



•For clients that want the convenience of the herd vet bringing out vaccines and other pharmaceuticals, please remember a few things:

- Tell the office staff the day before, so they can put your request together and get the veterinarian to pick up the product. For most of you, the office is calling the afternoon before herd checks.
- Most of the veterinarians leave from their homes and go directly to calls, the office is rarely 'on the way'. The vet may also be running an emergency in your neighborhood before they head to your farm. Running back to the office won't work.
- The stickers that ID the clinic and veterinarian can be filled out by the office ahead of time so you and the veterinarian can save time.

We carry less product on our vehicles than in the past so a heads up from you ensures we have what you want with us. Thanks

• **Ear Tag Shortage:** I don't know if the problem is in the Suez Canal, the port of Los Angeles, maybe a shortage of plastic because of the shutdown in Texas' plastic production, or perhaps the Chinese are just being jerks. Regardless of its origin, Allflex ear tags are hard to get, along with several drugs and vaccines. I recommend ordering well in advance.

• **Just a quick reminder:** Bulk tank cultures done weekly or monthly will pick up contagious bacteria before they impact your SCC and milk production. Bulk tank cultures act as insurance that problems are caught early.

**Ketosis Economics:** Catching ketosis early using a ketone monitor to test BHBA levels can save money in several ways. Each case of ketosis costs about \$300 because it increases the risk of DA's, drops total lactation milk production for lactation, and delays breeding. Cows with ketosis also have an increased risk of culling in the first 30 days which is the worst time to lose a cow.

**Washing towels for Milking Parlors:** We all know that a cloth towel is dirty after being used to wipe teats. So into the washing machine it goes. The washing machine gets it reasonably clean. However if you sample that towel for bacteria, there are still lots of microscopic bugs present. It is the dryer that kills the bacteria, and it's a combination of the heat and just being really dry. So make sure your towels are coming out of the dryer bone dry.

**Protocol Drift:** If you manage people, "protocol drift" is important. It's just a fancy name for when your employees (or maybe you) forgot the exact way to do something, or think a slightly different way is better, resulting in an "on the fly" adjustment in your farms protocols. Examples of protocols you or the vet set up might range from giving a prostaglandin shot on Tuesday morning, or paste dehorning calves before they are three days old, or always checking the temperature of milk replacer water before you mix. There are thousands of important protocols on every farm. Even when the farm is a husband-and-wife team there are protocols, and there will be drift. But there are costs to protocol drift.

The employee that is tasked with the prostaglandin injection perhaps waits until the afternoon, or because the dairy is out of 1.5-inch needles tries a 1-inch needle. The milk replacer mixes fine in colder water. Someone forgets to put dehorning paste on the calves until they are a week old. In all three examples, there are no immediate consequences. If fewer cows are pregnant a month from now, it's considered normal variation.

The solution to protocol drift is written protocols and timely review. Sometimes it seems boring, but catching errors early prevents bigger catastrophes later.

## Selling Online:

I had an old 4-wheeler that still ran but was close to 20 years old. The seat was cracked and weathered and foam padding was exposed, so if it rained you got a wet butt for the next two days whenever you sat down. The tires were worn from the road and one fender was split, but it ran. The hours were not very high (maybe 2000) because I only used it around home. The dealer did not really want it and offered me \$500 on a trade, so I decided to sell it privately on Craigslist.

I posted a bunch of pictures including the worn tires, the bad seat, and the cracked fender. I listed the year and the model. I asked \$800 firm, because if I couldn't get that I was going to leave it with my kid who lives a mile down the road and could use it. I included a statement: "The price is not negotiable."

I got a couple emails right away, the first guy wanted to come that night at 6:00 to look at it. I was going to my kid's house after dinner to work on the machine shed. I'm thinking 6:00 p.m. will work, so I tell the guy six, but that I'm really busy, and will have to leave by 6:30. The second guy can't come until the next evening so I tell him he is second in line.

6:00 and I was waiting. I couldn't start any projects, so I start moving some stuff around my garage. (My garage is a mess; I tell my wife I keep it that way so when I have a little spare time I can clean the garage. It's a bit of a sore point). 6:30 the guy shows up and I ask right away, are you a veterinarian? He looks at me funny and says no, why? I tell him I have a bunch of veterinarian partners and they're always late, but the sarcasm flies right over his head. He looks at the 4-wheeler, and I start it. "It's green," are his first words. I'm thinking, that's the color in the picture I posted on Craigslist, but maybe I got the angles wrong in the photo. Then he mentions he was hoping it was camo. I'm thinking this is an 18-year-old \$800 4-wheeler, really? Then he says the "The seat's bad". I'm questioning in my mind if I missed that in the ad. He drives it down the drive and back, then plays with the torn seat and the fender. We did some small talk but I'm quickly losing patience. This is not like buying a new house. By 7:15 I'm figuring my kid is getting frustrated, I'm getting wired, and the sun is setting. "I guess not," the guy said. I say a quick goodbye and leave.

Later that night, 5 more emails to respond to, and I called the guy that wants to come tomorrow. He plans on being there at 7:00. Right after dinner, I head to the shed project, but leave at 6:45 and tell the kid I'll be back in a half hour. In my dreams. The guy shows up at 7:15, tells me his GPS didn't tell how long it would take, and has beer breath. Same show with the seat as the last guy. Now I'm thinking I need to look at my ad, maybe put 5 more pictures of the seat. At 7:45 he offers me \$600. I say it's \$800 firm, he offers \$700. I'm thinking I should give him the phone number to Miracle Ear where I got my hearing aids. I tell him I'm gone, have to go work on a shed, he says he only brought \$700 but he'll have another \$100 in two days, on Friday after he gets paid. Thank God he didn't offer to write a rubber check. I'm wondering why this guy is buying a 4-wheeler, when what he needs is a second job. I tell him to check back on Friday.

Later that night I check emails, make a couple phone calls, I can't remember what I told to who or who wants to come when. I take down the ad from Craigslist. I did remember someone was coming the next night at 6:00 so for the third evening in a row I'll stick around and get little done on the shed. By 6:30 I've got two people looking at the 4-wheeler, both are wondering how much it will cost to fix the seat.

I've still got the 4-wheeler over at the kids. We're still working on the shed.

When you think about the market for cheese, remember that cheese is not just cheese. When consumers eat out of the home, mozzarella drives the market, which hopefully happens soon. When consumers were homebound from COVID rules, mozzarella sales dropped, and cheddar shot up.



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