

pull back and get their head back over the pipe so that it shuts off the vein and you can't run a solution. That's my favorite use for it. Another is when you get into a stanchion barn and the stanchion looks like it's a threat to your life when you are down in front of the cow! You can loop this around the top of the stanchion in the stanchion bar once or twice and you think you are safe. You can do it to the bottom. More often the bottom rusts off and the cow is standing there with the bottom swinging free. You tie this over the post and around the stanchion and it holds it in place so she can't twist around and come on you if you pull her head the other way. The other thing this will work on, if you're using a come-along and you've got an open beam at the top, you can hook this over the top of the beam and hook your come-along on to the bottom. You can put it around the post and hook your come-along on if you're going across the barn to pull a down cow out and across the gutter, you can use that on the bar. You can use it to steer your chute to the barn door when you are dehorning heifers. It loops around the post. Most of the doorways have a crack in the barn that you can get this through and hook it around the chute and the doorpost and

that holds your chute from sliding away when they get in. A few of my clients have these in the barn and have it handy. When they have tie stalls they use it themselves for clipping heads for fitting and showing, for clipping heads for classifying cows. For some of these tough ones that don't react to the clippers too well, they just put these around over the top of their neck and they don't have to have a special stanchion for clipping cows and clipping heads.

The other tip I have is just a rope halter with a knot tied in it. This is a modification that you put the halter on a cow and you've got this knot tied just a little ways from the loop. You can use it for a pulley. You thread this around the stanchion bar and back and you pull it up. You have a built in pulley! You can secure the cow by yourself. If you have a downer cow, put this underneath the base of the tail and tie it. You can hold the cow without her tipping over on you. You can put it on her leg if she tips over. I've been in a few panic situations where the cow's head is tipped underneath the cow. If this is around the base of the tail, you can always get at the loose end of your rope and untie it.

Bovine Practice

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What I want to talk about is something just entirely away from the usual practice tip. It may do you some good. It's a nutritional practice tip. I want to talk about cobalt and the clinical evaluation of cobalt levels, and why you should look at them.

Cobalt deficiencies primarily relate to vitamin B¹² deficiencies with anemia and unthriftiness, but most importantly, if you do have a cobalt deficiency in a herd, that you are clinically going to see a lot more cases of Johne's disease in these herds. Also high producers tend to have more cases of ketosis. Cobalt is a necessary precursor of B¹² which is a coenzyme involved in the metabolism of propionate, so there are some benefits as far as the ketosis problem, with cobalt.

The next thing that I want to mention is that cobalt is extremely hard to analyze in the laboratory. Clinical deficiencies in cows usually occur at about 0.1 parts per billion. Most labs cannot analyze cobalt levels at these levels in liver or serum, so the big problem is to find a lab that can do it. I have spent quite a bit of time trying to figure this out and I think there is an easier way to deal with it. I want to give you a little background on the method of determining it, if you need to look at cobalt levels.

When soil pH is above 6.7, plant uptake of cobalt decreases and so anytime we are talking about alkaline soils

it is likely that the forages are going to be low in cobalt. An interesting thing that happens also with this same condition in the soil is when pH is above 6.7 the uptake of molybdenum increases and so an easy way to evaluate if your forages are low on cobalt is to look at the molybdenum status of the forages. If molybdenum levels are higher than expected, you will usually benefit from cobalt supplementation. The normal molybdenum threshold level to be concerned about, is at 1.5 parts per million and generally in Ohio I see areas with molybdenum levels in the forages at 3-4 ppm and there has been an instance or two where I have seen molybdenum levels at 10 or 12 ppm. The interesting thing is that if you do see these molybdenum levels that are higher, you are also going to see a secondary copper deficiency. If you're seeing herds with copper deficiencies, they are due to unavailability of molybdenum, or unavailability of copper due to molybdenum, then you are likely to have a cobalt deficiency with it and you will benefit from supplementing cobalt as well as copper. So, analyze molybdenum levels, if they are higher than expected, you likely will benefit from cobalt supplementation. It will mean fewer clinical cases of Johne's disease in the herd and my experience is in these herds that are fine tuning the rations, you will benefit in production of 1,000 or 1,500 pounds on the rolling herd average.