and trade show of the American Soybean

Association (ASA) and National Corn Growers Association (NCGA), provides numerous opportunities to learn, discuss hot topics, see new products, and network with other growers.

ASA President Dwain Ford said, "Farmers, agribusiness leaders and other key players in the agriculture sector come together at Commodity Classic to share a variety of valuable information about production, products and resources."

NCGA President Fred Yoder said, "With nearly 700 booths, the trade show is an excellent opportunity for growers to see a wide variety of equipment and

products in one convenient location, making it easier to compare and ask questions."

The special "evening of entertainment" will feature an exciting and energy-filled show by Diamond Rio, an award-winning country music group. Commodity Classic is a perfect opportunity for growers to include their families and spend a few extra days enjoying the many activities in and around Charlotte. Complete details and registration information are on the Web at www.commodityclassic.com or call (636) 928-3700.

Extension Offers Pesticide Update Meetings

EBENSBURG (Cambria Co.) — Penn State Cooperative Extension in Cambria County will be conducting pesticide update trainings for crop producers this winter. A pesticide applicator certification exam will also be given.

Meetings will take place Feb. 4 and March 4 from 1 to 3 p.m. at the extension office in Ebensburg. Two Category 1 credits and two Core credits will be offered.

Topics for the three meetings will include Problem Weeds of

Pennsylvania, Herbicide Adjuvants, Insects in Forages, New Herbicides, and Drift Control.

The registration fee is \$3 per person for individuals who pre-register. Cost for walk-ins will be \$5 at the door. To preregister, send or drop off a check made payable to Cambria County Extension, P.O. Box 390, 499 Manor Drive, Ebensburg, PA 15931 at least five days prior to the meeting date. Be sure to indicate which meeting(s) you wish to attend.

The pesticide applicator's license exam will be given Feb. 21 from 9 a.m. to noon at the extension office in Ebensburg. No pre-registration is required to attend, but call the extension office at (814) 472-7986 to ensure adequate seating. Persons interested in taking the exam should contact the Penn State Publications Distribution Center at (877) 345-0691 to order the appropriate pesticide training materials. The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture will be administering the exam.

Holstein Silent Auction To Feature 60 Lots

TULARE, Calif. — The Next Generation Holstein Silent Auction during World Ag Expo, Feb. 11-13 in Tulare, will be featuring 60 lots from the industry's highest quality cow families. Comprised primarily of first choice female consignments, there will also be some prominent flush cows selling, as well as a number of frozen embryo lots.

The sale will be open for bidding during normal trade show

hours (9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday; 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Thursday) in the Dairy Pavilion of Western Dairy Business.

The sale will be organized and managed by Burton-Fellers Sales Inc., of Berryton and Overland Park, Kan. The experienced sales manager duo conducts hundreds of sales every year, including the Stars of the Silent Screen Sale, a silent auction conducted during World Dairy Expo.

The Next Generation Holstein

Silent Auction will feature 8x10 photographs of the dams of each consignment. Bids can be placed by name or bidding number (available at the sale information table), with minimum bid increments being \$200.

For more information on the sale, contact Dallas Burton at (785) 379-9774 or fax (785) 379-9775; or Ed Fellers at (913) 897-4121 or fax (913) 897-0954. Inquiries may also be e-mailed to dallasburton@msn.com.

Dairy Risk Management Workshop Set

SHELOCTA (Indiana Co.) — A dairy risk management workshop is scheduled for Monday, Feb. 10, at Sandy Kaye's Restaurant in Shelocta. The workshop will begin at 10 a.m. and conclude at 3 p.m.

The objective of this workshop is to help Pennsylvania dairy farmers develop the skills needed to plan and budget future milk production, income and expenses, and to incorporate dairy futures into a marketing plan. The workshop will focus on understanding the basics of how

milk is priced, evaluating the milk check, computing "basis," understanding futures markets, learning how to forward contract/hedge milk, developing a marketing plan, and using a hedging strategy.

The speaker for the workshop is Ken Bailey, associate professor of dairy markets and policy at Penn State. Bailey has developed a Web site to help Pennsylvania dairy producers better understand marketing questions: ([HYPERLINK http://dairyoutlook.aers.psu.edu/](http://dairyoutlook.aers.psu.edu/) [fhttp://dairyoutlook.aers.psu.edu/](http://dairyoutlook.aers.psu.edu/)).

Cost of attending the workshop is \$5 per person, with a registration deadline of Wednesday, Feb. 5. This program is supported in part by a USDA grant from the Northeast Center for Risk Management Education.

Please bring a calculator and your 2002 milk check stubs.

For additional information, and registration details, please contact Eugene Schurman at (724) 465-3880 or email at [HYPERLINK "mailto:exs10@psu.edu"](mailto:HYPERLINKmailto:exs10@psu.edu) exs10@psu.edu.

Land O'Lakes Supports Proposed PMMB Pooling Regulation

CARLISLE (Cumberland Co.) — Land O'Lakes, Inc., is encouraging all Pennsylvania dairy producers to contact their legislators and ask them to approve the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board's (PMMB) proposed regulation to pool 45 percent of the Pennsylvania over-order premium among all dairy farmers in the state.

Land O'Lakes was among several organizations who asked the PMMB to draft a pooling regulation more than two years ago. After a deliberative process open to all processor and producer

groups, the board submitted a final regulation.

"We commend the board on its regulation, formed through a compromise of all groups," said Dennis Schad, Land O'Lakes director of Mid-Atlantic regulatory and marketing affairs. "We have evaluated the effects that this regulation would have on the state's producers and on Class I milk sales in Pennsylvania, and we've shown that pooling would more fairly distribute the premium dollars without having any impact on Class I sales."

"With the current low milk

prices and last year's drought situation, all Pennsylvania producers need those premium dollars now more than ever," Schad said. "Postponing the pooling regulation's release would needlessly delay dairy producers in the state from receiving their fair share of the premium dollars."

According to Schad, a processor's decision on whether to bottle their Pennsylvania Class I milk in the state is dependent on in-state and out-of-state milk prices and should not be confused with the pooling regulation.

"We're talking about two sepa-

rate issues," he said. "The pooling regulation addresses producer inequities, and it was a compromise that pools a minority of the premium dollars. It provides little incentive for a produc-

er or producer organization to evade it.

"Delaying the release of the regulation any further would do more harm than good," Schad said.

Large dairies often require a huge labor force. How do dairies deal with communication management issues involving Hispanic labor? What are the challenges other producers have faced and what are their suggestions? See the next issue of *Lancaster Farming's Dairy Plus*, geared toward large-scale dairy operations, in the Feb. 15 issue. Also scheduled: news from the Penn State Hispanic Workforce Management Conference and what's required for the survival of the Northeast dairy industry.

