



From The Doctors Desk.....Dr. Michelle Borek

Welcome to March! In like a lion, out like a lamb...let's hope so.

Thank you for an excellent turnout to our winter meeting! Approximately 130 people were in attendance. The overall message of the meeting was that focusing on quality feed and feeding practices will only be beneficial during tough economic times.

Dr. Barbara Dartt stressed "Kicking Up" your forage management by knowing your income over feed costs (IOFC). IOFC is milk income per cow per day minus lactating cow feed cost per cow per day. It is important to accurately measure harvest. You can do so by counting truck loads, the use of scales, calculate yields and measuring weigh backs and DMIs. Remember forage inventory is like cash.

Dr. Adam Lock discussed potential areas of milk fat suppression problems include feeding high levels of polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs). PUFAs are toxic to rumen bacteria and cause a decrease in milk fat yield. A change in the milk fat: protein ratio is usually related to a milk fat change not a protein change. If you are having milk fat issues examine your ration, see how many unsaturated fats you are feeding, check for mold counts and or mycotoxins, and the variability in the dry distillers. If you make a dietary change, a response should be seen within 2-3 days, if not, that was not your complete issue.

Dr. Fred Owens discussed the cow-corn connection and the digestability of various types of processed corn. The most important message is that moisture levels are critical (27%-32%) for proper digestability.

Dan Bolinger made some excellent points about the large amounts of variability within the feeds and your feedbunks. No matter the size of your feedbunk, there will be variability in the moisture, starch, and spoilage levels.

Farm Tour March 18th

We are very excited to be hosting our first farm tour of the thumb. We will be visiting 6 dairies in the western section of our practice area. We will be taking a look at a variety of barn styles including calf, heifer, and lactating facilities. In addition, Parlor styles and a producer's method of making high quality milk (SCC ~100,000), and good bunk management will also be examined. This trip will be an excellent way to get ideas and share your methods with other producers. Tentative plans are to take 30 people on a bus leaving Deckerville at approximately 9:30am and returning by 4 pm with lunch provided. A small fee maybe charged to cover some expenses. **Space is limited**, if you are interested and want to RSVP or need more information contact *Carrie at 810-376-2425 ext 102*.

Water Sampling

Water samples are still being collected. If you have not had your water analyzed call the office and we will get someone to get the sample. We are donating our services for this project and only charging the actual cost of the analysis. The cost is \$33 for analysis.