

The BovLine[®]

From the desk of Angela M. Daniels, DVM
 Circle H Animal Health LLC & CattleLac Services LLC
 angela@circleanimalhealth.com www.circleanimalhealth.com

Volume 7 Issue 1 copyright 2006

winter edition

**Happy
 New
 Year!**



The onset of the New Year is our chance to start fresh, wipe the slate clean and make a new beginning. Now is the perfect time to set some goals for 2007. The keys to goal setting are to limit the number of goals to a manageable number, to make the goals achievable, very specific and measurable and to write them down so you can periodically look at them and redirect efforts if needed.

Next share these goals with all members of your management team—veterinarian, nutritionist, financial consultant and key farm employees. We all need to work together towards a common vision.

I look forward to helping you achieve a prosperous 2007!

Off-duty

I will be attending the NMC (formerly known as the National Mastitis Council) meeting in San Antonio January 22nd thru the 24th. For emergency calls please call Scanlon at 333-2829.

Added Costs and Lost Opportunities

Cow health, reproduction and milk quality are key areas on a dairy that all impact a dairy's cash flow and profitability. Some costs are very obvious—discarding milk due to clinical mastitis shows up as a loss in the volume of milk delivered to the plant and money spent on mastitis therapy. Other costs can be more insidious because the true economic impact is hidden in long-term losses—lower milk production, lost milk premiums or poor reproductive performance.

Your main tool to identify these opportunities are accurate records. There is benefit in having trained people review records to identify trends, to benchmark against other dairies or previous years on the same dairy and to identify areas to take corrective action or to redirect efforts. Table I lists common cow health, reproduction and milk quality issues that impact cash flow and profitability. The monetary loss is based on a national average, so locally these values could vary.

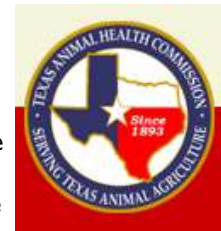
Many of these areas can be “fixed” without major capital investment, which is important in tight economic times. Instead, most of these items can be addressed through management changes and attention to detail.

Table I. Economic impacts

Item	Recommendation	Potential loss of income
REPRODUCTION		
Heifer age at calving	22-24 mo (Holstein)	\$60 per month over
Days open after calving	110-110 days	\$3/day after 90 days
Avg services/conception	1.5	\$1.50 per 0.1 increase
Dry period length	40-60 days	\$2/day under; \$3 over
Heat detection	over 90 days open	\$42-\$105/missed heat
Calving interval	12.6 months	loss per cow: 13 mo \$0.36; 13.3 mo \$14.62; 13.6 mo \$32.96; 14 mo \$57.54; 14.3 \$88.92
FRESH COW DISORDERS		
Milk fever		\$181 per case
Dystocia		\$161 per case
Retained placenta		\$206 per case
Ketosis		\$151 per case
Left displaced abomasums		\$312 per case
OTHER		
Lameness		\$302 per case
MILK QUALITY/MASTITIS		
Subclinical mastitis		\$110 per case
Clinical mastitis		\$197 per case
SCC 200,000-400,000		\$108/year in milk
SCC over 400,000		\$295/year in milk

Reference: Western DairyBusiness Peak Performance Nov 2002

Texas Voluntary Johne's Disease Program



We just received notice from Dr. Andy Schwartz, Area Director of the Texas Animal Health Commission and Designated Johne's Coordinator that there has been a major reduction in Johne's Program Funds. The Texas Voluntary Johne's Disease Program for Cattle has been funded through cooperative agreements with USDA-APHIS-VS. They received notice on December 15th that funds for Calendar Year 2007 will be less than 10% of what was available in 2006. There is some chance that some of the funding will be restored when Congress reconvenes. Therefore, funds are no longer available to pay for testing. Risk assessments/Management plans and testing done at the owner's expense may still be recognized if done by program standards. This point is important for those herds enrolled in a Test Negative Program. Currently TVMDL in Amarillo has been testing all of our samples. Their charge is \$5 for the first sample and \$4 thereafter. We are investigating the possibility of running this test at our CAVL facility. We will only do so if there is opportunity to provide the test at a lower price than what TVMDL is offering. We will keep you informed of any program changes. Hopefully 2007 will bring some good news for this program.



Continuing Education Opportunity

Dairy Decision Making in a Financial Context: a web-based course in financial tools for the dairy industry

The Center for Dairy Health, Management, and Food Quality at the College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Minnesota will offer a 12 week web-based course in the most commonly used financial techniques that help dairy managers and dairy consultants to integrate economic evaluations into practical decision making. The course will provide background material and interactive assignments in these decision making techniques, all keyed to real world decisions on operating dairies.

The first offering of this course will begin on January 9th, 2007. Registration should be open starting next week. To register, go to: www.cvm.umn.edu/outreach Enrollment is limited to the first 25 registrants.

The course will span 12 weeks and will require real effort, with a variety of assignments due every week or two. The course is structured into five modules and a packet of materials will be sent to you before the course begins. Each module has an array of readings, quizzes, and actual working assignments that require you to develop financial analyses for concrete, practical situations. Within each module, you will work mostly independently and on your own schedule. There are no required "meeting" times for the course, although everyone will be encouraged to participate in an on-line discussion forum for the course. You will be expected to complete each module on time so that you are prepared to progress to the next module. While focused on the dairy industry, the techniques and concepts you will learn apply to any business environment. You will need a computer with access to the Internet and with Microsoft EXCEL.

The course will be taught by John Fetrow VMD, MBA. He has been teaching economic decision making in dairy for nearly three decades, including courses offered on the web. You will have access to Dr. Fetrow throughout the course, although much of the material is designed to be done independently on your own time.

The course will qualify for 20 Continuing Education credits and a Certificate of Completion will be given to learners who successfully complete the course within the allotted time period.

Course cost is \$495 and includes all materials, payable at the time of registration. Once the course has begun, there are no refunds except for exceptional circumstances (e.g. major family crisis), as determined at the discretion of the instructor.

You can call Dr. Fetrow at 612-625-3776 if you have questions or e-mail him at fetro001@umn.edu.

Product Update—Thrifty Dipper

I rarely endorse a product. However, since this newsletter has addressed cost savings, I felt that this product is worth discussing. The Thrifty Dipper has been around for a few years. The benefit of the product is that they contain a set of brushes on the top of the dip cup that removes excess dip from the teat, thereby reducing the amount of wasted dip. A standard dip cup will use approximately 0.41 oz of teat dip and the Thrifty Dipper uses 0.08 oz.—an 80 percent reduction. I've talked with other veterinarians that have clients that use this product. Once they begin using Thrifty Dipper, they do not go back to what they had been using. The brushes need to be rinsed with water after use, but some major mastitis experts were not able to culture bacteria in the brushes. Lextron Animal Health carries this item. More information can be found on their website. www.mastitismanagementtools.com This site has a handy calculator that helps with the math on the savings. They claim a 1000 cow dairy will save over \$20,000 per year. Even though this may be overstated, I believe this product is worth looking at.

