Ouch! My Back: Modifying an Ordinary Hoof Trimming Chute to Avoid Backaches

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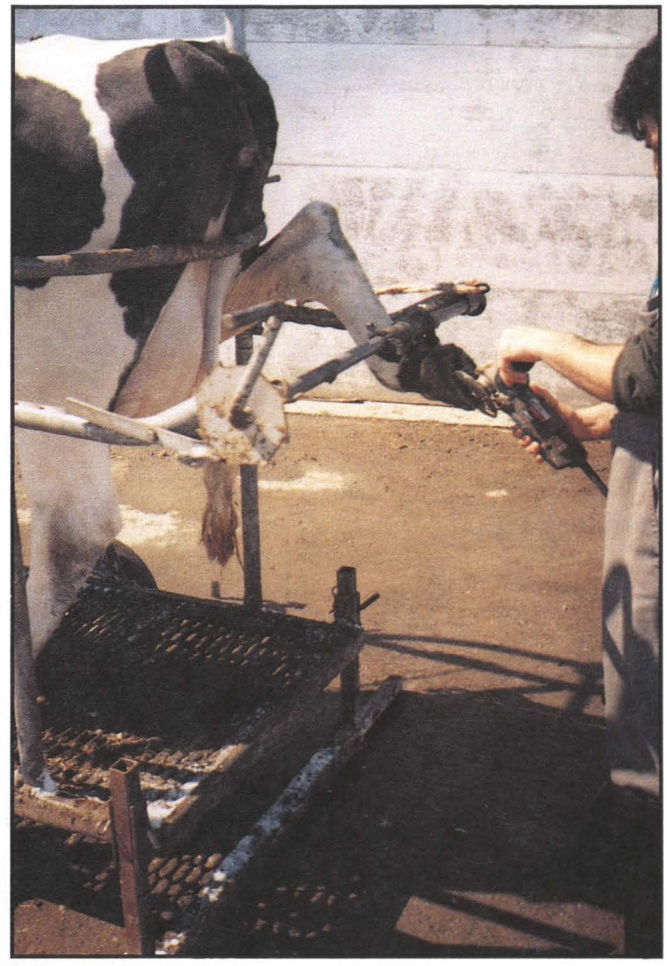
Stay Alert

As reported in the AABP newsletter, July 1996, repetition work can lead to professional or working diseases or syndromes. Besides the arm, shoulder and neck syndrome another repetitive work such as hoof trimming can cause severe backache problems. As dairy or bovine practitioners, we are more and more involved in hoof care and trimming and that is why we have modified an ordinary standing hoof trimming chute to avoid backaches.

Think Simply

From an ordinary hoof trimming chute, we have replaced the wooden floor which is slippery, hard to clean and can be a vector to transmit such disease like hairy wart (digital dermatitis) by a perforated steel floor which is strong, easy to clean and giving good adherence. Second, at each end of the chute's floor we have installed a set of adjustable supports from 0 to 12 inches with extensible arms each side 12 inches long to avoid tilting (photo #1).

For the cow it is as easy as to step on to an ordinary trailer and for the trimmer it gives a good working position, avoiding bending or kneeling while trimming (photo #2).



Ergonomic: Pays Off

With bigger herds and veterinary specialization we have to trim a lot of cows at a given time. To help us work more comfortably we have developed an easy

concept, not expensive (<300$ US) with no electricity, no hydraulic, no mechanic and maintenance free (table 1). We encourage our clients to install their chute in such a manner to have an easier life in dairying. Doing more and more production medicine, trying to find the biggest bottleneck, I found that backache was to my lifetime career my worst bottleneck which I have tried to solve the best I could. As a dairy practitioner I sometimes think that my patients receive better care, nutrition and comfort than I can afford myself!

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge Dr François Dumont, my partner, for his help in preparing this paper.

Table 1. Comparative main characteristics of trimming chutes.

	STANDING	STANDING MODIFIED	TILTABLE
Price	$	$ + 300 U.S.	$$$
Electricity	no	no	yes
Hydraulic	no	no	yes
Foot Exposure To Trimmer	good plantar view	good plantar view	poor to bad lateral plantar view
Cow's Comfort In Chute	Standing	Standing	Lateral - bloating !!!
Trimmer's Comfort	Bad bend or kneel	Excellent standing	Excellent standing
Chute's Convenience	Lightweight moveable	Lightweight moveable	Heavy weight, space limiting, trailer hitch

Abstract

Novel ELISA for detection of *Neospora*-specific antibodies in cattle

D.J.L. Williams, J. McGarry, F. Guy, J. Barber, A.J. Trees
Veterinary Record (1997) **140**, 328-331

An enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) to detect antibodies to *Neospora* species in cattle was developed. Whole formalin-fixed *Neospora caninum* (NC-Liverpool) tachyzoites were used as antigen and a monoclonal antibody to bovine immunoglobulin light chain and an anti-mouse horseradish peroxidase conjugate were used to reveal bound antibody. A panel of 46 sera, negative by the immunofluorescent antibody test (IFAT), were used in the ELISA at a serum dilution of 1:500 to calculate the negative cut-off value of OD_{405} = 0•77. There was a 95 percent agreement between the results of the ELISA and the IFAT with 104 serum samples. The specificity and sensitivity of the ELISA were 96 percent and 95 percent, respectively, when compared with the IFAT. No significant cross-reaction was observed with sera from cattle infected experimentally with *Toxoplasma gondii, Cryptosporidium parvum, Babesia divergens, Sarcocystis cruzi, Eimeria alabamensis* or *E bovis*. A significantly modified version of the test is now commercially available.