



November 2019 NEWSLETTER

- The problem with averages is outliers. A farm averaging over 100 lb of milk/cow/day that is feeding an open cow making 20 lb is selling a lot of milk but still losing money on that one cow. A farm with a 100,000 cell count that doesn't go look at a cow that just spiked a 2 million cell count is missing a treatment opportunity for the mastitis cow. It is important to look at ranges and not just averages, because opportunities exist in the outliers.
- Dirty syringes contain dirt and bacteria that cause abscesses, systemic infections, poor absorption of injected drugs, and can even lead to death if a clostridium infection is triggered. This is a huge problem for sick cows receiving antibiotic injections, because their immune systems are already compromised. If you pick up a dirty used syringe containing chunks or flakes of dried up antibiotic, throw it away and get a new one. If you are going to spend \$50 on antibiotics, it's worth a 35 cent syringe and needle to make sure they are safe and effective.
- Dehorner maintenance. Over time the gas orifices and igniters in butane dehorner get plugged with dirt or wear out, resulting in dehorner that don't get hot enough or don't work at all. We can get replacement parts for the Express butane dehorner and are happy to order them for you or help you troubleshoot and fix your broken dehorner a lot cheaper than buying a new one. The best way to avoid dehorner issues is to ask your vet to show you how to use paste on newborn calves the day they are born.

**This note is copied from the Animal Ag Alliance notice. The concern is that unauthorized visitors could use this ruse to gain access and videotape your operation.

Census Workers Attempting to Access Farms

There have continuously been incidents in several different states with Census Bureau workers (or people claiming to be affiliated with the Census Bureau) asking to enter livestock and poultry barns. Census workers are currently out gathering information. They should be willing to provide proper identification and should not be entering barns or other biosecure areas. The [Census.gov website](#) lists how to identify a Census worker. To further verify the visitor's identity, use the [staff directory](#) to find contact information for the individual's supervisor or contact the [regional office](#). If the worker seems to be legitimate, but asks to go into livestock facilities, contact the supervisor and report it to rumors@census.gov.

If you cannot verify the identity of a visitor, ask them to leave and contact law enforcement if they do not. Report the incident to the Census Bureau regional office and contact your [FBI local field office](#).

The GI tracts in cattle and horses are arranged in opposite fashion. In cattle, fermentation of fiber happens right away in the rumen prior to digestion in the small intestine. The starch gets burned up in the rumen and gas byproducts are burped away as methane. In horses fermentation happens in the hindgut after the small intestine has digested everything else. The starch is supposed to get absorbed by the small intestine, but if it makes its way to the hindgut the horse can become significantly ill with colic. Instead of burping the gas byproducts away like cattle there is no where for the gas to go in a horse.

Equine researchers have conducted several studies searching for a correlation between the source of dietary starch and the amount of starch that ends up in the hindgut. One recent study focused on multiple starch sources in very pregnant mares and found there was no difference in the amount of starch that got through to the hindgut. Researchers identified an interesting change in GI bacteria around the time of foaling. Foaling hormones have been suggested as the main reason for the change in bacteria, along with decreased intake and environmental changes.

GI bacteria research in cattle has found that over 85% of rumen bacteria stay the same before and after calving, but the remaining 15% changes between the dry period and lactation. Increased energy demands and a change in diet have been suggested as the cause, but not calving hormones. Understanding the effect of calving hormones on GI bacteria will likely be a focus of research and transition diet formulation in the future.

I recently attended an economic forum at the UW business school with some great speakers and I came away with several key points. First the probability of a recession in the next 12 months is pretty low, even though we had a yield curve inversion and a major trade war. Second, health care costs are going to keep going up regardless of who is the next president. The only chance health care costs will decrease is if we limit care, especially to older people (think no one over 80 years old gets a hip or knee replaced, just a wheel chair); we severely restrict profitability at hospitals, pharmacies, drug companies; and we restrict income to doctors and nurses. None of this is going to happen because that will stop innovation.

