

Investigating Possible Cause of Dead Dry Cows

This article relates to one of the most difficult jobs on a dairy farm. Recently two of our veterinarians investigated a mastitis outbreak in just dried off cows. Five dead cows, dry less than a week.

The process of infusing dry tubes and teat sealants had introduced a contaminant in the udder. This happens more than people realize because people don't investigate the cause of a single dead dry cow. When you have a half dozen, then it becomes a bit of a crisis.

The cause is acute toxic mastitis, usually some form of gangrene mastitis. Proper dry off procedures are like doing surgery, the cleanliness and disinfection are just as important as surgical preparation.

The reason I consider it one of the most difficult jobs is because it appears easy, but the focus necessary for keeping everything clean and disinfected, the attention to proper protocol while working under a dairy cow is hard. Just the slightest contamination can create sick or dead cow. Try to keep employees focused and constantly retrain.

National Scrapie Results

As of June 30, 2022, WVS and its cooperators sampled 17,310 animals for scrapie testing in 2022; 16,181 at slaughter and 1,129 on-farm; 11,243 were sheep and 6,067 were goats. No animals have tested positive for scrapie in 2022.

We are getting close to eliminating this disease from the United States.



Lap AI is in Full Swing!

Dr. Emma has been busy this month performing laparoscopic artificial insemination in sheep and goats. In the photo above she makes two small incisions in the ewe where she looks at the uterus through an endoscope in one hand and then uses the other hand to inseminate. WVS vet technicians Angie Arndt and Brianna Westhuis are critical to the whole operation. Future vet student, Gabby Huitema also helped at many of the Lap AI events. Dr. Jackie, Dr. Kelsey and Dr. Molly have all also assisted this month.

Drop Ship Program Available

This is just a friendly reminder related to our drop ship program. By purchasing product with our drop ship program, you save from 5 to 15 percent.

There is no time loss waiting in the office. We use two different companies, and you can either call the inside rep at a company or call the office and they will place the order for you. If you choose not to use the program, please call ahead to allow the office time to sticker your product and produce an invoice.

We can always add a couple of forgotten items when you arrive but calling ahead saves you time.

Allergic Reactions in Cattle

We hear about allergic reactions almost daily. People can die from bee stings or eating peanuts. But what really happens?

An allergic reaction is an inadvertent over reaction of the immune system to a foreign protein or protein combination, and it can be deadly. There needs to be an initial exposure to the product causing the allergic reaction, but the exposure can occur repeatedly for years without a problem, and then suddenly the body triggers an allergy. In severe cases, the lungs fill with fluid and the airways in the lungs constrict. This is life threatening and epinephrine is the antidote. In humans with a bee sting allergy, those affected always carry an epi pen or epinephrine injection with them.

We have producers who keep epinephrine on hand for cattle with vaccine reactions. A less severe manifestation in cows may be swelling of the vulva and or eyes with excess salivation and diarrhea.

The reaction occurs within minutes after the offending vaccine or drug is injected.

Newsletter Basics with Dr. Al

I started doing the WVS newsletter almost 40 years ago. My purpose is to educate and remind producers of easily overlooked errors that can cause big problems.

As the practice grew, I added more updates related to new staff and new services. Throughout the years I've had people upset because they said I was picking on them or they thought I was pointing out they were stupid. We all make mistakes, but no one is stupid. I know everyone is extremely busy and we all forget little things of being busy. I only change the oil in my truck because the notification comes up, otherwise it would be 25 thousand miles. So, I'm not picking on anyone. I also like to inject a little humor to keep the newsletter light.

Dr. Monty Did it this Time

Last year in a summer newsletter I picked on Emma for bidding against herself at the Fond du Lac County Fair and then buying a goat. So, this year Mark S. went with her. No goat, but Mark had to have two beers afterward. Emma had too much energy.

Then at the Alto Fair I sat next to Monty, and he bid against himself a couple times, finally the auctioneer had to reel him in.

California Animal Production Standards May Affect Wisconsin

California has passed a ballot initiative called Proposition 12 which sets standards for how pigs are raised if the pork is going to be sold in California. It also mandates all eggs be produced by cage free poultry if the eggs are sold in California.

In essence California wants to set standards for animal production in Wisconsin, or Australia if pork is going to be imported from Australia to California. A slippery slope but so far, the courts have upheld California law. The argument hinges on animal cruelty and California's definition of cruelty.

In my view, there are three issues that are critical. First, product produced according to California rules but produced outside of California must be segregated, which will add significantly to the price of the product. But in California, residents are used to government rules inflating costs. Second, although a noble cause, the definition of cruelty is in the eye of the beholder. It could be argued that a free stall barn is cruel compared to a dozen cows free grazing on a sunny hillside. Third, although the claimed cause is animal housing, similar arguments can be used to limit trade.

An example could be, 'because Wisconsin doesn't trust other states drug use guidelines for calves, no beef can be sold in Wisconsin unless the animal was born on a Wisconsin farm.' Excuses for restricting trade can get creative which is why until this initiative, courts have always upheld that only the federal government could regulate interstate trade.

The supreme court will hear the case in October with 26 states attorney generals and the Biden administration who are urging the proposition be shot down as unconstitutional.

Reminder!

Call before 10 a.m. for your non-emergency or routine work.