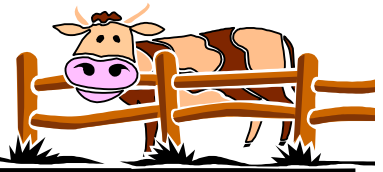


DAIRY *Update*



Spring 2008

New Publication Helps Educate Employees about Dairy Beef Quality

Sales of cull or “market” dairy cows and bulls make up about 5 percent of a dairy’s income, but dairies may be able to increase this percentage if cows can be managed for their eventual beef products as well as milk production. Historically, most beef from dairy cattle went to hamburger or bologna. However, today more than half of every carcass is fabricated into high-value whole-muscle products like marinated steaks, roasts, deli roast beef, Philly steaks and fajitas.

To help dairy producers educate their employees about the importance of beef from market dairy cows, the Idaho Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Program released a new 16-page training guide, “Idaho Dairy Beef Quality Assurance,” in both Spanish and English. The project was overseen by University of Idaho Extension Specialists Jason Ahola (Beef) and Mireille Chahine (Dairy). The publication was translated in Spanish by Chahine with the assistance of visiting Bolivian veterinarian Omar Pozo.

Copies of each version (Spanish- and English-language) have been included along with this newsletter. Copies will also be available through Cooperative Extension’s national DAIReXNET Website, www.extension.org/dairy+cattle, to which University of Idaho Extension faculty contribute. Dairies can also acquire additional copies of these publications by contacting the Idaho BQA Program at 208-459-6365 or beef@uidaho.edu.

Dairy Beef Quality Assurance – a nationwide educational program for dairy owners, managers and employees – emphasizes humane handling and management of dairy cattle to prevent lameness, bruising and injury; giving injections in the neck to avoid damaging valuable cuts of beef; following drug label guidelines to prevent drug residues and potential antibiotic resistance problems; implementing biosecurity plans to control infectious diseases within a herd, and timely culling to reduce the incidence of unmarketable “downer” cows.

This publication is the newest dairy-related resource created by the Idaho Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Program, which is funded in part by Idaho beef and dairy cattle producers through the \$1-per-head beef check-off program. The Idaho BQA Program is also currently conducting several research projects to provide information to Idaho dairies about the quality and value of their market dairy cows and bulls. This includes beef checkoff-funded projects such as “*Identification of key BQA-related factors that affect the value of market dairy cows*” and “*Effect of pre-harvest feeding on market dairy cow carcass characteristics, value, and end-product eating quality.*”

UI Faculty Recognized

★ Chahine wins Diversity Award ★

Dr. Mireille Chahine, Assistant Professor and Extension Dairy Specialist in Twin Falls, recently received the University of Idaho Extension Diversity Award. In response to dairy producer and allied industry suggestions, Dr. Chahine has developed a wide range of Spanish language programs for Idaho dairy employees over the past five years, including:

- Milker's Schools (classroom and on-farm sessions)
- Calf Raising Schools
- Hoof Care Workshop
- TMR Mixing and Feeding School
- "Vaca Verde" – Green Cow Environmental Workshop

Dr. Chahine has also published numerous Spanish language articles in "El Lechero" magazine in the past two years.

★ Battaglia wins Advising Award ★

Dr. Dick Battaglia, Professor and former Department Head of Animal and Veterinary Sciences, received the University of Idaho College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Advising Award for 2007-2008. Dr. Battaglia has devoted countless hours to advising undergraduate and graduate students since stepping down as Department Head after 14 years in early 2005.

This is the second year in a row that a faculty member from the Department of Animal and Veterinary Sciences has won this award, as Dr. Amin Ahmadzadeh was the recipient last year.

National Dairy Animal Well-Being Initiative

The National Dairy Animal Well-Being Initiative, introduced at World Dairy Expo 2007, is a producer-led coalition that includes members from throughout the dairy and allied industries.

Last October, the coalition introduced a draft of proposed principles and guidelines intended "to provide a uniform umbrella of assurance that the dairy industry is meeting its ethical obligation for dairy animal well-being." Endorsers include numerous milk processors and co-ops, including Dairy Farmers of America, Inc., and Northwest Dairy Association (Darigold).

To view the draft principles and guidelines concerning nutrition, animal health, management, housing and facilities, handling, movement, and transportation, and third party oversight:

www.dairywellbeing.org/index.php

Dairy Cattle Research Update

Q: What is the incidence of stillbirths in dairy cattle?

A: Stillbirth may be defined to include calves that are born dead or die within 48 h after calving. In research conducted on three Colorado dairies (Lombard et al. 2007), greater than 7,300 calvings produced 7,788 calves. The results are summarized below:

- From primiparous cows, 12.6% of calves were stillborn.
- From multiparous cows, 6.1% of calves were stillborn.
- Overall, the proportion of stillborn calves was 8.2%.
- A greater percentage of bull calves than heifer calves were stillborn (10% vs. 6.3%, respectively).
- More than half (51.2%) of calves born to primiparous dams required assistance during calving, as compared to 29.4% of calves born to multiparous dams.

These data agree with the results of Meyer and co-workers (2000) who reported that 7.1% of dairy calves were stillborn, based on 666,341 calvings during a 12-yr period. Furthermore, Meyer and co-workers (2001) reported that primiparous dams produced stillborn calves more often (11.1%) than multiparous dams (5.7%).

What can be done to decrease the incidence of calving difficulty and stillbirths?

Management should:

- Work with the nutritionist to monitor heifer development
- Work with their semen supplier to select service sires that meet the goals of the business (NM\$, milk, fat, protein, and calving ease)

All employees should be trained in calving management, including:

- Recognizing the stages of calving
- Recognizing the presentation of the calf
- The importance of cleanliness
- The correct way to use obstetrical chains and pull a calf
- Care of the newborn calf (identification, dipping the navel, and the importance of delivering a fixed amount of high quality colostrum within 1 to 2 h after calving)

For more information on calving management contact your herd health veterinarian, semen supplier, or University of Idaho Extension Dairy Specialist.

Coming Events

- ◆ **American Society of Animal Science Western Section Meeting**, Laramie, WY, June 24-26. For more information: www.asas.org/western08/
- ◆ **World Buiatrics Congress**, Budapest, Hungary, July 6-11. For more information: www.xxvwbc2008.com
- ◆ **Association for Applied Animal Andrology**, Budapest, Hungary, July 12-13. For more information: <http://www.animalandrology.org/futuremeetings.htm>
- ◆ **International Congress on Animal Reproduction**, Budapest, Hungary, July 13-17. For more information: <http://www.icar2008.org/index.php>
- ◆ **American Dairy Science Association-American Society of Animal Science Annual Meeting**, Indianapolis, IN, July 7-11. For more information: <http://adsa.asas.org/meetings/2008/>
- ◆ **Conferencia Internacional Sobre Ganado Lechero – CIGAL 2008**, Guadalajara, Jalisco, México, July 9-11. For more information: www.cigal.biz
- ◆ **National Mastitis Council Regional Meeting**, Green Bay, WI, August 12 -13. For more information: www.nmconline.org/meetings.htm
- ◆ **Dia Internacional del Ganadero-Lechero –DIGAL 2008**, Delicias, Chihuahua, México, September 4-6. For more information: digal@prodigy.net.mx
- ◆ **National Association of Animal Breeder's Technical Conference on Artificial Insemination and Reproduction**, Milwaukee, WI, September 18-19. For more information: <http://www.naab-css.org/about/events.html>
- ◆ **American Association of Bovine Practitioners Annual Convention**, Charlotte, NC, September 25-27. For more information: www.aabp.org/meeting/default.asp
- ◆ **World Dairy Expo**, Madison, WI, September 30-October 4. For more information: <http://www.worlddairyexpo.org/gen.home.cfm>

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Extension Dairy Specialist