

Stray Voltage

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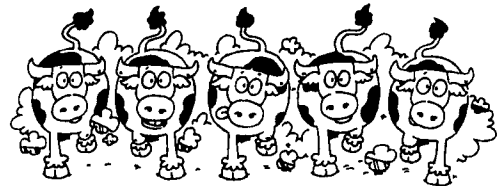
that the exposure to voltage will cause all types of disease. This may be possible at high levels, but at the levels I have found on the many farms I have monitored, potential current flow is well below the threshold of being a problem.

I see two problems that develop related to stray voltage. One is the diversion from real and existing problems. Much time, energy, and money can be spent chasing down purported stray voltage problems while overlooking real and fixable problems. An example is a recent farm visit that had been blaming stray voltage for a high somatic cell count and lameness problems. I measured no more than one-quarter volt in the barn on cow touch-points. Not significant. But I did see lameness causing acidosis and poor milking techniques resulting in damaged teat ends.

Another problem that I see is the merchandising of expensive "stray voltage" cures after questionable measurement methods. A small amount of voltage will exist almost anywhere between two points. So be certain that measurements depict connections between potential cow touch-points. Be careful if the person doing the measuring also has a

cure to sell. Get a second measurement done. If the two measurements are done correctly, they should support one another. If no significant voltage is detected, then you can move on to look for other causes to herd problems.

Stray voltage is real and can cause real problems when in the wrong place at high enough levels. But stray voltage is not difficult to rule in or out with proper methods and equipment. I find that it too often gets more time and blame than is warranted. It reminds me of Mark Twain's comment: "The rumors of my death have been greatly exaggerated."



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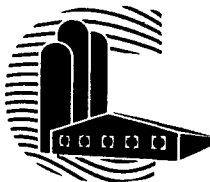
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