

Dairy Alliance Checks Producers' 'Calf Sense'

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Dr. Robert Van Saun addressed newborn calf health issues emphasizing the importance of taking in the whole picture when developing a calf health program.

"You can't vaccinate your way out of a disease or a biosecurity issue," said Van Saun as he reviewed the importance of calf care before, during, and after birth.

Van Saun said that 75 percent of calf losses in the first year of life happen during the first month.

Richard Stup spoke on the importance of calf care consistency and how to communicate it with calf managers on the farm.

"Actions in the first hours of life directly affect the calf's chance of survival," Stup said. "Dead calves don't make you money."

Stup reviewed ways to develop standard operation procedures (SOPs) for calf management, employee communication to maintain good calf care, and employer review of procedures.

"All this science is important," Stup said. "But we need to find a way to communicate and get it on the farm."

After the morning workshops, participants took their knowledge and put it to the test through hands-on training in tracking calf health, feeding, colostrum testing, SOP development, and record keeping.



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