



Attitudes.....From the desk of Dr. Tom Michalek
February 1st, 2016

As the calendar turns to February, let's hope this February is not as cold and miserable as last year. Let's just say I'm looking forward to some record high temperatures rather than all those record low temperatures of February 2015. Regardless of the weather, 2016 has some changes in store that will affect many of us in the dairy industry. With the arrival of the upcoming year of 2017, we will no longer be tail docking, the Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) will be in full effect and "Animal Welfare Audits" may become as regular as the milk inspector of today. Lets review each of these a little more.

Several years ago, tail docking became popular because of the theory it would lead to cleaner cows and therefore higher quality milk. Although I'm sure the cleaner cows theory is true, all data and research that has been done has shown there to be no difference in milk quality between "docked cows" versus "undocked cows". This information along with the efforts of many animal welfare groups has led to the elimination of tail docking effective January 1, 2017. You may want to add a good set of cattle clippers to next year's Christmas list. I remember those days of clipping tails and flanks on my family dairy 50 years ago.

The Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) became law this Fall and will also take full effect on January 1, 2017. At that time all feed additive antibiotics will require a prescription from your veterinarian. The VFD is basically an extension of Veterinary Client Patient Relationship (VCPR) already in effect for injectable antibiotics. The overall intent of these two programs is to eliminate the indiscriminate use of antibiotics in food producing animals with the ultimate goal to enhance food safety. The VFD probably affects feedlot and swine industries more than the dairy industry. But many dairy replacement heifers have also been put on oral antibiotics (AS 700 for example) for respiratory disease prevention and treatment. By next January, this will require a veterinary prescription.

Some of you may have already had some experience with an Animal Welfare Audit or similar program. These programs are an extension of the treatment protocols you have (or should have) in place on your dairy. We have a "generic" protocol book available at Thumb Veterinary Services that can be tailored to your dairy. If we haven't done this for your dairy yet, please take the time to review protocols with one of us in the near future. Animal welfare audits go beyond treatment protocols. The industry also

would like protocols in place for all the other routine events that happen on each dairy. We already have created protocols for humane down cow movement and for humane on farm euthanasia. Many other protocols such as milking procedure, lameness management and/or colostrum management can be added as needed.

Well, that's enough for now-Think Spring, Take Care and Stay Safe, -Dr. Tom

New online store!

TVS first introduced an online store for pharmaceuticals and supplies for cats, dogs and pocket pets last year. In the fall we introduced our equine store for pharmaceuticals and supplies. We are pleased to announce that we have an online store (PharmStore) for cattle, swine, sheep, goats and other farm animals. The PharmStore is not intended to replace the Drop Ship program. It is intended for those who do not qualify for the Drop Ship program, the opportunity to purchase pharmaceuticals and supplies at a reduced price with shipping to the door.

All stores offer products we trust and recommend, these are manufacturer guaranteed products with no hassles or delays. All scripted items still must comply with a valid veterinary client patient relationship, and we will be notified when you request to purchase a scripted item.

All stores can be accessed through our website at www.thumbvets.com. Click on the online store tab.



Producer Meeting

Make the Employee Experience Work
For You

Thursday 2/18/16

St. Patrick's Parish Center, Palms, MI 48456

Speaker Matt Wood Vita Plus

Registration 9:30 am

Program 10:00 am-2:00 pm

Herdsman and Calf Personnel Meetings

Wednesday 2/3/16 Herdsman Meeting -

Repro- the latest and greatest

Wednesday 2/17/16 Calf Personnel

Injection Sites and Injection Site Reactions

(Contact the clinic if you wish to receive reminder text or email notifications of these meetings.)

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