



## SAVE THE DATE

We are pleased to announce an upcoming meeting on Thursday 3/20/08. The topic will be on cross breeding in dairy cows, what is behind the drive, the science involved (heterosis effect), the opportunities, as it relates to profitability on the farm and the potential pitfalls. Our speaker will be Dr. Les Hansen from the University of Minnesota Animal Science Department.

Dr. Hansen is a honored speaker/teacher and is very excited to take time from his spring break to visit with the dairy producers in Michigan's Thumb. He has authored many papers and conducted much research in the area of crossbreeding as it relates to dairy profitability. He will share new information on recent DHIA studies. Regardless of where you stand on the issue currently, it behooves us all to look at the science and data behind this current genetic "hot topic." We are looking forward to a great meeting. See you there!

### Special points of interest:

We have reduced our large animal inventory at our Sandusky Clinic, please call ahead to be sure they have what you are looking for.

**\*\*SPECIAL PRICE\*\*** Apollo tags, & Z-tags. This is a low volume item and I am removing it from inventory. Please call to take advantage of these great values!!

Thank you, Helen

## February Meeting Follow Up

We would like to thank all of you who were able to attend our meeting on Salmonella and SRP vaccine. For those of you who couldn't attend there were a few take home messages.

First and foremost is that Salmonella is a rising problem in the dairy industry and due to its public health implications should be a concern for all of us. Salmonella organisms are shed primarily in the feces but can also be shed in the milk. As producers you are the "first line of defense" in this biosecurity war.

Secondly is that the SRP vaccine works well in controlling shedding of the salmonella organism. Many of you have had experience with acute disease and in our experience the SRP vaccine has had dramatic results in controlling these symptoms. i.e. watery diarrhea, fever, crashing fresh cows.

The third message was the idea of subclinical salmonellosis. It seems that acute infection sick cows are just the tip of the iceberg and may be a clue to a more wide spread subclinical salmonella problem. Some research has shown benefits of SRP vaccine in apparently healthy cattle because of the control of subclinical cows. Less energy needed to fight infection, more available for milk.

To reiterate some of the major points from the meeting. These ideas are not just for Salmonella control, but can be beneficial for all aspects of calf health and cow biosecurity. Remember that the cleaner your facilities and equipment, the greater your chance of minimizing the spread of disease agents among cattle groups.

1. Salmonella counts can double every twenty minutes (as can many bacteria). Reducing contamination of feed is critical.
2. Be aware of personnel flow on your farm. Work from the highest risk cattle down to the least susceptible animals. Feed the calves first and then feed the older heifers and finally the cows.
  - A. Feed healthy calves first.
  - B. Feed the sick calves last before moving on to another area of your farm.
  - C. Boot baths can minimize carrying organisms to the next group of animals.
  - D. Thoroughly rinse and sanitize bottles after every feeding. Allow to dry.
  - E. Sanitize hutches between calves and allow to dry.

3. Eliminate contamination of feed handling equipment with manure. Use separate buckets/scrapers. Otherwise, thoroughly rinse buckets/tires before handling feed.
4. Bedding is a must for calves. Deep, dry, fresh straw will minimize disease spread as well as provide a "nest" for the calves to maintain body heat better. Cold stress can override all our preventative measures.
5. Obviously, sand in the freestalls is best for cow/udder health. All other bedding surfaces require more attention not only for padding, but for moisture control.
6. Manure removal to prevent "splashing" will greatly reduce the spread of disease among the cattle herd. The more you scrape the alleys, the better!
7. Bird control may be more important with Salmonella than other disease agents. Birdless trusses, netting over ridge vents, plastic over forages, and bunk face management can all greatly reduce the number of bird droppings getting onto feed. Baiting and poisoning has been quite successful on many farms. Leave that process to a professional exterminator.
8. Vaccination with SRP vaccine has proven very effective at helping control Salmonella in cattle. It's not a "magic potion" in a syringe, though. Management factors play a far higher part in controlling this disease.
9. Diagnosis is crucial in any disease. We must know what we are trying to prevent or treat. Dr. Thayer recommends getting a fecal sample before any treatment is given. You then can treat until the sensitivity results come back. (once there is a pattern established on a farm you can select the correct antibiotic for first line of treatment) Sometimes no pattern emerges and each case may respond to a different antibiotic. Fecal samples can be "collected" in a palpation sleeve, turned inside out and tied off, then refrigerate. Don't forget to identify samples with a sharpie. Milk vials work well also, but care must be taken to get a "clean" sample. (don't try to pick up a sample from a "puddle" on the floor unless you can do so without getting bedding included in the sample) cow manure surfaces can be swabbed. Feed samples can be sent for culture. Waterers can be a source of infection. Milk pipes, bottles, milk replacer containers, and nipples can all be swabbed to check for Salmonella.

Dr's Tom, Mark & Jarrett