



July 2014

## Dairy News



### Feeding During Heat Stress

Heat stress causes behavioral changes in high producing cows resulting in lower rumen pH's. Cows under heat stress ruminate 1-2 hours less per day. They may also pant and/or drool losing bicarb which was intended for the rumen. Cows will slug feed more when hot. These all have negative consequences for rumen fermentation and milk production.

Feed the highest digestible feed on the farm during hot and humid summer months. This will take some forethought around harvest time and possibly segregation of feeds. Highly fermentable NDF is the goal. Look and test for the highest fiber digestibility forages and non-forage sources of fiber. Examples of this are early haylage or grass/haylage mixes and highly digestible corn silage or BMR brown mid rib) corn silage types. These will increase digestion efficiency and reduce heat load in the rumen. This also helps maintain good rumen function and VFA (volatile fatty acid) profiles that promote higher milk component production.

Another things to consider during heat stress: reduce overcrowding and competition at the bunk by not feeding to an empty bunk. This will decrease aggression and slow down eating rates. Empty bunks during high milk prices isn't the best strategy for profitability.

What is considered the start of heat stress? A temperature humidity index (THI) of 68°F for cows milking 77# / head / day or more. A THI of 68 occurs at 72°F temps with only 45% relative humidity. Cows will eat and ruminate less. Respiratory rates will increase. Core body temps will start to rise and their standing times will increase (increase exposed surface area of skin) in an attempt to cool down. All these changes in feeding behaviors decrease rumen ph.

Don't forget about dry cow cooling! Fans should be mounted over bedded packs and freestalls. Cooled dry cows produce more milk in the next lactation through more mammary growth and stronger immune function. Calves from cooled dry cows weigh more (placental weights are also increased). Calves from heat stressed cows have increased cortisol, along w/ altered insulin levels, compromised passive immunity, and decreased cell-mediated immunity.

Stay Cool this summer and make sure your cows do too!



### **KITCHENS FOR ASSEMBLY: Election date: Aug 12, 2014**

Dairyland Veterinary Service confidently recommends Joel Kitchen for the First Assembly District Seat. Dr. Kitchens, a farm animal veterinarian and small business owner understands and relates in the areas of agriculture and small business needs. He understands the need to differentiate between emotion and facts when talking about environmental matters i.e. water contamination. As a small business owner he understands the importance of less government interference in people running their businesses and creating jobs. In our years of working with Dr. Kitchens as a colleague and business owner, we have found him trustworthy and reliable.

Joel's well-known commitment to agriculture will promote an atmosphere of openness in the area of agriculture fairness and government and also, allowing small business to thrive. His passion in these areas will allow him to be your voice at

## *Veterinary Feed Directives: What Producers Should Know*

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The Animal Drug Availability Act (ADAA) established a new regulatory category for distributing certain new animal drugs for use in or on animal feed, the Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD). The law allows VFD drugs to be administered in animal feed under a veterinarian's order and professional supervision. Now producers can obtain and use critically needed drugs while the FDA ensures the protection of public health.

### **What are VFD Drugs?**

VFD Drugs:

- Are drugs that FDA approved for use in animal feeds, and / or water.
- Are used under veterinarian supervision and issued under written veterinary feed directive orders.

**Extra-label use (i.e., use of VFD feed for unapproved indications or at unapproved doses), is strictly prohibited.**

### **How do I get a VFD Order for a VFD drug?**

- Contact your veterinarian.
- Your veterinarian will determine if your animals need treatment with a VFD drug.
- If a VFD drug is needed, your veterinarian will provide the VFD order to you or directly to the feed mill or feed distributor. You must ask your veterinarian to issue a new VFD order.

### **As a producer, your VFD drug responsibilities include:**

- Contacting your veterinarian to diagnose and treat your animals.
- Following your veterinarian's recommendations.
- Administering the VFD medicated feed to your animals according to the directions on the VFD order.
- Keeping copies of your VFD orders for at least 2 years.
- Providing your VFD order copies for FDA inspectors to copy and review when requested.

Under Title 21, Part 558.6(a)(3), of the code of federal regulations, a veterinarian "must complete the VFD in writing and sign it." Incomplete or unsigned VFD orders are invalid, and the feed mill or another distributor will not fill them. They may refuse to issue the feed and may or may not contact your veterinarian to get a corrected order. Your veterinarian is responsible for providing an accurate and complete VFD order to the feed mill or to another distributor.

Within the next 3 years all will have to be compliant. If you have any questions talk to your veterinarian.



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