

mentation for calves that come in which are under 500 lbs. but were preconditioned in the west. We have had some bad experiences here. They are small calves once again. They would be in the feedlot from four to six months and we would have an acute outbreak of either IBR or BVD. It would just sweep the whole bunch! We had one client who had 300 calves last spring, having purchased them the first of the year. They were all preconditioned and had a veterinary certificate. During the middle of May he had an acute outbreak of IBR which was confirmed in the laboratory. We feel that these calves were preconditioned too early and were probably given an intramuscular product. The ones that were given Nasalgen did not have any problems. We have had the same problems with outbreaks of BVD in these preconditioned calves. We tell these fellows if they have real small calves to leave them in the feedlot three or four months and then run them back through and give them IBR and BVD vaccinations again. I know that some may not agree with this, but we have had so many outbreaks after they have been in there four to six months, we thought we would have to run them back through and revaccinate them.

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Dairy Practice

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It is a pleasure to be here. We have a group practice in Edgerton. We have five veterinarians, one having a Ph.D. in nutrition. Our mornings start out like about everyone else's. We start out with a routine visit to some farm, sometimes two of us are out on routine visits. We always have one free to cover; someone has to check the small animal clinic and see if anything died overnight. Anyway, he also covers emergencies. Every time we pregnancy check a cow we try to record everything on a clipboard. We leave the clipboard at the barn. We have less than a dollar invested there! We figure we can give that to anyone whether he is on the herd health program or not. We try to write down everything; every veterinarian does this because we do not all necessarily go to the same farms all the time. We rotate and it is very hard to remember what somebody else gave to what animal. Sometimes we get bad drug reactions when we do not keep track of what was done. Also, it is a place to leave messages. I do not know if you find it this way, but half the time I go to the farm and the farmer is gone. I do not know why he calls me if he is not going to bother to be there but at least I like to let him know that I have been there, before my bill arrives!

Information is accumulated on what we call a calving interval chart. We just put down the date the cow calved last time and right beside it, the date she is due the next time according to our predictions, which are in the general range of within 30 days of when they should calve, depend-

ing upon how soon we get there. If we are in the 35-60 day range, we come very close to hitting those new calving dates but if it gets beyond that, our accuracy diminishes but this does give him a chance to monitor himself and see how fast and how good he is keeping up on this 12-month calving interval which we consider 100%. Some clients have a hard time determining heats so we have performed some penectomies. We also create a "monster" with cystic ovaries. The farmer who owns one of these calls him "the sex director!" He keeps a big ballpoint pen underneath his chin and carries a halter. He runs around putting marks all over the cystic cow which is a great help to us. We have to shut the cystic cow in the barn except when we want him especially for heifers. I could not tell you which heifer was in heat without that red mark. Manure is money—most of my farmers keep telling me that is all the profit they have left after they get done with my bill! We run around and try to collect a lot of fecal samples. We do get positives and we try to set up a worming schedule, not just run around as a feed mill man will do and say that now is the time to worm your cows because I am standing in your yard and I have the wormer to sell you! We also teach CMT tests because we think that a client, not knowing which cow is infected, panics a lot of times and thinks he is in a lot of trouble when he just has a few cows that are in a lot of trouble. We also collect a lot of milk samples on the horizontal. I think this is one good tip I would like to give everybody. A plastic

bag that is held underneath the cow to catch the sample usually catches a few hairs and, lots of times, the sensitivity results reflects that. If you hold the bag horizontally and squirt milk a foot across to it, you're not going to pick up as many organisms that you do not want. Some of our milking herds can afford a deluxe milking set-up. I think that a Ph.D. in a feedlot is worth a lot more. Dr. Olson is a consultant to our practice and he has a Ph.D. in nutrition. He goes over a lot of things. We run a lot of protein analysis, check the cow's condition, check the feed bunk, see how much room they have, how big the yards are and break this down into recommendations according to the cow's production. We try to have these herds divided into groups; you cannot put three bulls out with 200 cows and come up with any kind of calving record. You have to have them grouped and the same way with feeding. If you do not group them, it is hard to feed them well. We have really gone all out on identifying heifers. A lot of clients try to identify their heifers from a drawing they make three months after the calf is born and I am sure they cannot remember which calf it was from which cow so we try to get them to tag the calves at the time of birth. These are Ritchey tags and we have about one dropout in every 100 calves.

One of our big problems in calves is moisture control. I think that watching the humidity and the inside and outside temperature is a real good task for somebody and we set up another clipboard; another dollar invested in our client and we have good records. We try to keep the inside temperature 45°F and try to hold the humidity to about 50% by running a thermostat on the fan. One thing you have to watch is that the thermostats do not agree with each other. One will say it is 50°F the other 45°F. You do not pay any attention to the thermostats themselves but you do set them up and watch that thermometer. One \$10,000 calf barn I was in not so long ago was put up when the lowest temperature he could turn his heating thermostat was 70°F. You can imagine how that barn looked!

Somebody a few years ago invented a wheel and we have tried to modify it a little bit to keep track of fertility control and when to worm the cow, when to dry her off, to give dry treatment, to pregnancy check and when the veterinarian should check her for breeding, etc. One farmer modified it

by putting a polka dotted curtain over it so he would not get it wet when he sprayed down his milk house. Sometimes wives make better record keepers than their husbands and we encourage that! A 200 cow herd takes a lot of dots but I would be willing to bet that the farmer who runs this thing could tell you what every button is for and could give you the history and how many pounds of milk each gave last year.

Basically, I like herd health work. That is one of the things that keeps my work exciting and our herds range from 200 to 400 cows. We even have a herd health program on a 25 cow herd and these clients have a lot of fun. We will not take on a herd for herd health work unless the client is willing to take on DHI testing because we, in turn, can find a lot of things in his DHI test that can help us a great deal in helping him. We can find underfeeding or overfeeding of grain; how many cows he has in his herd so we can charge him, that is a very important part! We start a client that is not on DHI and charge him \$1.50 a cow per month. We were surprised to see that figure quoted before in this meeting; I thought I had invented it. As soon as we can, we shift him on to the rolling herd average and, for example, we take a 500 pound rolling herd average as a cut-off line and charge him four tenths of a cent times the number of cows, times his rolling herd average up to 500 pounds. When he reaches that we reduce it to three tenths of a cent. We do not include drugs or emergencies in our herd health program. The results from a 200 cow herd over the last two years are interesting. We started in 1969 and kept records. We had been talking about it before that but that was when we started keeping records. This herd improved 200 lbs. in butterfat and 4,000 pounds of milk per cow. No cows were purchased into this herd and he showed about a \$50,000 increase in his production today and we are proud of that. Another 390 cow operation showed a million pound increase in production without purchasing a cow but the second year we could not do quite that good. We only hit 700,000 lbs. increased production in that herd! He is running close to \$90,000 more profit in that herd this year than he did two years ago. I think we will keep him in business! We enjoy this work and it also helps our practice. I said we started in 1969. We have a 200% increase in our practice since. It correlates very well.