

The Veterinarian and the A.I. Industry

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INTRODUCTION

We have placed the A.I. topic in a place of prominence this morning because we are virtually in the cradle here in Wisconsin, Illinois and the Midwest where A.I. was started on a large scale. I suppose people from the northeast would say that it started there and the people from Ontario would say likewise. I guess one of the first places that really promoted dairy A.I. was Clinton, New Jersey. We think that the topic is very valuable to practitioners and perhaps we as a bovine practitioners organization have not given enough thought to the A.I. industry and its inter-relationship to the practicing veterinarian. It is quite obvious that we all have been directly or indirectly involved with A.I. organizations or herds using A.I. and, consequently, most of us have gone through the experience of being confronted with problems of A.I. and frustrated perhaps as to our role in working with AI organizations and the A.I. problems that occur between the technician and the veterinarian. We felt that it needed a good airing and a thorough discussion this morning. For this reason we have been fortunate in obtaining a group of speakers that will form a panel here and discuss this. We are fortunate in obtaining them because of their long years of experience. This is a group of veterinarians that not only took note many years ago of what was happening in A.I., but they jumped right into it and they did not have any hesitation that this was a very important role for the veterinarian to be involved in full time and I can see the reason for this because I have personally been involved in the A.I. industry since its start on a large scale. To me the average veterinarian graduating from school today has a much better background to help the A.I. industry and service the A.I. industry than any other individual. I know that we have many bio-medical students who have certain backgrounds in physiology and anatomy but the veterinarian really

has a well rounded background in anatomy, physiology and nutrition that I think is necessary to make a real contribution to the A.I. industry. I have noticed through the years that this is one of the many areas that veterinarians have ignored when they could have been a real service to the A.I. industry. When you consider other groups and laymen that have become involved with the AI picture, they have lacked the background that veterinarians enjoy to go ahead in this field. I feel very strongly about veterinarians and their future and I am trying to say to you that we should no longer ignore the potential that we have in offering service or taking an active part in artificial insemination work. I think the dairy industry is very well defined and the veterinarian's part in it in the recent past. Our speakers are going to give you the past, the present and the future of the veterinarian's role. I wanted to add that in beef A.I., we have a much tougher problem of the veterinarian's relationships than maybe we had in the dairy work because the extension people of most universities and the dairy extension people helped a lot in getting A.I. started in dairy circles. Until very recently the university staff has been very reluctant to help educate the rancher or farmer about beef A.I. In many cases the ranching and beef cattle industries have asked veterinarians, "What do you think about beef A.I.?" I find that many veterinarians have said, "I don't know very much about it so it isn't any good." I hope that has not happened too often but I have a feeling that when we do not know something about a certain subject, we are inclined to say it isn't good. I hope again this morning that we can start on the road to having veterinarians better informed about the good and the bad of beef A.I. so that we can give clients a reasonable answer and tell about its limitations and advantages.