

Could This Happen on Your Farm?

On January 26, 2010, ABC Nightly News and ABC Nightline aired a documentary on Animal Welfare. An undercover investigator, working for the animal rights group Mercy for Animals, filmed abuse episodes at Willette Dairy in Locke, NY. Due to pressure from consumers (Domino's, Papa John's), Leprino Foods will no longer accept milk produced at this dairy. This exposé highlights three critically important issues.

Point 1. Animal husbandry practices are under greater scrutiny by the general public, and by animal welfare groups in particular.

Point 2. Specifically, production animal agriculture is under fire.

Point 3. Dairy farming is a consumer driven industry, supply and demand, and demand has changed.

Point 3: Consumer Driven

The actions and image of dairy producers is important to manufacturers and consumers. An increasing number of consumers will change dairy purchasing habits based on real or perceived impressions of dairy farmers. Additionally, the majority of consumers of dairy products have no knowledge of agriculture or animal husbandry practices. While Milk Mustache and California Cows ads are "cute" marketing schemes, they do nothing to answer the criticisms of current farming practices. The dairy industry must openly promote cleanliness, wholesomeness of products, compassion for cows and stewardship of the environment.

June/July 2005

(R)Evolution From Within? New Directions for the Humane Society

The *Satya* Interview with Wayne Pacelle

"With his promotion came a revamp of the organization's mission, the development of a new campaigns section with a focus on farm animals, and the establishment of a company-wide vegan policy."

www.satyamag.com/jun05/pacelle.html

Point 2: Under Fire

Modern production agriculture practices (Factory Farming?) are under intense scrutiny by well-funded and organized groups. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) is an 11 million member group headed by Wayne Pacelle with annual revenues of over \$130,000,000. *see sidebar* They have a powerful lobby in congress and incredibly savvy mass media marketing campaigns. They are very influential and have the ability to alter public perception and public policy. Animal agriculture must become proactive towards animal welfare issues. We must not only manage our cows well, we must inform consumers, the food industries (milk and meat), and the media that we are employing best management practices that address animal welfare issues. *If we do not regulate ourselves, other groups will develop their own guidelines, matching their own agendas, and perform on-farm audits.* The Dairy industry must present a unified, scientifically based, environmentally sound opposition to these attacks if we are to feed the world.

Because of progressive farming practices, Americans spend less on food than any nation on earth at any time in history.

Point 1: Key Welfare Issues

Dehorning

- Use adequate restraint – even if you must build or buy a dedicated chute.
- Use of nerve blocks and/or sedation is imperative.
- Must have properly functioning dehorning.
- The employees must be properly trained.
- Dehorning of younger animals with smaller horn buds is better than older/larger.

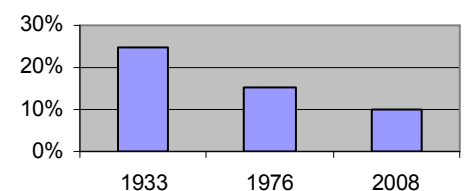
Tail Docking

- American Veterinary Medical Association has opposed this practice since 2004.
- As of January 1, 2010 – banned in California.
- There is no scientific evidence that tail docking reduces disease incidence.
- Anyone who continues to dock tails should:
 - have valid reasons why,
 - make sure docking is done as humanely as possible, as young as possible and with clean instrumentation,
 - provide fly control in summer months.

Down Cows

- Move downers to a safe, comfortable place only in a way that will not injure them further.
- Provide a clean area with adequate feed and clean water.
- Use only approved euthanasia protocols - consult your vet.
- Set rigid timeline protocols for nursing downers - 24 – 48 hours maximum.
- Provide fly control in summer months.

**Percent of Disposable Income
Americans Spend on Food**



Cow Movement

- Trained employees move cows quickly without physical abuse (How does your freestall rake keep breaking?)
- If a prod is used, is the employee trained?
- How comfortable are the freestalls?
- How well bedded are the freestalls?
- Are there an excessive number of lame or crippled cows?

Cleanliness/Environment

- There is no excuse for filthy conditions.

Bull Calves

- Animal welfare decisions cannot be based on the value of the animal.
- Bull calves need colostrum and navel dip.

Self Regulation is key

There are many animal welfare programs / models currently in action. The NYSCHAP (New York State Cattle Health Assurance Program) is a viable option that is currently available and offers independent 3rd party verification. If you are interested, contact your herd health veterinarian.

AVISO A LOS EMPLEADOS

La regla a ser observada en este establo a toda hora hacia el Ganado, joven y adulto, es la de paciencia y ternura. El valor de un hombre en un hato termina en cuanto él pierde su paciencia e imparte malos tratos. Los hombres deben ser pacientes, el ganado no es un ente que razona. Recuerde que este es el hogar de las Madres. Trate a cada vaca como una Madre debe ser tratada. El dar leche es una función de la maternidad. El trato duro disminuye el flujo. Eso me causa daño tanto a mi como a la vaca. Siempre mantenga estas ideas en mente cuando maneje el ganado.

W. D. Hoard
Fundador de Hoard's Dairyman

Dueño _____

NOTICE TO THE HELP

"THE RULE to be observed in this stable at all times, toward the cattle, young and old, is that of patience and kindness. A man's usefulness in a herd ceases at once when he loses his temper and bestows rough usage. Men must be patient. Cattle are not reasoning beings. Remember that this is the Home of Mothers. Treat each cow as a Mother should be treated. The giving of milk is a function of Motherhood; rough treatment lessens the flow. That injures me as well as the cow. Always keep these ideas in mind in dealing with my cattle."

-- W. D. Hoard

Proactive Self Regulation

1. NYSCHAP (New York State Cattle Health Assurance Program) has developed an excellent cattle welfare module. If your dairy is already a NYSCHAP herd, you are encouraged to consider adding this module. If your herd is not a NYSCHAP herd, now is a great time to join. <http://nyschap.vet.cornell.edu>
2. NDWAI (National Dairy Animal Well-Being Initiative) is a coalition of dairy producers, processors, co-ops, retailers, ag-lenders, researchers and veterinarians. NEDPA (North East Dairy Producers) and Cornell University have also become involved. www.dairywellbeing.org
3. Other programs are available—contact your herd health veterinarian for more information.

The food industry, processors and consumers expect that animal industries will develop on-farm audit programs addressing animal welfare. The expectation is that 3rd party audits will be a component of this process.

PVC Transfers IVF Embryos

The Perry Veterinary Clinic now has qualified veterinarians to transfer fresh in vitro fertilized (IVF) embryos. In January of 2010, Dr. Craig Lamb traveled to the Trans Ova Genetics regional center in Boonsboro, MD and received training in the handling and transfer of fresh IVF embryos. As part of Trans Ova's Fresh Ship Program, PVC clients synchronize their on-farm recipients to be in heat the day after their donors are collected at Trans Ova Genetics. The following week, day six embryos are removed from culture and evaluated, and all viable embryos are packaged into vials. The vials are placed in a portable, battery-powered incubator. This allows the embryos to continue growing and developing as they are shipped overnight. The following day the embryos are transferred into the on farm recipient. So far PVC has transferred over 40 fresh IVF embryos.



For more information please contact Dr. Craig Lamb at the clinic.


Spring Producers Meeting!!

Breezy Hill Party House, Warsaw NY
Wednesday, March 24, 2010

6pm Registration

6:30pm Dinner

7pm Speaker

 **Look for your invitation
in the mail soon**

Craig E. Shultz, DVM | Director

Bureau of Animal Health & Diagnostic Services
Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
Meat Safety and Beef Quality Assurance

A copy of all newsletters are posted at: www.perryvet.com
To place a farm supply order:
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Store Hours: Mon-Fri 7am - 5pm Sat 7am - Noon
Closed: New Years Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day,
Thanksgiving and Christmas
Current Clients—Place your farm supply order by email:
orders@perryvet.com
You will receive a confirmation email from Farm Store staff.
Please include a contact name and phone number.

