

DAIRY PIPELINE

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Department of Dairy Science

Blacksburg, VA 24061

540/231-4762 Fax: 540/231-5014

www.vtdairy.dasc.vt.edu



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“Dairy producers should always remember that cull dairy cows will enter the food chain.”

Photo courtesy of Flickr

PRESERVING WINTER TEAT CONDITION

Cooler temperatures reduce much of the stress faced by dairy cattle, but bring more challenges with teat condition. As temperature drops it is more difficult to maintain skin moisture, leading to chapping. Just as chapped, bleeding hands are painful for us, teat chapping is equally irritating for cattle. Discomfort from this chapping makes udder prep and milking itself painful for the animal. Not surprisingly these animals may respond with additional kicking and milk letdown can be reduced.

Cracks in teat skin may emerge on the teat barrel or teat end. Cracked teats create the ideal environment for bacteria to hide and proliferate; these bacteria have the potential to migrate into the udder where new infections may emerge. Research also shows certain viruses (herpes and pseudocowpox) thrive in cold temperatures. These viruses can produce lesions on teat ends which at first glance may appear to be from chapping or milking system problems (high vacuum).

Now is the time to make preparations to prevent adverse effects on teat condition from cold weather. Keep these points in mind as we head into winter:

1. Provide clean, dry housing and protection from wind to reduce the number of new environmental infections. This is probably the best way to ensure good teat condition throughout the winter.
2. Restrict access to potentially muddy areas to keep udders clean and reduce damage from prolonged wetness. Temporary fencing can be used to exclude cattle from these areas.
3. Secure sufficient bedding to keep stalls well bedded. Check with bedding suppliers now to

gauge estimated availability during winter months. If storage space is adequate, taking extra loads now is advised. It may be necessary to make arrangements for alternative bedding sources if supply is anticipated to be tight.

4. Evaluate the emollient level of your teat dip.

Higher emollients are needed in the winter to retain skin moisture and assist with healing of chapped teats. Glycerin levels of 5 to 10 percent are common in winter post dips. Higher levels of emollient are especially important for cattle with limited shelter from wind and weather.

5. Make sure milking systems are functioning properly. Teats that are already stressed from winter weather can be further compromised by poorly functioning milking equipment. Check operation of pulsators and make sure vacuum levels are in a normal range.

6. Remix dip if it becomes frozen. The active ingredients in teat dips can settle out if frozen. It is important to remix these before use or the concentration of the dip will be too low near the top of the barrel and too strong at the bottom.

7. Keep using post dip! Although it may be tempting to stop using teat dip during cold conditions, this can actually make problems worse. Contagious mastitis organisms (such as *Staph aureus*) can spread when post dipping is stopped. Post dipping can also control the spread of viruses that cause teat lesions. Emollients in the dip also aid in recovery of chapped teats. During very cold periods (<15°F with wind chill), consider applying post dip, allowing 30 seconds contact time, and wiping dry to prevent frozen teats.

—Beverly Cox, Extension Agent, Franklin County
(540) 483-5161; bccox@vt.edu

ALTERNATIVE MILK MARKETING—HERD SHARES

Necessity is the mother of invention, and depressed profitability due to high costs and low milk prices calls for invention. One option some have considered is herd sharing. A herd share agreement allows a producer to establish a known income for the portion of his production that is shared with a second party. In a herd share, the producer sells a “share” entitling the purchaser to a percent of the herd’s production. The purchaser pays a boarding fee for the care of their part of the herd, generating income for the producer.

Herd sharing is contentious, pitting liberties of consumers against responsibility of the government for public health. The controversy over the legality of raw milk consumption exists within the Commonwealth of Virginia. It is clear that the owner of a dairy animal is entitled to consume the raw milk the animal produces, at the same time accepting the risks involved. Those risks are *not* inconsequential and have resulted in prohibition of sale of raw milk for human consumption in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This ruling is backed by the Virginia State Dairymen’s Association, US Food &

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Upcoming Activities

Dairy risk management workshop series—10am to 12pm (need to attend all sessions) —Multiple locations Wytheville, Rocky Mount, Weyers Cave, Culpeper ~~Oct. 15, Oct. 22, Oct. 29, Nov. 5, Nov. 12, and Nov. 19~~ Contact Beverly Cox at (540) 483-5161 or visit <http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/news/workshop.shtml> for more information.

Nov 4 -- Hoof Health Workshop Rocky Mount, Location and time TBA

Nov 10—Feed Management Workshop, Penn State—Training for consultants interested in Feed Management Planner Certification. **This workshop is targeted for those who are NOT yet certified.** contact Virginia Ishler vishler@gmail.com or (814) 863-3912.

Nov 11-12 Penn State Dairy Cattle Nutrition Workshop, Grantville, PA for agenda and registration information see <http://www.das.psu.edu/research-extension/dairy/nutrition/continuing-education/workshop>

Managing Milk Quality Conferences:
Bacterial counts in milk
RSVP by Nov 2
Nov 9—Noon – 6:00 - **Open House VT Dairy center;** Noon – Lunch will be served; 5:00 - 6:00, Supper; **6:30 - Regular Milk Quality meeting @ Vet School** contact Chase Scott – (276)223-6040 or miscott1@vt.edu

Nov 10—Abingdon, 4-H Center, 6:30pm contact Chase Scott – (276)223-6040 or miscott1@vt.edu

Nov 11—Rocky Mount, The Gereau Center, 6:30pm contact Beverly Cox—(540) 483-5161 or becox@vt.edu

Nov 16—Farmville, Extension Office, 6:30pm contact Beverly Cox –(540) 483-5161 or becox@vt.edu

Nov 17—Harrisonburg, Montezuma Hall, 10am contact John Welsh – (540)564-3080 or jwelsh@vt.edu

Nov 17—Weyers Cave, 1pm contact John Welsh – (540) 564-3080 or jwelsh@vt.edu

Nov 18—Brandy Station, Fire Hall, 10am contact John Welsh (540)564-3080 or jwelsh@vt.edu

Virginia Forage and Grasslands Council (VFGC) Improved Corn Silage Management Conference
Dec 8—Mt. Crawford, VA. (Mrs. Rowe's Country Buffet)
Dec 9—Rocky Mount, VA. (Franklin Center)
Dec 10—Wytheville, VA. (Wytheville Meeting Ctr.)

All VFGC conferences are from 9 to 3, with lunch provided. Registration at 8:30- RSVP to Margaret Kenny at 434 292-5331

2010 Area Dairy Conferences— "Updates on Dairy Reproduction"

Jan 12 – Prince Edward County Ext. Office, Farmville Contact: Beverly Cox, (540) 483-5161 or becox@vt.edu

Jan 13 – Franklin County, The Franklin Center, Rocky Mount Contact: Beverly Cox, (540) 483-5161 or becox@vt.edu

Jan 14 – Smyth County Farm Bureau Building, Marion Contact: Chase Scott— (276) 223-6040 or miscott1@vt.edu

Jan 19 – Rockingham County, Montezuma Hall, Dayton Contact: John Welsh, (540) 564-3080 or jwelsh@vt.edu

Jan 20 – Culpeper County, Brandy Station Fire Hall Contact: Carl Stafford, (540) 727-3435 ext. 351 or ccstaffo@vt.edu

See notice in Virginia Dairyman or at www.vtdairy.dasc.vt.edu for more information

Virginia State Feed Association and Virginia Tech Dairy Nutrition Cow College - Feb 17 - 19, 2010, Hotel Roanoke. Contact R. E. James at jamesre@vt.edu or (540) 231-4770

If you are a person with a disability and require any auxiliary aids, services or other accommodations for any Extension event, please discuss your accommodation needs with the Extension staff at your local Extension office at least 1 week prior to the event.

Drug Administration, Center for Disease Control, American Medical Association and many other health and government organizations.

Herd sharing offers a quasi legal alternative to the sale of raw milk, hinging on the premise that owners of dairy animals are entitled to drink the milk produced. A herd share agreement involves two documents for legitimacy:

1. A legitimate bill of sale must exist that notes the percent of ownership in the cow herd that is being transferred to the purchaser. That share must be equivalent to the portion of the herd's production actually received.
2. A detailed boarding agreement must outline expectations of both parties, defining responsibility for daily expenses and tasks associated with ownership of the herd. The agreement must cover questions such as ownership of new animals born, mortality of animals and termination of the agreement.

Agreements based on more relaxed standards to circumvent prohibition of sale of raw milk are subject to penalty under state laws. The Virginia State Office of Dairy and Foods is responsible to insure that herd sharing operations involve true ownership and not a scheme to sell raw milk.

—John Welsh, Extension Agent,
Rockingham County,
(540) 564-3080; jwelsh@vt.edu

DAIRY COWS BECOME BEEF COWS

Dairy producers should always remember that cull dairy cows will enter the food chain. Cull dairy cows are not just ground into hamburger but provide other cuts of beef for our food supply. Dairy cows receive a number of injections and dairy producers should follow several general rules. Any product that carries a label that states it can be given either subcutaneously (SQ, under the skin) or intramuscularly (IM) should be given subcutaneously. If a product has both routes of administration on the label then it has been shown to work equally well by both routes. But by administering the product subcutaneously, muscle damage can be avoided. If a product is only labeled for the intramuscular route of administration, then it should be administered in the muscles in the neck region. A recent study showed that administration of 5 milliliters of Lutalyse® caused significant muscle damage. Administering all products that must be given intramuscularly to dairy cows in the neck region will ensure that any muscle damage will be confined to the lower cuts of beef. Notably, Banamine® and its generic equivalents are only labeled for intravenous administration. When used according to label, these products have a 36 hour milk withholding time and a 4 day meat withholding time. These products are often administered intramuscularly and are extremely irritating to tissue, causing extended withholding time. There have been several cases of residues caused by the intramuscular administration of these products.

—John Currin,
Extension Dairy Veterinarian,
(540) 231-5838; jcurrin@vt.edu

For more information on Dairy Extension or to learn about current programs, visit us at VT Dairy—Home of the Dairy Extension Program on the web at: www.vtdairy.dasc.vt.edu.

Bennet Cassell

Bennet G. Cassell,
Dairy Extension Coordinator & Extension Dairy Scientist, Genetics & Management

www.ext.vt.edu

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