



## November 2016 NEWSLETTER

### Cancer in cattle

The two primary types of cancer in cattle are squamous carcinoma of the eye, and lymphosarcoma which is caused by a virus.

The eye cancer starts on the eyelid, almost always in cattle with white skin around the eye (Herefords having a predilection but common in Holsteins as well). If it is caught early a quick surgery usually takes care of the problem. Often the growth is ignored and the cancer grows deep into the tissue and then it results in the animal being shipped. If the slaughter plant correctly diagnoses the cancer the entire animal will be condemned. The take home is that if you see a small growth around the edge of a cow's eye, just have the vet check it next time they're out.

Lymphosarcoma is totally different in that it is caused by a virus and the cancer comes in several forms. The most common form is that the lymph nodes start to enlarge, often at different rates. There are several nodes inside the abdomen that we can check with rectal palpation. There are also nodes at the top of the rear udder, nodes in front of the stifle, and nodes in front of the front shoulder. There are nodes behind the eyes which can enlarge and cause one eye to start to protrude, and there are nodes behind and below the jaw that can enlarge.

The virus is found in up to half the animals in a herd and is spread with common use of needles, dehorning equipment, possibly single use sleeves, and biting insects- shared blood. There is no treatment and at the slaughter plant they will condemn the animal if they diagnose cancer.



### Holiday Blood Lab Hours:

The blood lab will be closed Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of Thanksgiving week. Last year we had some misunderstandings on BioPRYN testing the Friday after Thanksgiving, but samples received on Wednesday November 23 or Friday November 25 will be held and run the following Monday November 28 with results on Tuesday November 29. We apologize for the inconvenience.

### Mastitis Treatment Savings

Before treating a mastitis case, answer three questions:

First, is the cow sick? If she is, obviously she needs treatment, perhaps not so much the quarter as the entire cow. The cow needs fluids, Banamine, and depending on who you talk to systemic (IV or IM) antibiotics.

Second question if she isn't sick, what has her cell count been the last few months? Obviously you need DHIA records for this. But if the cow has been a high cell count cow, or what is referred to as a chronic cow, treatment may make the milk look good in a day, but her cell count will probably stay high and the net result is dumped milk and money invested in antibiotics with no long term improvement in udder health.

The third question is what bug am I dealing with? Most of you have eliminated contagious mastitis from your herd (Strep Ag and Staph Aureus) which involve a totally different strategy. Therefore, in most cases a culture will show either a gram positive staph or strep, a coliform, or no growth. With no growth and coliforms in which the cow isn't sick, antibiotics don't change the disease outcome. Again they just cause dumped milk and increased expense for drug purchases. That leaves working out with your herd vet a drug treatment plan for the gram positive strep and staphs.

The take home is that if you are going to treat a mastitis case, first select cows in which treatment pays. Secondly, measure success with a cow with a SCC below 200,000 on the next DHIA test.

A thought on government stimulus policies with the election approaching; a quote from Winston Churchill, "Can a people tax themselves into prosperity? Can a man stand in a bucket and lift himself up by the handle?"

**Attached is a series of “How To” shots on paste dehorning.**

1-Do as soon after birth as possible, preferably under 24 hours old and clip around horn bud.



2-Apply small amount of paste with a wooden applicator stick. An amount the size of a dime is sufficient.

3-Wrap head gently with duct tape to prevent the paste from being rubbed off by the calf or rinsed off by rain.



4-Remove tape a day later.

Use Meloxicam at the rate of 45mg (3 yellow tablets) per newborn calf for pain relief

**New Calf vaccine:** Merck has introduced **Bovilis Coronavirus** vaccine.

This is a new intranasal vaccine that was developed because the corona virus is a common cause of scours in baby calves and also commonly found in calf pneumonias. The vaccine is given at birth and can be repeated. I think this may be a good tool to try in some situations with scours problems or calf pneumonia problems.



Congratulations to Swiss Valley Farms for being the 2016 dairy exporter of the year. They started exporting only eight years ago. I do fear for the dairy industry with the anti trade rhetoric I hear from both presidential candidates. 14% of milk is exported in one form or another.