

Foreign Dairy Farmers Learn from WVS Vets

Waupun Veterinary Services assisted World Wide Sires in teaching various farm animal medicine topics to farmers and veterinarians from all over the world recently. The group of visitors included producers, consultants, and veterinarians who came from Australia, Morocco, Argentina, Panama, Latvia, Italy and Hungary. The group spent a week in Wisconsin and three days with WVS vets.

During their visit they spent one day with Dr. Wade who discussed young stock and genetic testing in heifer program planning. He also shared with the group information about calf lung ultrasound, which is a fairly new practice and not done much outside of the U.S. The group then visited a local farm to see the process of calf lung ultrasounding.

The next day Dr. Ralph led the group with a presentation on lameness and hoof trimming. He shared ideal approaches to correct hoof lameness. He then led the group in a hands-on demonstration with cow feet from a processor to practice the trimming techniques he discussed. After trying their hand at hoof trimming, he took them to a local farm where they learned more from a farm employee who trims hooves.

Dr. Monty finished out the visit the third day with presenting information on cow-calf comfort, ventilation, and approaches to ventilation issues and solutions. He also presented trouble shooting ventilation for calves. The group toured another area farm where they could see firsthand modern ventilation system.

A trip to Waupun Veterinary Services was among one of their stops during their week-long visit. Although they couldn't purchase any scripted items, they were excited to purchase weight tapes, thermometers, dehorning paste, metal tube calf feeders, OB chain, casting bands, casting pliers, keto sticks, ph paper and an IV set. All items they said are not readily available to them in their countries. I think sometimes we need to step back and really count our blessings. It's so easy for us to run to town to get supplies, even though it seems like a burden many days, but imagine not even being able to get many of the items listed above.



Dr. Monty is pictured with farmers and vets from throughout the world during a week-long visit to the Waupun area.

Denmark Passes Burp and Fart tax on Livestock

Denmark has passed a carbon tax on farm animals. Cattle, pigs, and sheep will be taxed, or the farmers that own them will be taxed.

According to CNN it will amount to \$100 a cow based on estimates of how much a cow burps and farts. There's no indication that high producing cows that eat more will be taxed more. Nor will any reduction in burping from nutritional management on the part of the farmer reduce the tax. This is perhaps the stupidest tax I've ever seen. If you don't like the tax, you can quit farming. In the end, it adds costs to Danish farmers which means Danish farmers will have more expenses, which will increase imports or the cost of Danish food. Just another feel good environmental rule.

USDA Finally Enacts New Rules for Official ID

After what seems like a decade of on-again off-again discussion, effective November 5 (Yep, it already happened), USDA has implemented mandatory 840 animal identification using RFID or EID tags, which are electronic tags that can be read with a wand as well as having a visual component. If an animal already has an 840 metal or bangle 840 tag, continue to use that tag. If that tag falls out, it has to be replaced with an RFID tag. Any calf born after Nov. 5, 2024, can only be identified with an RFID tag. If you still have metal tags, they might work as fishing sinkers. Our lab will only run Johnes samples on animals with official 840 numbers because we are federally licensed as are all Johnes labs. The clinic uses an orange RFID tag for brucellosis vaccinating.

In researching the RFID article, I found an interesting study on the comparison of metal ear tags, the old clip-on that we used for brucellosis, and plastic bangle tags. The study was on range cattle in heavy brushy rugged pasture. Almost a third of the metal tags came out, and only 3% of the bangle tags came out. The brand of bangle tags would have been interesting, but it wasn't listed.

Hunting Pheasants and Talking to N.D. Farmers

In late October I spent a week hunting pheasants in North Dakota. There were lots of birds which meant I had time to talk to local farmers in a variety of environments.

One farmer who lets us pheasant hunt has thousands of acres and 350 beef cows. He sold his dairy cows a decade ago. He keeps back his own heifer calves for replacement but sells the rest of the calves after weaning. His herd is basically black angus with Herford for mothering instinct. I was surprised he sold his calves at a local sale barn, because he processes the calves, vaccinates and castrates, while they are still nursing on pasture and then weans three weeks later.

I would pay a premium for his calves! He didn't understand why I thought his process was excellent.

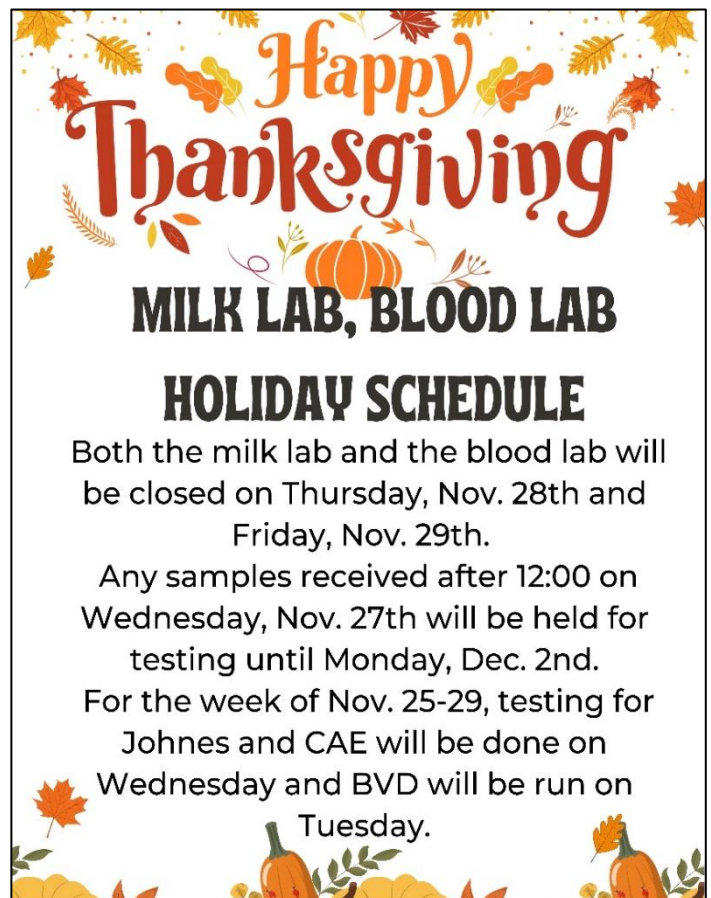
Another rancher I talked to weaned and backgrounded his calves and sold at about 7 to 8 hundred in March, feeding them pasture and corn stubble and supplements. The bean crop was so great that there were piles and piles of beans at elevators wherever we went. The local butcher was telling me he butchers all cattle, one pig a year, and he wanted to know if the fact that the spleen in this year's pig was big, and last year's pig was small would indicate that this was going to be a bad winter. I told him we didn't learn that in vet school. Four thousand buys an acre of land, recently that was just pasture.

Dr. Al Martens is the author of the Waupun Veterinary Services monthly newsletter. To read past editions visit our website at www.wdtimes.com.

New Use for Political Postcard Advertisements?

I have a long-time friend in Iowa that I reach out to monthly. He and his brother were dairy farmers and his grandfather, and my grandfather were best friends. He's active in politics so guess what the topic usually drifts to. The last time I talked to him we got on the topic of the huge postcard style political adds that have been filling our mailboxes.

Does anyone even look at them? His comment was at least politicians could send them on some soft paper to wipe your butt with.



Happy Thanksgiving

MILK LAB, BLOOD LAB

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Both the milk lab and the blood lab will be closed on Thursday, Nov. 28th and Friday, Nov. 29th.

Any samples received after 12:00 on Wednesday, Nov. 27th will be held for testing until Monday, Dec. 2nd.

For the week of Nov. 25-29, testing for Johnes and CAE will be done on Wednesday and BVD will be run on Tuesday.