

NAVAN VETERINARY SERVICES – AUGUST 2011 NEWSLETTER

Calves

Calves are especially susceptible to heat stress. At temperatures above 26°C their maintenance requirements increase – more feed needed before growth can be achieved. Calf requirements can increase by as much as 20-30%. This energy is necessary to provide the energy to cool themselves by panting and sweating.

This can be difficult to understand considering we (humans) tend to eat less in the heat. But we are not generally trying to gain weight. Wintertime energy needs are much easier to understand.

Water needs by calves can increase by more than a litre per day during high temperatures. Water needs to be fed in addition to milk and it should be fed free choice. Water encourages calf starter intake. It is calf starter not hay, that is necessary for rumen development. The water that is in milk bypasses the rumen and flows directly to the abomasum for digestion. Bacteria require a watery environment in the rumen in order to survive and ferment calf starter. This is how the rumen develops properly.

The following four points are important when feeding water:

- 1) keep water out of direct sunlight and change regularly
 - 2) use different buckets for water and milk to avoid bacterial growth
 - 3) dump starter daily to avoid mold growth – this can be fed to older calves
 - 4) keep grain from falling into water – separate the buckets sufficiently to achieve this
- (this information was sourced from www.calfcare.ca)

Somatic Cell Count

The U.S. voted to maintain its SCC at its current level of 750,000 rather than 400,000 by a vote of 26 in favour to 25 opposed.

Reasons for keeping the status quo:

- 1) SCC is not a public health issue and an SCC reduction will not make milk supply safer
- 2) maintaining a low SCC is not attainable in some parts of the U.S. and would force some farmers out of business

In Ontario moving from 500,000 to 400,000 (Aug 2012) will mean that there will be about 400 more dairies at risk of penalty. In the planning process right now is a risk assessment and management program to assist herds and their management team, that are above 400,000 SCC on a monthly basis.

Regrouping Cows

Regrouping cows during their dry period has an effect on – feeding, ruminating, lying behaviour and social interaction. This affects both the cows that are moved as well as those in the home pen. Dry matter intake drops by 9% the day of regrouping, rumination decreased by 9%, Feedbunk interactions double for the first 24 hours. The cows that are moved are bothered the most. Everything that affects DMI is relevant to dry cows. If at all possible try to handle dry cows in an “all in – all out” fashion.

Hoof Trimming

Our trim day with Dr. Gerard Cramer last April was very successful. We would like to run a 3 day hoof trimming school this fall by Dr. Cramer. He does these clinics in SW Ontario for producers who want to learn and understand trimming from A – Z. There would be in-class and on-farm training. Six to eight producers are optimal. The cost will be \$1000 plus HST for each participant. If you are interested, please contact the clinic.

Did you know:

Summertime heat will cause cows to stand more while they search for the most comfortable situation – best ventilation. More standing can lead to an increased incidence of sole ulcers which only become evident this fall (2-3 months later). Be on the look out!

Congratulations

Congratulations to Brianne who will be getting married this September to Tom Griffith. Best wishes to the future bride and groom!!!

Office Hours

Please note that effective September 1, 2011 our office will close at 5pm instead of 6pm on weekdays. This will mean that the phones will be transferred to the answering service an hour earlier so if you have questions or drop off requests for the next day please call before 5pm.