



FARM FLASHES

LOWER SCC AND ANTIBIOTIC RESIDUE RISK

High somatic cell counts (SCC) and elevated antibiotic residue go hand in hand, according to researchers at the University of Wisconsin. They found that herds with SCC greater than 700,000 cells/mL were seven times more likely to have antibiotic residue violations than herds with less than 251,000 cells/mL.

In a recent *Dairy Focus at Illinois Newsletter*, Phil Cardoso, D.V.M., suggests taking a look at milking protocol and SCC tracking to reduce the chances of antibiotic residues on the farm. He explained that low SCC is a critical control point for antibiotic residue violation.

The University of Illinois assistant professor of animal sciences recommends placing extra

emphasis on cleaning, drying, and stimulating teats during milking parlor preparation. The effectiveness of the milking team can be evaluated by swabbing the teat end just after preparation and scoring cleanliness on a scale of 0 to 3. A swab with residue of predip or dirt would score 3, while a clean, dry teat would score 0. No more than 20 percent of teats should score 3.

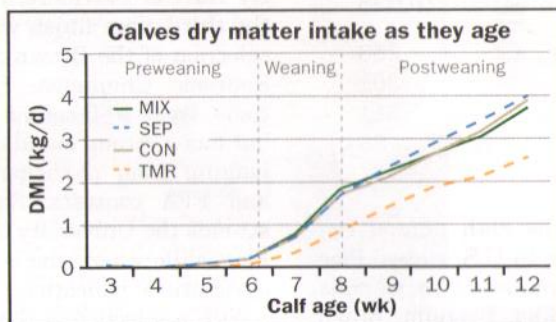
Additionally, Cardoso recommended monitoring SCC values in dairy management programs. He said farms should aim for less than 12 percent new infections per month, a maximum of 2 percent clinical mastitis, a 50 percent cure rate on active mastitis cases each month, and less than 5 percent culled cows because of mastitis.

TMR NOT THE BEST CHOICE FOR WEANING CALVES

Calves have limited room for solid feed in their diets during preweaning, weaning, and postweaning. A calf feeder's goal should be to provide starter and/or forages that maximize nutrient intake.

Recently, researchers at the University of Guelph analyzed the most effective concentrate and forage provisions to complement milk replacer intake. They fed four different rations, including milk plus TMR (TMR), milk plus concentrate (CON), milk plus chopped hay and concentrate mixed together (MIX), and milk plus chopped hay and concentrate separated (SEP).

The study published in the January 2016 *Journal of Dairy Science* found calves fed TMR during the weaning and postweaning stages fell behind in average daily gain and dry matter feed intake. The group also spent more time feeding and ate at the slowest rate.



During all three stages, the TMR group had similar as-fed intake to the CON, MIX, and SEP groups. Researchers reasoned calves were unable to keep up growth-wise because the TMR was only 52 percent dry matter as compared to the 89 percent dry matter of the other feeds.

PREVENTIVE CARE IS POPULAR ON DAIRIES

Dairy producers are paying special attention

Additionally, dairy producers reported vaccina-

SOYBEAN MEAL FUTURES SURGE HIGHER

The last couple weeks of April saw an aggressive rally in soybean and soybean meal buying activity. Soybean meal futures pushed well beyond \$300 per ton with front-month soybean meal contracts closing at \$318 per



ton at the time of this writing. That was up over \$60 per ton from the seasonal low in the middle of February.

The recent market spike is being driven by global buying activity, as well as concerns that additional corn acres being planted will limit long-term supplies of soybeans. The spike higher may create a market correction over the coming weeks, where producers could take advantage of longer term market positions.

—Rick Kment, DTN Dairy Analyst

EMBRYONIC DEATH LOSS NOT LINKED TO PALPATION

Rectal pregnancy testing comes in two forms, manual palpation and ultrasonography. Recently, researchers at Texas A&M University compared these two forms of pregnancy diagnosis to see if palpation was associated with pregnancy loss, calving rates, or abnormalities in newborn calves. The study was conducted on two farms where pregnancies were either detected by ultrasound alone or by ultrasound and rectal palpation between Day 45 and 48 of pregnancy.