

Management Strategies During Challenging Times

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Management Strategies During Challenging Times

- Calf & Heifer
- Reproduction
- Transition Cow
- Milk & Components
- Feed & Forage Mgt.
- Maximize Labor

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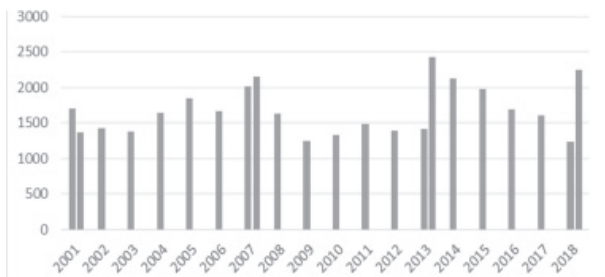
Colostrum: More than just antibodies...



- **Single most important management factor for calf health and survival**
- Quality = >50 g/L IgG
 - 150-200 grams of IgG at 1st feeding
 - Rich 1st source of nutrients
- Quantity - 10-15% of birth weight
- Quickness - within 2-4 hours
- sQueaky clean - <100,000 cfu/ml

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Calf & Heifer Program - Investment or Cost?



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Reproductive Goals

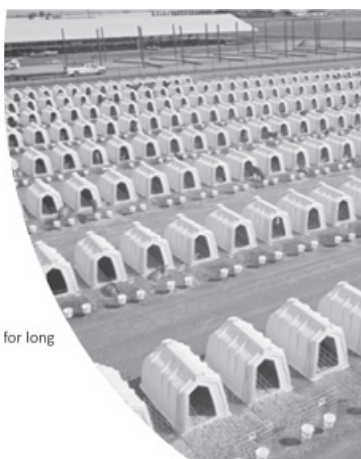


- **Pregnancy rate: >22%**
 - Cow inseminated within 21 of end of VWP>90%
 - Heat detection rate >65%
 - Conception rate: >35%
 - Cow pregnant by 150 DIM: >70%
- **Lactating herd confirmed pregnant: >50%**
- **Cows culled for reproduction: <5%**
- **Age at first calving: 22-24 months**

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Managing Heifer Inventory

- What is being generated?
 - Excess Heifers?
 - Impact of Overcrowding
- How many are needed?
 - Sexed vs Conventional
 - Genomic Testing
 - Identify heifers with desired genetics for long term viability in the herd
 - Consider beef
- KPI's to watch for....
 - % DOA and HFR Ratio
 - Double Birthweight in 56 days
 - Age at 1st Breeding and Age at Calving



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Reproductive Goals



- **Know when to stop breeding**
 - If 3rd lactation and "deviation from herdmates" milk is negative after 1st breeding consider "Do Not Breed"(DNB).
 - If average cow, consider DNB after 2 services.
 - 3-4 breedings should be the limit for the majority of cows. An exceptional cow may get more breedings.
 - If a cow loses a pregnancy and is over 200 DIM then she should be on the DNB list.
 - Consider Somatic Cell Count(SCC), Lameness and Other Factors

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Reproductive Goals



- **Increase number of calves born**
 - Increasing heifer calves augments the dairy's flexibility in culling decisions
 - Increasing bull calves improves income, as increasing heifer calves allows greater flexibility in culling decisions.
 - Role of genomic testing
- **Lower culling rate**
 - Culling for reproductive reasons is the single-highest reason cows leave the herd.
 - Reducing the amount of cows culled for reproductive reasons, will allow culling for low production.

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Heat Stress affects Dry Cows too!

Heat stress conditions at **conception** or **late gestation** reduces daughter milk production

Lower birth weights and compromised transfer of immunity compromised calves heat stressed in utero

Cooling cows during late gestation effective to lessen impacts of heat stress on calves

Transition Cow Program - Single most impact on peak milk

- <30 DIM: 4% culled
- <60 DIM: 6% culled

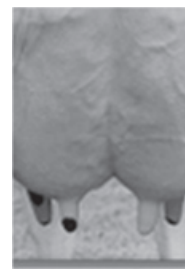


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Milk Quality (SCC) AND Components!

Pounds of components produced vs. pounds of milk produced, what are you getting paid for??

- SCC < 150-200,000
- New infections (high SCC) < 5%
- Clinical mastitis / mo. < 2%
- % 1st lact. < 200,000 ≥ 90%
- % older cows < 200,000 ≥ 80%
- % early lact. > 200,000 < 10%
- % culled for mastitis: < 8%?



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Transition Cow Facility Goals:

- ✓ Maximize dry matter intake:
 - 18-24 inches to dry cows
 - 24 inches to milking cows
 - 30-36 inches to pre/post fresh cows.
- ✓ If working with existing facilities, priority should be given to feed access
- ✓ 80% stocking density if pre/post fresh cows have feed access of 24 inches
- ✓ 100% stocking density if pre/post fresh cows have feed access greater than 30 inches



Feed & Forage Management

- **Maintain Forage Quality**
 - Harvest corn silage at the right moisture content
 - Properly cover bunkers and drive-over piles after packing
 - Keep an even face
 - Remove moldy feed
 - Monitor dry matter content at least weekly
- **Ration formulation vs. ration formulation**
 - Chop length, mixing of ingredients, inaccurate weighing



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Maximize Labor



- “Train people well enough so they can leave, treat them well enough so they don’t want to.”
- Increasing cost of labor.
- Second greatest expense – just behind feed expense.
- Increased labor productivity = Increased cow productivity.

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Reference: Melissa O’Rourke, ISUEO Farm
and Agribusiness Management Specialist

What is Turnover Costing You?



- Estimates are 150 to 250 percent of an employee’s annual wage.
- Employee making \$10-12/hour
- Turnover cost = \$37,500 to \$45,000 at 150%
 - Example:
 - 20 employees and 10% turnover....
 - Cost = \$75,000 to \$90,000 per year
- Important concepts to consider:
 - Importance of job analysis and descriptions
 - Recruitment and selection considerations
 - Orientation and onboarding

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