



From the Dr's desk.....Dr. Chuck Roberts

This month we are going to cover some old material that no one likes to think about. How do we manage bulls on our farm? There are many different management systems and facilities in this area that have to address the needs of bulls and the people who work with them. The basics should be the same for everyone.

First, one must decide if the management, labor and facilities can assume the liability of having bulls on a farm in a safe and productive system. Everyone must respect the bull and what he is capable of without necessarily fearing him. Proper training of employees is essential.

Second, an infertile bull is not only a liability but is also a very large expense in many ways. He should have a breeding soundness exam before being exposed to your cows. Semen evaluation is a part of this exam and is basically a still shot in time; it lets us know at this moment in time, if he is capable of producing a pregnancy. Many things affect fertility infectious diseases heat, cold, nutrition, physical injuries and anything that caused debilitation of the bull. A bull that goes through these problems should have a repeat semen evaluation to make sure he is still fertile or be culled.

Other factors play a role in the bull's ability to breed cows. Libido is a measure of the bull's willingness to breed. Lameness or injury can be a major limiting factor. Age of the bull or size can also play a role limiting libido. Older mature bulls often become aggressive (increasing liability) and spend excessive time and energy defending his harem. Concrete floors and lactating cow rations both play a role in feed health. If it hurts or is uncomfortable to walk, it will likely decrease willingness to mount and breed. Which brings up my last point, make sure there is good footing and adequate over head room to ensure nature does not have outside limiting factors.

Lastly, for all people raising brood cows. Annual fertility exams are important to ensure an even and full calf crop. Many producers have only a few cows and find it hard to justify multiple bulls therefore it is more important to know that the bull going in is fertile. Percentage wise only 10-15% of fertile bulls fail, but at some point it may be yours.

Offer: Two way radio system. Several years ago our clinic, like many communicated via 2-way radio. We still have some equipment that was in working order when we put it away. The antenna remains on our tower, 2 base units; one of which was only a year in use when retired (Kenwood), 4 mobile units, several mobile antennas. In the age of cell phones this equipment is obsolete to us, but we thought someone out there may still be interested in it.

If you would like to see what we have feel free to stop by. Thumb radio serviced our system for years and may be able to give you some input on what we have. Make us an offer! It is a shame to see it all sitting and going to waste.

We have long awaited the arrival of a "generic" form of Naxcel. Although we no longer have to wait—the news isn't that great. Cefitflex 4gm—the equivalent of Naxcel 4gm entered the market in July. Much to our surprise Cefitflex is priced very close to Naxcel. Due to this we will not be switching our inventory in Clinic. Right now Cefitflex is buy 11/1 free when purchased on drop ship. This does bring the cost down. If interested in making the switch to the "generic" please let me know. I will not be automatically ordering this product for anyone, you need to make the request.

It was nice seeing all those whom made it to the picnic. We enjoyed another great day this year with a wonderful turnout...Helen