



## April 2017 NEWSLETTER

### **Tetracycline Alert:**

There are still producers out there using tetracycline's without proper withdrawals. Why, because they have been able to. There are three tetracycline molecules used in food animal production; Oxytetracycline, Chlortetracycline, and just tetracycline. They all act about the same once in the animal. The current milk antibiotic tests only pick up tetracycline residue at high levels. This means that milk could be shipped with illegal levels and end up in the food chain and no one knew. This is about to change. Because of awareness by the industry of their inability to pick up illegal residues by the current methods and their awareness that producers are sending milk with illegal levels, testing is being ramped up. A word of warning, start paying attention to written withdrawals. The world changes, and "I always did it this way" is not an excuse when handed a bill for a tanker or silo of milk.

### **Tetanus Kills**

A couple times a year we are asked to examine animals that are down and stiff, sometimes bloated. Often several animals are affected. With rare exception the animals have one thing in common. They are either castrated with rubber bands, or they have their tail banded with rubber bands.

Tetanus is an organism that survives a spore in the soil essentially forever. It can't grow in the presence of oxygen. Inject the organism into your blood stream, nothing happens. But get it into dead tissue and the animal or person is in big trouble unless they are vaccinated. The bacteria produces a toxin that paralyzes muscle. The toxin is absorbed at the interface between dead tissue and live tissue. No dead tissue, no tetanus. Drugs can't really get to the dead tissue that the toxin is coming from, but we try. I've never seen an animal live except one dog in vet school.

There are a couple of simple solutions. First, don't use rubber bands to castrate. Just use a pair of scissors or a knife. There will be no dead tissue and it is easier than putting on the band. Consider an emasculator and a knife for tails. Second, use tetanus toxoid, (a vaccine), ideally two weeks before you apply the band. I've never seen tetanus when the vaccine was given at the same time as the band, probably because the dead tissue that is required by the tetanus organism takes a week or more to form.

The vaccine is less than two dollars an animal. Add the cost of the vet bill to examine the animal, and we often are told to try to treat, and this is one case where prevention is way less expensive than the disease.

*Saying Goodbye....After 43 years in practice, 10 at Waupun Vet and Malin Embryo Transfer, Dr. Steve Malin is officially retiring. We will still have some access to his expertise and we hope to see him around, but his shoulders are telling him that there is no future in wrestling with cattle. Dr. Abbie is certified and is out trying to fill some big boots. Her phone number is 920-344-1718. It's been really a great 10 years Steve. Thanks from all of us.*

### **Pink Slime lawsuit:**

Four years ago ABC news presented a very negative report on what they disparagingly called pink slime. The product in fact was the fat trimmings from butchered beef and then the trimmings were run through a centrifuge and the fat was removed, making a product that was pure muscle. From a green perspective, this was a great way to salvage more meat from a carcass. At that time 70% of all hamburger contained the product. After the ABC news report, the company, Beef Products Inc. closed all but one plant and laid off 700 employees. Currently, the case is moving forward in a South Dakota court with Beef Products suing for north of 5 billion in damages because the market for their product was destroyed. When Trump says the big news companies published false news, this is sure an example supporting him.

## Counting to two:

The educational bullet about tetanus brings home another point about using bands to castrate. Frequently we see steers purchased at sale barns that have one testicle that is hidden because someone put a band on the steer and only managed to include one testicle. There can only be two reasons for this. First, the guy putting the band on the steer can't count to two. I have tried to teach these guys to reach down and self check between every steer, but it seems to be a difficult concept. The second reason would be a deliberate attempt to fraudulently sell a bull as a steer. This improves profit because the calf grows better without being castrated, but the buyer doesn't realize he's been screwed until the steers are bigger and turn staggy. I'm afraid there are a lot of people that fall into this second category.

Years ago I had a producer that purchased colored steers from a sale barn way up north. These were coming out of the back woods and we would always have 10% or more of the steers turn up as bulls, and then we had to run them through a chute and then castrate with no scrotum, which is a very difficult procedure. The buyer for several years contacted the sale barn and complained, but the barn manager was unable to count or unwilling to check. The buyer seemed to accept that the hillbillies from northern Wisconsin were either unable to self check, or were crooked. I went along with it until an angus kicked at the wrong time and I ended up with a four inch cut in my arm. The rest of the day we collected the testicles. I then sent them UPS to the sale barn with a note explaining what they were, where they were in a steer, how many there weren't in a steer, the difference between a bull and a steer (6 to 10cents a pound for the buyer), and how the sale barn manager could check himself before he checked the steers and make a comparison, which I suggested was probably the only way he would be able to catch on. The good news was that we castrated on a Saturday, UPS on Monday, and it was a warm fall.

Evidently the sale manager didn't open the box, so word got out, and I heard about it from several truckers. It was vindictive and fun, but didn't help much. The guy was just unable to count to two.

Dr. Kolby was married to the future Dr. Jackie on Saturday in Randolph.

There were at least 30 Wisconsin Veterinarians at the wedding.



Dr. Mark was not in the picture, someone had to work. So that he didn't feel left out we enclosed his picture. The way it looks, working hard too!

Have a Happy and Blessed Easter!