

Lactipro Shows Potential Benefits

Bacterial Supplement New Option for Producers

By Dr. Al Martens
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Late September brings the World Dairy Expo to Madison. I haven't been to the show in some time because my wife and I grouse hunt up north during that week, but I've walked the booths in the past. Based on the advertisement of the companies at the event, if you purchased every supplement advertised to enhance milk production by one to two pounds per day, your herd will produce 250 pounds per cow per day. I'm a great skeptic of all the special supplements for cattle (same with human food, just drink milk and eat fruits and vegetables).

But occasionally a product comes along that does work, especially in certain situations.

With that background, I am impressed with the bacterial supplement called Lactipro[®]. Lactipro[®] is a specialized refrigerated probiotic for beef and dairy cattle containing the bacteria *Megasphaera elsdenii*. In vet school, if a professor misspelled that name on a true/false test the answer would have been false, because it was misspelled. I know, you don't care.

It stabilizes rumen pH, reducing metabolic issues during feed changes, transport and stress while promoting faster, safer transitions to high-energy diets.

A take home from Lactipro[®] is that this bacterium is a normal part of the normal bacterial flora in the rumen. This bacterium thrives on lactic acid, which is the acid that causes rumen acidosis. By adding this bacterium at high levels, just prior to nutritional situations that risk the production of excess lactic acid, the companies many research studies show that the rumen pH, (measure of acid) stays higher for up to two weeks. This is long enough for the rumen to adjust.

What are some critical times when rumen acidosis is important? Those critical times include



when ration changes during transition, baby calves just starting on feed, and feedlot steers going from a high roughage diet to a high concentrate diet. The company making the product, Axiota, has done multiple research trials to show that the acid levels in the rumen are reduced for extended times.

The results are extended, not like giving some bicarb and 8 hours later nothing has changed. With Lactipro, the bacteria continue to eat up the excess lactic acid until the rumen stabilizes.

The product comes as a single dose cow or calf capsule or a liquid for drenching. Single dose is key. Another important point is the product absolutely must be kept cold to keep it viable.

Dependability?

The mail delivery of statements is getting to be a bigger issue.

This past month we had five regular clients that didn't receive their statement. If you are interested, we can simply email you the statement and skip the post office all together. We have several clients that receive their statements by email.

I've noticed the post office is good at delivering all the requests for donations though...

“It was just a pocket knife...”

A Hunting Story by Dr. Al with Dr. Monty

By Dr. Al Martens

Waupun Veterinary Services

If you know Monty, this is a funny story. It's a two-part story.

Part 1. Not long after Monty started at WVS, Monty and I were grouse hunting northwest of Princeton in the Germania Marsh. I had an old junk rusted out pickup that I was driving, on a bumpy gravel trail, when the exhaust pipe between the engine and the muffler broke, or more precisely rusted through. The muffler started dragging on the gravel and I wanted to drive home and salvage the muffler. I climbed under the truck, while Monty supervised from a standing position. There was a single rusted hanger holding the remaining muffler assembly onto the truck.

I had no tools, so I asked Monty if he had a pocket knife. He produced a big foldout knife; it may have had a bone handle. When he tells the story today it was gold inlaid, a gift from the US President. I used the knife blade to hack through the rusted metal and release the muffler hanger.

If the blade had been good quality, like super knife advertisements on TV, it wouldn't have even been dull, but for weeks Monty lamented that his knife was ruined, he could never get an edge back on the cheap blade.

I offered to sharpen it for him but for some reason he wouldn't let me touch it.

Part 2. South Dakota November pheasant hunting, 6 or 8 years later. A heavy fresh snow had fallen overnight, after the pheasants had gone into the cattails to roost. Monty and I pushed into a 20-acre cattail marsh and pheasants started getting up all around us. They burst up through the snow into the sunshine with snow cascading off them. There were a lot of pheasants. My first shot was a rare misfire where the primer went but the powder didn't, and usually when this happens, the wad sticks in the shotgun choke.

If you shoot again without clearing the stuck wad, the barrel end can explode and peel back like banana skin. I've seen it happen. I'm frantically trying to clear the wad, and I watch Monty shoot at three roosters within a minute. Because he was using cheap steel shot shells, all he did was knock feathers off the



A young Dr. Monty is pictured above in front of a vet truck holding some pheasants after a hunt with Dr. Al and one of his favorite hunting dogs.

birds, and then we watched them fly away. I had a pocket full of Tungsten shot shells, better than lead, but very expensive.

I asked if I could use his pocket knife, and in exchange I gave him a bunch of shells. Birds were still getting up. In a panic, I leveraged the knife blade into the shotgun barrel, trying to wedge out the plastic wad, and promptly broke the very tip of the knife, not even half an inch.

Monty went three for three on the next three birds, as did I, and in five minutes we had a limit of six pheasants. Here I had saved Monty's hunt, an 8-hour drive from Wisconsin, and all he could do was rant about his ruined knife. And it was still quite functional except maybe not for stabbing things. And he has never let me forget. He has also never lent me a knife again.

I think he was lucky I was along with good shells.

Avian Influenza Update

As of mid-March, there are no new herds in the entire United State with Avian Influenza. Bird migration is starting. It does not look like this disease is going away in poultry.