

“What’s the Word on Orbeseal? “

Orbeseal is still in short supply, but there is a little more arriving every week. There are two new products that will be introduced as you are reading this letter and they will probably relieve the shortage. Do not stock up on this stuff because I anticipate something of a price war.

BI is introducing a product called ‘**lockout**’ which I think most producers and employees will really like. The tube is shorter and the barrel is larger in diameter but it fits much more comfortably in a normal person’s hand. The insertion tip is shorter and easier to get into the teat with less risk of stretching the teat end. The annoying bleb of air that is in Orbeseal is gone. The product is also blue, which some may like when they strip out fresh cows. At this time the product will cost about 30 cents more per cow, or \$13.00 a pail of 144 tubes. I would recommend trying it because I think the tube design will make you and your employees a lot happier.



A generic of Orbeseal called Mastishield is also being introduced. It should be exactly like Orbeseal but slightly less expensive unless you are a Zoetis Leaders Edge member,(in which case the Orbeseal will still be a better deal). Although I do expect a price war.

Important note for Administration of teat sealants: Any of these three products need to be administered carefully. There is a move to eliminate using dry cow antibiotic tubes and just use a teat sealant. This is great, but you will kill cows with toxic mastitis if you do not spend a tremendous amount of time training employees and making sure the product is administered in a sterile environment.

Key points:

1. The teats need to be incredibly clean before teat sealant is administered.
2. The teat end needs to be wiped clean with an alcohol wipe. Get big wipes from Walgreens or CVS in a pail and throw away the rinky-dink wipes you get with the teat sealant.
3. Do not touch or brush or in any other manner contaminate the teat end after it is wiped with alcohol and before the teat sealant is inserted.
4. Dip the teat immediately after sealant is administered with a teat dip.

Suggested methods: Option one, do teats individually, clean, alcohol wipe, administer sealant. Start with far teats and work towards yourself. Do this the same with every udder. Never massage the udder because the teat sealant needs to stay in the teat. Option two, do the two farthest teats, then the two closest teats. Option three, clean the far teats, then close teats, wipe with alcohol the far teats and then the close teats, then administer the teat sealant in the close teats, then the far teats. This requires thought and habit formation.

5. Be sure the teat sealant tip is not removed until it is about to go in the teat, do not ever touch or contaminate the end of the teat sealant tube or you need to throw it away. Never put tubes in warm water before you administer.

Beef Implant meeting:

There is a dinner meeting on February 8 at 5:30 pm at Leahy's in Fairwater that is going to target the use of implants. This will include the use in different production systems from birth to slaughter. Beef cow calf, dairy beef feeding, and people purchasing feeders can all benefit from using implants correctly. There is no other procedure in animal agriculture which gives the financial return that implanting does when done correctly. This is a reminder and we tried to do a direct mailing to everyone we thought would be interested. We need an RSVP to the office at 920-324-3831

Thoughts on hedging to reduce risk:

There is no possible way to hedge a profit with today's prices. End of story. In order to capture profit or prevent loss in hedging one needs volatility, price swings that move into profit and loss areas. Today, there is only loss. Realize that every form of hedging, whether LGM or options, or actual contracts requires an entity on the other side of the trade accepting a position opposite yours including an insurance company for LGM. There is no one in this market willing to risk that the market will swing significantly higher or that believes that there will be a production decrease any time soon. LGM has the advantage of government subsidizing about a third of the cost, but since its introduction it hasn't paid out much to producers. For producers that are required by their lenders to have some form of catastrophic protection there are no options. For everyone else, the catastrophe that hedging was supposed to protect against is here and we are living it.

I sure hope that Trump doesn't screw up NAFTA with regards to agricultural exports.

Commodity	% of WI Exports to CAN & MEX
Corn	19
Soybeans	54
Wheat	2
Rice	21
Fruit/Veg	53
Dairy Products	49
Live Animals	88
Beef	34
Pork	94
Poultry	79

Why Cows Die:

A recent issue of Dairy Herd Management had an article on why cows die. This is an often ignored subject, because after a cow dies, you can't do anything about it. However, cull cows are a significant source of often ignored income, and dead cows are a significant loss of income. Monitoring death requires a standardized set of reasons for cause of death, and a standardized definition of death. For me, a dead cow is any cow you don't get paid for. So if it goes to slaughter and is condemned, it is a dead cow. You can argue this, but in reality you want to identify animals that are going to be condemned earlier and try to ship them earlier, when they still have value. A simple list would include Injury, Pneumonia, Gut or GI, Mastitis, and Calving. One could expand it slightly but don't over think it. If monitoring GI issues one could break out HBS or diarrhea or DA's. Somewhere in the records every dead cow should be recorded and losses should be evaluated.