



FEBRUARY 2020 NEWSLETTER

Client Meeting “How to Feed Your Cows Matters” presented by Dr. Dave Ohman from Diamond V

Where: Waupun Pizza Ranch

Date: Thursday, February 20

Time: Food will be available starting at 11:30, Presentation is at 12:00

The presentation will be about one hour long with Dr. Dave Ohman from Diamond V presenting “How You Feed Your Cows Matters”. His focus will be on proper TMR mixing and feeding to optimize rumen health. Consistency matters a lot and is arguably the single most important job on your dairy is the feed mixer.

Hope to see everyone there. An RSVP would be helpful so we know the room size. If you call the clinic during office hours, they can put a note down and call you with a reminder February 19.

With the new year maybe a new year’s resolution for some clients would be to enhance your accounting accuracy. Following are a few simple ideas and a couple more complex ideas.

1. Keep a separate checkbook for your farm (business) so when doing bookwork everything in the farm checkbook is related to farm expenses. Write a draw check from the farm checkbook to a personal checkbook. I am amazed at how many people don’t do this. In a PDPW farm business class I took, it was amazing the number of participants that didn’t realize what they spent on personal items. A family of four can easily spend \$75,000 a year, especially with no budget.
2. Keep separate credit cards accounts for the farm and for personal. When the farm credit card bill arrives; break it down into expense accounts at the same time you pay the bill with the farm checkbook and attach individual invoices to the credit card bill for verification. Obviously pay the home credit card with the home checkbook or enter the payment as a draw from the farm account.
3. Dedicate time to either set up a simple accounting spread sheet on excel, or uses quick books, sage, or farm specific software. Get help setting the program up and entering data. Then dedicate time to enter data every week when it is fresh in your mind.
4. Get receipts for everything farm related.
5. If you use any software, set it up on an accrual basis when you first start using it, or on the first of the year. Accrual isn’t the method used by farmers to report tax liabilities to the IRS, but it does tell you actual profit and loss and is more important for your business management. In accrual you put all your expenses in when they occur even if you don’t pay them. You do the same for sales. If you do \$25,000 of custom work for the neighbor and you expect to get paid, enter it into your software, and if you have a \$10,000 vet bill you expect to pay, then it should be in the software even if you aren’t paying it this month. This allows you to evaluate your finances at a glance, all in one place. It’s easy to go quickly from accrual to cash to satisfy the IRS. It’s a lot harder to go from cash to accrual to see if you are profitable.
6. Remember if you can’t measure it, you can’t manage it. This applies to your finances the same as tons of corn silage per acre.



This picture shows Merck's new teat sealant at the top and the bottom, with a light blue cap. The other three products on the market are shown in between Merck's. Merck needed the product to complement their mastitis portfolio and it will help producers meet purchase targets for special deals. Merck's ShutOut is using the selling point that their little end tip comes off easier than the others. Lockout from BI is the dark blue colored product and has the shortest tube which is the easiest for small handed people to squeeze. For

many, the important point is that the new ShutOut is the least expensive (See chart). The really important point for dairy producers is that whatever product you use, it must be placed in the teat correctly! If an easy-off tip helps with application, then it becomes important. If the short syringe helps, then it is important. Putting teat sealant in a cow at dry off is a really critical event in the mammary gland, especially if you contaminate the quarter which can kill the cow. We've seen it happen. Constantly reassess your procedure and evaluate employee's procedure. Maybe saving a dollar and losing a cow isn't a wise tradeoff.

DROP SHIP PRICE COMPARISON OF TEAT SEALANTS

Product	ShutOut	Orbeseal	LockOut	Mastishield	BoviBlock
Company	Merck	Zoetis	BI	Aspen Vet	MWI
Drop ship Cost per tube	\$1.89	\$2.19	\$2.29	\$1.96	\$1.98

** As usual there are some price changes for the new year. Merck just increased their prices February 1. The good news is that Estrumate 50 dose bottle dropped \$10 /bottle and Nuflor actually dropped 10%. Resflor cost went up 3% a bottle.

Calf Pneumonia records:

Almost every farm has too many heifers. What to do with all the heifers is topic for an entire newsletter. However, keeping good records on medical treatments can help make a few decisions simple. It's also important for the F.A.R.M. program and other audits. As an added incentive, it is Federal Law that you keep records of every animal you treat with antibiotics no matter the age.

Unfortunately, calf pneumonia is a common issue on most dairies. It does impact the production of the heifer when she becomes an adult, but in most cases the calf recovers and there is no obvious damage to the calf's lungs. What about older calves? Is the occasional calf that is 8 months old a new infection or a flare-up from a calf that had pneumonia when she was 6 weeks old? What about the yearling that has pneumonia in the pen and she is the only one that has any evidence of illness? Producers need records on what calves were treated, when, and with what drug.

Using treatment records will allow you to cull heifers before they become wrecks in the fresh pen or milking pen. Calves that get pneumonia a second time in their life, especially if they get it twice after weaning, are not going to be profitable. Get rid of them. Don't breed them. Don't feed them another day for \$2.50 a day. And don't put more drugs for \$40 a treatment into the heifer. Cut your losses, cut your fresh pen problems and eliminate the animal.

But you need records to make this decision.

Cow pushers needed?

I went shopping in a huge grocery store while visiting Madison. My wife normally does the grocery shopping, but she's had both hips replaced in the last three months, so I got the job. We normally shop right in Waupun at a tiny little store that fits inside the produce department of the behemoth I was in. List in hand I searched for her items, back and forth crisscrossing the store, frustrated, with a cart in front of me and no stockers around to answer questions. It made me think about moving cows. People move about 2.5 to 3 miles per hour at a brisk walk. Cows move about 1 to 1.5 miles per hour. That's half the speed of people. And cows don't like to be hurried, they get excited and they slip and fall and then don't let their milk down for the next 30 minutes. But there were a lot of people in the grocery store that need to work pushing cows, because they didn't even move at 1 mile per hour. When you add in a cell phone and a shopping cart, there were a lot of people that didn't move at all. Not only did they not move but the aisles were just about wide enough for three shopping carts, however these people managed to block the entire aisle. So next time you're trying to hire cow pushers, think about going to a really large grocery store to recruit. Just don't expect much out of anyone you hire there beyond cow-pushing.