

Maternity Pen Management

Companion to Summer Informational Meeting

Calving pen management is an important factor in farm profitability. The value of heifer calves worth \$600—\$700 is obvious. Also, internal herd growth is extremely important as it allows for expansion or increased voluntary culling. All successful heifer raising programs begin with excellent management of the calving pack.

Still births are defined as any calf that dies within 48 hours of birth. A 2007 National Animal Health Monitor System (NAHMS) dairy study reported 6.5% still born rates nationally. They also reported that 17.2% of all calvings were assisted. Dystocia (difficult calving) increases still birth rates (SBR's.)

Odds Ratio of Increased Stillbirth Rate		
	slight dystocia	forced extraction
heifers	2.91%	6.76%
cows	4.67%	11.36%

Goals for still birth rates should be less than 8% for both heifers and cows

combined. In order to achieve this goal, 1st calf heifer rates should be less than 10%. The DairyComp command "Events\3" produces a calving report by gender and live/dead status.

There are multiple factors that affect dystocia rates. A partial list includes:

1. Age—heifers <22 months or >26 months at first calving experience increased still birth rates (SBR)
2. Gestation Length—<275 or >289 DCC increases SBR
3. Twinning Rates— should be less than 5% (if not, talk with your nutritionist)
4. Seasonality—may vary by farm, but typically highest SBR in mid-winter or mid-summer
5. Nutrition
 - a) BCS (Body Condition Score) > 3.5 increases SBR
 - b) Milk Fever in cows increases SBR
 - c) poorly grown, over-conditioned heifers— recommend using heifer growth charts to check height and weight at 12, 16 and 20 months
6. Calving Pen assistance protocols and implementation
7. overcrowding—minimum of 200 square feet per cow in the calving pen (don't count feed alley space)
8. Sire selection—choose calving ease bulls for heifers

On farm dystocia rates should be monitored monthly for any developing trends.

Using a scoring system, similar to the following scale of 1—5, makes it more uniform and easier to analyze:

- 1 = no assistance
- 2 = minimal assistance—easy hand pull
- 3 = calf jack necessary
- 4 = fetal manipulation required, some vaginal tearing, calf jack necessary
- 5 = veterinary assistance, c-section, moderate to extensive vaginal tearing, extensive manipulation of the fetus

Do Not Disturb

**** A shift change is never an excuse to pull a calf ****
**** Moving a cow in stage 2 labor can arrest labor for up to 2 hours ****



Informational Meeting in the Perry Park

Thank You!!

To all of the people who came to learn and enjoy great food & company!

To Dr's Lamb and Wakefield for excellent presentations.

To Pfizer Animal Health for help in sponsorship.

To the Wyoming County Dairy Princess for her assistance.

Normal Parturition Consists of 3 Stages

Stage 1

1. Typically lasts 6—12 hours.
2. Contractions begin, forcing calf and fetal membranes to the birth canal
3. Cervix dilates
4. Behaviorally, cow is uncomfortable, often getting up and down, restless
5. Ends with water bag visible or breaking and mucous plug released.

Stage 2

1. Delivery of calf—strong coordinated contractions
2. Expect: 1—2 hours with a heifer, 1/2—1 1/2 hours with a cow
3. Should be steady progress when feet appear.

Stage 3

1. Passing of placenta
2. if this takes longer than 12 hours, it is a Retained Placenta

When to intervene

1. If Stage 1 is greater than 6 hours
2. Stage 2
 - water bag visible for 2 hours and cow is not trying
 - cow is trying for 30 minutes with no progress
 - cow quits trying for 30 minutes
 - rectal or excessive vaginal bleeding
 - excessive fatigue of cow or calf
 - abnormal presentation (ex: 3 feet, tail...)

Most Common Mistakes / Problems

1. Intervening too soon = impatience
2. Lack of Cleanliness
 - * calving area should be well-bedded
 - * vulva should be cleaned with soap, and tail held securely out of the way
 - * calving chains or straps should be clean
3. Intervening too soon = impatience
4. Insufficient Lube—do not use soap as this breaks down cows' natural lube
5. Intervening too soon = impatience
6. Follow the "15 minute rule" - if you cannot make progress in 15 minutes, call for assistance

TLC for the compromised calf

Bovine Veterinarian/March-April 2008, p.12

Good supportive care can go a long way for a compromised calf. Sheila McGuirk, DVM, PhD, says calves with difficult deliveries are high-risk calves and everything about their post-natal management is difficult. "Attentive, well-trained people who care make a difference," McGuirk says.

Stimulation, clearing an airway, stopping navel bleeding and warming up that calf will make a difference, McGuirk notes. She suggests sitting the calf in sternal recumbency, changing body positions and towel drying. Giving oxygen by mask is also useful.

Give the calf some time. "Delay colostrum feeding for the compromised calf for four hours, but if the nose and mucous membranes don't turn pink, have your clients call a veterinarian for assistance," McGuirk suggests. "There is no magic medication to make calves breathe or quick tricks that turn these calves around. Keep them sitting, warm and stimulated to breathe. Give warm colostrum and get assistance if needed."

The Perry Veterinary Clinic Has 5 Portable Ultrasound Units

The units are being used routinely on many dairies. Advantages of ultrasound use in sterility exams are many. The use of ultrasound can help improve sound reproductive programs. Some of the advantages over manual palpation are:

Accurate ovarian palpation— The ovaries are actually visualized for accurate detection of structures. For example; follicles, corpus luteum, cystic structures are quickly identified. A recent study demonstrated significant improvement in accuracy on ovarian palpation over manual palpation.

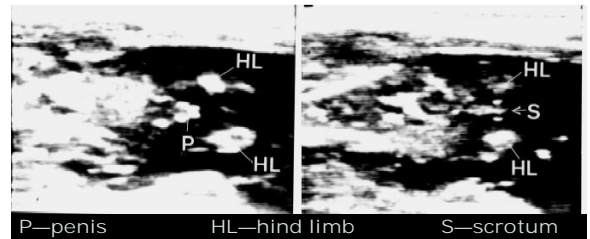
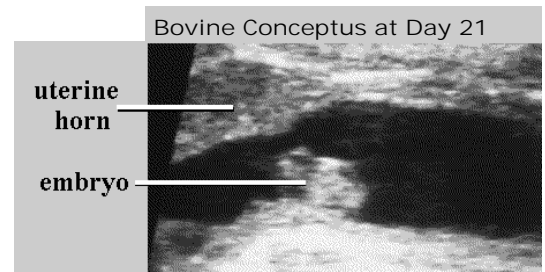
Uterine pathology problems such as chronic infection (pyometra), endometritis, cysts and adhesions can be identified accurately and treated in a timely fashion.

Early pregnancy diagnosis— A fetal heartbeat can be detected on day 28 routinely. Identifying open cows earlier allows a quicker decision to be made to get a cow bred again more rapidly.

Twin detection— Cows that are carrying twins need to be treated differently than cows carrying single calves. Twin cows tend to freshen early and retain placentas. It helps to identify these animals and get them dried off two weeks early. These cows are also at a higher risk for dystocia. Ultrasound exams find a much higher percentage of twins.

Fetal sexing— Accurate fetal sexing can be completed from day 55 to day 75. Knowing the sex of a calf is important for many reasons, including marketing, calf inventory planning, and culling decisions. Sexing is a new service now being offered by Perry Veterinary Clinic.

If ultrasounding can fit into your operation's reproductive program, or you're interested in more information about ultrasound or sexing, please contact your herd veterinarian.



Rabies in New York, 2007

1. 559 animals confirmed with rabies in 2007.
2. More than 3,000 New Yorkers underwent a month-long rabies treatment due to bites, scratches or mucous membrane exposures to saliva or nervous tissue from potentially rabid animals.

www.health.state.ny.us

World Rabies Day Sept. 28

1. 7,000 confirmed cases of rabies in the U.S. in 2007
2. Domestic animals with the most confirmed cases: dogs, cats and cattle.
3. Do not handle unfamiliar animals—even if they appear friendly.
4. Report any suspicious animals or bites.
5. Vaccinate!

www.worldrabiesday.org

A copy of all newsletters are posted at: www.perryvet.com

To place a farm supply order:
Phone (585) 969-9120
Fax (585) 237-5544

Or, visit the Farm Store:
Mon-Fri 7am - 5pm
Sat 7am - Noon

Closed: New Years Day,
Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day,
Thanksgiving and Christmas

Dairy Work Force Development Module Starts September 23

The Wyoming County Dairy Institute, a collaborative arrangement between Cornell Cooperative Extension of Wyoming County, Alfred State College, Quality Milk Production Services, PRO-DAIRY, Genesee Community College, and New York Center for Dairy Excellence, will be offering a dairy work force development module starting on September 23 at Cooperative Extension, 401 N. Main St., Warsaw.

The title of this module is "Herdsmanship, Herd Health and Lameness." It will be taught by local veterinarians, faculty from Alfred State College and Cornell's College of Veterinary Medicine.

The classes, which are available for college credit through Alfred State College, will meet Tuesday and Thursday nights from 7:00 to 9:00 pm from September 23 until October 16.

Topics discussed will be:

- Biosecurity protocols
- Cow behavior and cow sense
- Nutrition's role in herd health
- Identifying the Sick Cow
- Health issues
- Feedbunk management
- Cow Comfort
- Lameness detection, and treatment
- Developing vaccination programs



Also, classes will meet on Saturday, October 4th and Friday October 10th.

Those days will be dedicated to developing "hands-on" skills at local dairy farms in Wyoming County.

Anyone interested can register on line at www.wyomingcountydairyinstitute.com, or call Cindy at 585-786-2251. Costs are \$75 for CCE enrollees, \$95 for non-enrollees, with an additional charge of \$55 if an applicant desires college credit.