

CHARMANY DAIRY NEWSLETTER

Spring 2005

Issue 04

April 24th, 2005

RED'S CORNER

I am feeling better these days even though my production is down to 25 pounds. It must be depression syndrome from the long Wisconsin winter. Maybe Becky Mentink is right and it's because I have lost weight (Becky gave me a lower body condition score than Jason Loner). However, back to feeling better...I guess that can be credited to the students showing so much respect for our daily care. It started when the spring rain came a few weeks ago. The students put lime by the doorway steps so we wouldn't slip. They also helped Lynette, who has had trouble coming in since her feet were trimmed, by spreading lime down the walkway to the middle alley.



Lately some students have been removing hay from our water cups. This has allowed us to get water more easily, and we don't spill so much which used to make Dave mad. You know, I notice a lot of things from my box stall and from my walks down to the east end of the barn (this also makes Dave kind of mad). I've seen students carefully closing our feed alley gates so Amanda and Katrina don't get their heads bumped! Also, when refusal is fed outside, I notice that the students are very careful not to get the pitchfork prongs near any of my cow-leagues eyes. For some reason I always seem to be commenting on feed, but I've also noted that the students have been very careful to remove all the moldy silage. This means we cows get more total silage which is extremely important not only to those of us who like silage (and only get it once per day) but also to those cows producing more than 80 lbs of milk.

As I mentioned in a previous newsletter, students have been keeping the grates clean, but even better, they also watch out for our udders and tails when they come through on the grates with the rake turned up. I guess I just can't get away from feeding, but the tidy silage piles the students place in front of us in the stalls are so much easier to eat all at once. Most of us don't even have to bother getting up (alas, some cows' tongues are not as long and flexible as mine). Finally, a big thanks to whoever started arranging the hay in the outside bunk so that it covers the bottom of the bunk and doesn't overlap so much. It is so much easier to get nice big mouthfuls of hay now!

Hip-Hip-Hooray!

Thank you to **John Artz, Kerry Hagen, Abbey Butler and Stacy Garves** for finishing the herd health rotation, and to **Becky Mentink, Rebecca Dallwig, and Elizabeth Martin** who will finish at the end of the week.

Clinical Insight:

Dairy Obstetrics in a Nutshell

By Harry Momont, DVM, PhD

The Charmany dairy herd provides many opportunities for learning. One unique aspect of the teaching herd is the ability to monitor and manage parturition, or delivery, of the calf. As they approach their due-dates, the heifers and cows provide us with real-life examples of the things that can influence the timing and complexity of parturition in cattle. For instance, the sex and number of fetuses is generally known for the cows in the Charmany dairy herd but not for the first-calf heifers. Knowing this, we can start watching for delivery a few days earlier in cows carrying heifer calves and twins, as these pregnancies tend to be a few days shorter than average. Cows carrying bull calves tend to go a few days over their due-date, and the larger bull calves are more likely to result in calving difficulties. Heifers calving for the first time will very rarely be pregnant with twins but they do present other challenge for farmers and veterinarians. Conversely, the risk of milk fever (hypocalcemia) increases with the age of the dam.

Difficult labor, or dystocia, is a common emergency call for large animal veterinarians. Dystocia in cattle is most often the result of a relative mismatch in size between the fetus and the dam. This relative fetal oversize problem is accentuated in heifers calving for the first time, as they will usually have a smaller birth canal and more pelvic fat than older dairy cows. We generally recommend that heifers be bred by bulls known to produce smaller calves. These are referred to as "calving ease" sires. Other common causes of dystocia in dairy cattle are postural abnormalities of the calf and torsion of the uterus. Postural abnormalities are typically a flexed neck or limb. Because the calf is so large in comparison to the cow's pelvis, it can only be delivered in an upright position with all its extremities in full extension. Options for dealing with bovine dystocia range from manipulative obstetrical procedures followed by extraction of the calf to caesarian section.



Dairy farmers rely on their veterinarians to provide timely, effective and economical solutions to their obstetrical problems. Training in bovine obstetrics is provided in lecture and laboratory courses in the third year of the DVM curriculum. Hands-on experience with real calving problems is absolutely essential to building the skills and confidence required for large animal practice. Getting involved with the Charmany dairy herd is a good place to start this training.

“ASK DAVE”

Q: Why do we give calcium paste to our older cows before and after calving?

A: Basically we give it as a preventative for milk fever. Paste should not be given to a "clinical milk fever," because the cow might not have a normal swallowing reflex. Those cows would get calcium, either IV or subQ.

Q: What is a normal blood calcium level?

A: We use >7 mg/100 ml as our baseline. The Merck Vet Manual specifically says the normal range is between 8.4–11.0 mg/dL.

Q: Why do we pull calves? Why don't we just let the cow have it on her own?

A: Most of the older cows would have their calves on their own. Because we are a teaching herd and calving presents a whole array of opportunities for the students, we let the cow proceed for a while then assist in getting the calf out so we can begin to tend to the cow and the calf. Obviously, if there is an abnormal presentation we might need to intervene sooner.

Q: Why do we dip the navel, and what do we dip it with?

A: To attempt to kill any pathogens present on the umbilical cord. We use 7% iodine solution.

Q: What is a midland test?

A: It is a quick test we use to determine IgG levels in newborn calves, (i.e. passive transfer from the dam's colostrum.)

April/May

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
17 Herd Health- AM and PM	18 Herd Health- PM	19 4 th Year Theriogenology Herd Health- PM	20 LAIM tail bleeding AM ¹ Herd Health- PM	21 Herd Health- PM	22 Management Meeting ³ Diagnostic Therapeutics ⁶ Herd Health- PM	23 Herd Health- AM and PM
24 Herd Health- AM and PM	25 Teat end scoring- AM Herd Health- PM	26 Herd Health- PM DHIA Testing	27 LAIM tail bleeding AM ¹ Herd Health- PM	28 Herd Health- PM	29 Calf Vaccinations ⁴ Vaccination and Tail bleeding ⁵ Herd Health- PM	30 Herd Health- AM and PM
1 Herd Health- AM and PM	2 Herd Health- PM PE Course ²	3 4 th Year Theriogenology Herd Health- PM	4 LAIM tail bleeding AM ¹ Herd Health- PM	5 Herd Health- PM	6 Management Meeting ³ Herd Health- PM	7 Herd Health- AM and PM
8 Herd Health- AM and PM	9	10 4 th Year Theriogenology DHIA Testing	11 LAIM tail bleeding AM ¹	12	13 1st year PE final Management Meeting ³ Vaccination and Tail bleeding ⁵	14
15	16 Herd Health- PM	17 4 th Year Theriogenology Herd Health- PM	18 LAIM tail bleeding AM ¹ Herd Health- PM	19 Herd Health- PM	2005	

1. Large Animal Internal Medicine will be sending a 4th yr student to tail bleed for PBS labs.
2. First year student PE course.
3. Meeting topics: 1st Friday= reproduction, 2nd= production, 3rd= Future issues, and 4th= management decisions
4. Herd Health helping vaccinate calves at bookout
5. Contact Melissa Maurer-Ford or Toby Pinn (2008) if you would like to help (from 1-3pm)
6. Physical exam course with Dr. McGuirk from 1-5 pm

COW PROFILE

"Scarlet" a.k.a. The Boss

BIRTHDAY: 05/12/97
6th Lactation

Calves

On January 16th, 2005 she had twin heifers,
Stephanie and Sammi

Also in the herd:

Star, born November 11th, 2002

Sophie, born August 15th, 2001

Production

3rd lactation: 31,930#

4th lactation: 30,270#

5th lactation: 28,440#

As of the last production test on 4/12/05 (86 DIM)
she is giving 143# per day!!!!



****We need at least 6 more worker for the summer so if you are around this and would like some large animal experience please contact Dr. Goodger (see below).****

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Interested in gaining experience working with dairy cows? Then boy do we have the opportunity for you! You can join the milking crew at the Charmany Teaching Facility and work the AM or PM milking shifts. Weekday shifts are from 5:00 am to 7:00 am and from 4:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Weekend shifts are from 5:00 am to 12:00 pm and from 4:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Interested students should contact Dr. Bill Goodger at (608) 770-1448.

One further note on employment is that we can save 50% in student salary expenses (about \$20,000 per year) if students apply for work study (about 90% of veterinary students are probably eligible). These added funds would not only allow more students access to the herd, but would also provide support for clinics, projects, and clinical upgrades to our facility which would enhance the experience for all students. Below is information about work study from the campus work study office in financial aid.

**** The Work-Study Program** does not determine where you work. It is up to you to determine where you'd like to work and what type of work you'd be interested in. The Federal Work-Study Program (FWSP) employee's will be glad to discuss with you what your interests are and what employment options are available to you but you will need to contact the employers directly to inquire about job availabilities.

Having accepted Work-Study will benefit you primarily in two ways: first, since employers only pay 50 cents of every dollar earned by a student, work-study students are highly sought after employees and second, any work-study monies earned are not counted and considered as earned income when you apply for next year's financial aid. Normally a student's earnings are considered as earned income and your next year's financial aid award is reduced by that amount.

If you decide to work on campus, **ANY** job at the UW automatically qualifies as a work-study position. You should always let a UW-employer know that you have accepted a work-study award, because again, it makes you an even more desirable hire to them. Having said this, some UW employers require that you have work-study. These listing can be found under the "UWWR" section.

***If you need to contact someone at the UW-SVM Teaching Herd Barn, call (608) 265-3558.
Please direct correspondence regarding the Charmany Teaching Herd or the newsletter to:***

William J. Goodger, DVM, PhD

Cell: (608) 770-1448

Email: wgoodger@facstaff.wisc.edu