

FEEDLOT[®]



FEEDER INFORMATION HIGHLIGHTS

Volume XXII Number 5

August 2014

Feedlot Focus

- Yearling health in the shadow of the drought
- Go with the flow

Management

- Leaning on lending
- Q&A: Do I have to have a lagoon?
- Are you partner material?

Cow-calf corner

- A new test for ranking forage quality

Marketing

- Bears or bulls?



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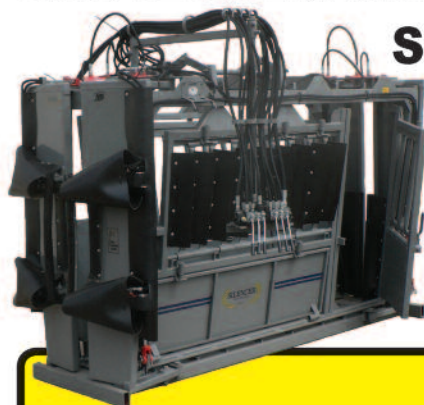
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Increasing Efficiency

Efficiency.

The dictionary defines it as "accomplishment of or ability to accomplish a job with a minimum expenditure of time and effort." I'd say in the livestock business, it's not so much about the expenditure of time and effort, but more about

making the most pounds per dollar spent. Here lately, we're all spending a lot more dollars!

Cattle prices are breaking records left and right. At press time, prices have softened slightly, but they are still far ahead of years' past. A mid-July Cattle-Fax report showed 450- and 550-pound calves are \$100/cwt. higher this year than last year. And although more and more folks are operating in the black, there's more on the line with every head. Cattle walking around today are almost like liquid gold. And although our inputs haven't increased as much as cattle prices, their roles of keeping cattle healthy and performing is even more important. Animal health products, feed additives, pest control and more – each play an important role in converting feed to pounds and pounds to money.

Higher prices are changing how we operate, from the amount of money it takes to be in business

down to business decisions because of the increased cost per head. In this issue of FEED•LOT, we touch on some of these issues and the need to remain efficient.

On a similar note, we took a look at our own operation at the FEED•LOT office in Dighton, Kansas, and did a few things to increase our efficiency. From the workflow to produce a magazine, to office efficiencies, each adjustment will help us stay at the top of our game. One of those changes included a facelift to our building. We are easy to find on the main drag in Dighton, Kansas. If you're ever in town, stop in and say hello.

We enjoy hearing ways you are increasing efficiencies in your own operation. **FL**



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¹ Sifferman RL, Wolff WA, Holste JE, et al. Field efficacy evaluation of gamithromycin for treatment of bovine respiratory disease in cattle at feedlots. *Intern J Appl Res Vet Med*. 2011;9(2):171-180.

² Lechtenberg K, Daniels CS, Royer GC, et al. Field efficacy study of gamithromycin for the control of bovine respiratory disease in cattle at high risk of developing the disease. *Intern J Appl Res Vet Med*. 2011;9(2):189-197.

³ ZACTRAN product label.

⁴ Kahn, CM. *Merck Veterinary Manual*. 10th edition. 2010:1319.

⁵ Van Donkersgoed J, Merrill JK. A comparison of tilmosin to gamithromycin for on-arrival treatment of bovine respiratory disease in feeder steers. *Bovine Practitioner*. 2012;46(1):46-51.



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INDICATIONS

ZACTRAN is indicated for the treatment of bovine respiratory disease (BRD) associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *Pasteurella multocida*, *Histophilus somni* and *Mycoplasma bovis* in beef and non-lactating dairy cattle. ZACTRAN is also indicated for the control of respiratory disease in beef and non-lactating dairy cattle at high risk of developing BRD associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica* and *Pasteurella multocida*.

CONTRAINDICATIONS

As with all drugs, the use of ZACTRAN is contraindicated in animals previously found to be hypersensitive to this drug.

WARNING: FOR USE IN CATTLE ONLY. NOT FOR USE IN HUMANS. KEEP THIS AND ALL DRUGS OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN. NOT FOR USE IN CHICKENS OR TURKEYS.

The material safety data sheet (MSDS) contains more detailed occupational safety information. To report adverse effects, obtain an MSDS or for assistance, contact Merial at 1-888-637-4251.

RESIDUE WARNINGS: Do not treat cattle within 35 days of slaughter. Because a discard time in milk has not been established, do not use in female dairy cattle 20 months of age or older. A withdrawal period has not been established for this product in pre-ruminant calves. Do not use in calves to be processed for veal.

PRECAUTIONS

The effects of ZACTRAN on bovine reproductive performance, pregnancy, and lactation have not been determined. Subcutaneous injection of ZACTRAN may cause a transient local tissue reaction in some cattle that may result in trim loss of edible tissues at slaughter.

ADVERSE REACTIONS

Transient animal discomfort and mild to moderate injection site swelling may be seen in cattle treated with ZACTRAN.

EFFECTIVENESS

The effectiveness of ZACTRAN for the treatment of BRD associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *Pasteurella multocida* and *Histophilus somni* was demonstrated in a field study conducted at four geographic locations in the United States. A total of 497 cattle exhibiting clinical signs of BRD were enrolled in the study. Cattle were administered ZACTRAN (6 mg/kg BW) or an equivalent volume of sterile saline as a subcutaneous injection once on Day 0. Cattle were observed daily for clinical signs of BRD and were evaluated for clinical success on Day 10. The percentage of successes in cattle treated with ZACTRAN (58%) was statistically significantly higher ($p < 0.05$) than the percentage of successes in the cattle treated with saline (19%).

The effectiveness of ZACTRAN for the treatment of BRD associated with *M. bovis* was demonstrated independently at two U.S. study sites. A total of 502 cattle exhibiting clinical signs of BRD were enrolled in the studies. Cattle were administered ZACTRAN (6 mg/kg BW) or an equivalent volume of sterile saline as a subcutaneous injection once on Day 0. At each site, the percentage of successes in cattle treated with ZACTRAN on Day 10 was statistically significantly higher than the percentage of successes in the cattle treated with saline (74.4% vs. 24% [$p < 0.001$], and 67.4% vs. 46.2% [$p = 0.002$]). In addition, in the group of calves treated with gamithromycin that were confirmed positive for *M. bovis* (pre-treatment nasopharyngeal swabs), there were more calves at each site (45 of 57 calves, and 5 of 6 calves) classified as successes than as failures.

The effectiveness of ZACTRAN for the control of respiratory disease in cattle at high risk of developing BRD associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica* and *Pasteurella multocida* was demonstrated in two independent studies conducted in the United States. A total of 467 crossbred beef cattle at high risk of developing BRD were enrolled in the study. ZACTRAN (6 mg/kg BW) or an equivalent volume of sterile saline was administered as a single subcutaneous injection within one day after arrival. Cattle were observed daily for clinical signs of BRD and were evaluated for clinical success on Day 10 post-treatment. In each of the two studies, the percentage of successes in the cattle treated with ZACTRAN (86% and 78%) was statistically significantly higher ($p = 0.0019$ and $p = 0.0016$) than the percentage of successes in the cattle treated with saline (36% and 58%).

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Leaning on Lending

BY JILL J. DUNKEL

Record-breaking prices that were only dreamed of a few years ago are the new reality for cattlemen. All segments of the industry are adjusting to this new-found price structure, and ag lending is no exception.

Cattlemen who purchase cattle with the assistance of lending institutions have discovered their line of credit doesn't buy what it used to. Business plans that revolve around head counts to maximize resources must adapt to high prices and loan limits. And lenders have to decide how much additional capital they are willing to offer.

"Today's record prices are a two-edged sword," said Ken Leiber, President of National Finance Credit Corporation of Texas, a Fort Worth, Texas, lender that has specialized in livestock loans since 1930. "It's a

blessing, and we enjoy the higher prices when we sell, but the pain of restocking and getting back in is real. It's been such an extraordinary move in total dollars in cattle pricing this year. Producers went from buying \$800 calves to turn out on wheat pasture to that same calf costing \$1,200 or more this year."

Recent Cattle-Fax reports show 450- to 550-pound calves have increased \$1 or more per pound from one year ago. That means cattlemen who utilize lending must either reduce the number of head they purchase or ask for an increase in their line of credit.

"It's a problem, and it's the banker's concern as well as the producer's. Ultimately, you have to borrow more money to run the same number of cattle. No matter how your operation is set up, if you've

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got a place to run 1,000 head, it's not an efficient operation if you can only afford 600," Leiber stated. "If you can't stock it yourself, then you have to find another way to stock it in order to maximize the efficiency of your production resources."

High prices are stretching everyone, Leiber said. "Our loans have a little more margin now from this year's profits, but it's been an ongoing concern for the past three years, and borrowing needs just took off on steroids this year."

Profitability has not provided the necessary margins to keep up with the increased borrowing needs, he states. Back when 750-pound feeders cost \$1,000 per head, it took \$1 Million to buy 1,000 head. But now, on that same 1,000 head, an operator needs \$1.5 Million or more lined up.

"He's got to borrow more money for the same operation, running the same number of cattle on basically the same financial strength. We see producers going from borrowing 70% to now having to borrow 80-85% of their operating capital," Leiber said. "His margin may be a little better in total dollars, but he's got less cushion on a percentage drop in market values."

"In other words, his overall risk has increased if he went from having 30% of his own money invested to just 15% of his own money in the business which means that if market values drop 15%, he could quickly be in trouble."

Leiber said it's a dilemma because a 15% drop on a \$1,500 steer is \$225 while that same 15% drop on a \$1,000 steer is \$150, and the market has experienced such percentage moves many times. "We've seen a much greater percentage increase than that in cattle prices just this year, so we know we can see those kinds of declines. Basically, there's less room for error but more volatility to manage."

He said most banks are making adjustments and loaning at a higher leverage to support their borrowers' needs. It's simply what the business is demanding today.

However a lender's commitment

to the cattle business can also make a difference. "Lending on cattle is our only business so we don't look at other options for our capital. But a bank that offers other loans, like commercial business or real estate...they've got different options where to put their loan resources. Other business models with lower leverage or less volatility may start looking better to them. Given the ever-changing

conditions in our industry, my advice is always seek a lender that understands and is committed to the livestock business for the long term.

"Right now, cattle are profitable. You like where you're at. Even if you made more hedge margin calls than you ever dreamed, you still made money. But if you start combining this higher leverage with losses, that's when you can expect lending will tighten up." **FL**

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Yearling Health

IN THE SHADOW OF DROUGHT

Calves follow their mothers in at feeding time during last year's Texas drought, inhaling a trail of dust with every step.

FALL EXPECTATIONS WERE DECIDED OVER A YEAR AGO

Fall can be a challenging time at the feedyard. Calves are coming in from all over when weather is widely variable, and drought conditions in recent years only magnified the health risks. Though many areas have seen some relief, late summer had cattlemen wary of lingering effects and what else the fall will bring.

Last year was worse, and veterinarian Scott Crain, owner of Cattle Health Management Network in Meade, Kan., pointed to some of the effects drought brought to cattle health.

"We were all spending more money on drugs, seeing cattle at the front end, and at the back end, losing them when we weren't expecting to," Crain said. Of course, any cattle deaths are costly, but acute interstitial pneumonia (AIP) often strikes in the last weeks on feed after full costs are incurred.

Necropsies found some lung adhesions, but the most telling were cases of "marble-sized abscesses, right next to good lung tissue," he said. Adhesions are a sign that the animal had a respiratory problem earlier, but the pattern made the veterinarian think about much earlier.

"A calf's health starts in the womb, and for the last several years we've had a cow that's challenged, the fetus is challenged and the

newborn calf is challenged," he said. For a short time in healthy calves, the thymus gland grows and establishes the immune system, but Crain said post-death exams showing an underdeveloped thymus are signs of those early challenges.

And those marble-sized abscesses?

"If you have a young calf that's walking along behind mom, he's inhaling dust all the time," Crain noted. "A normal calf's immune system will deal with that, but not the one with a poorly developed immune system. He'll have a small pocket of dust, a fleck on his lung that continues to grow. And he'll get another one, and another one. But you've never seen him sick or treated him on the ranch."

The stress of transport and relocation to a feedlot can make such calves an easy target for further respiratory disease. Spotty problems can become fatal, especially when calves grow quickly to heavy weights. There have been many reports of such problems in the best growth genetics.

A weakened immune system can be especially detrimental as cattle move through marketing channels. The more places an animal goes, and the more cattle it is

exposed to, the greater likelihood it will get sick, Crain said. With each movement, information for each animal also tends to be lost.

"We need to find ways to streamline the marketing process and retain more information along the way," the feedlot veterinarian said. "That could help more animals to receive the optimal handling and treatment that will improve overall health, especially during greater periods of stress such as drought."

Why drought effects linger

Weather conditions may have improved in many areas, but Crain does not expect that to translate quickly into improved cattle health. Many cattle on feed and those soon to enter were carried and born in drought conditions and even with rain, pastures take time to fully recover.

"The timeline to think about is – from conception to yearling to going to the feedyard – about 18 months," he said. "So it will be 18 months after the drought is completely over and the grass has returned to normal that I expect to see health as we used to see it, and some of these pastures may need three to five years to really repair themselves."

In the meantime, he urges producers to keep putting out the minerals ►



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Yearling Health... from previous page
and supplements of past years, even if their grass looks sufficient.

"Drought-stricken pastures typically do not have all the necessary nutrients, even though rain has allowed grass to grow," Crain said.

Cattle today may have the same potential for health problems as last year, but two leading Kansas cattle feeders say as of June, overall health has improved. Cooler temperatures and more rain to settle the dust have helped prevent

those early challenges from exacerbating health problems in cattle with compromised systems.

Dan Dorn, supply development manager for Decatur County Feed Yard, Oberlin, Kan., credited his customers as well. "Many of them are focused on quality," he said. "When the drought first started, they sought to learn from the situation, make improvements and move forward."

However, he and Nick Chesnut, operations manager for Cattle Empire's feedyard division, Satanta, Kan., noted higher prices may yet have negative impacts on cattle health. To best support the wellbeing of calves entering feedyards, producers need to maintain good vaccination and weaning programs.

"As feeder cattle of all types – preconditioned or not – bring record high prices, there is less and less incentive to put in the time, effort and money for those programs," Chesnut said.

"I'm afraid producers will just want to take the money and run," Dorn agreed.

Only time will tell.

"I'd like to think this year will be better than last, but I don't want to disappoint myself," Chesnut said.

For the moment he is just going to expect another season of health problems and hope to be proven wrong. **FL**



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Dan Basse, President, AgResource Company

11:30 a.m. **Impact of High Quality/High Grading Cattle**
Scott Brown, Ph.D., Assistant Research Professor, University of Missouri

12:15 p.m. **Presentation of the 2014 Industry Achievement Award winner**
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1:30 p.m. **Consumer Demand, Consumer Questions & the Ground Beef Nation**
Brad Morgan, Ph.D., Meat Science and Food Safety Specialist, Zoetis

2:15 p.m. **Getting the Most from Feed Sample Testing**
Randy Royle, Laboratory Director, Servi-Tech

3:15 p.m. **Conquering the Labor, Hiring & Retention Battle**
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CAUTION
Federal (USA) law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

INDICATIONS
Beef and Non-lactating Dairy Cattle
BRD – DRAXXIN Injectable Solution is indicated for the treatment of bovine respiratory disease (BRD) associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *Pasteurella multocida*, *Histophilus somni*, and *Mycoplasma bovis*; and for the control of respiratory disease in cattle at high risk of developing BRD associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *Pasteurella multocida*, *Histophilus somni*, and *Mycoplasma bovis*.

IBK – DRAXXIN Injectable Solution is indicated for the treatment of infectious bovine keratoconjunctivitis (IBK) associated with *Moraxella bovis*.

Foot Rot – DRAXXIN Injectable Solution is indicated for the treatment of bovine foot rot (interdigital necrobacillosis) associated with *Fusobacterium necrophorum* and *Porphyromonas levis*.

Swine
DRAXXIN Injectable Solution is indicated for the treatment of swine respiratory disease (SRD) associated with *Actinobacillus pleuropneumoniae*, *Pasteurella multocida*, *Bordetella bronchiseptica*, *Haemophilus parasuis*, and *Mycoplasma hyopneumoniae*; and for the control of SRD associated with *Actinobacillus pleuropneumoniae*, *Pasteurella multocida*, and *Mycoplasma hyopneumoniae* in groups of pigs where SRD has been diagnosed.

DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION
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Inject subcutaneously as a single dose in the neck at a dosage of 2.5 mg/kg (1.1 mL/100 lb) body weight (BW). Do not inject more than 10 mL per injection site.

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Inject intramuscularly as a single dose in the neck at a dosage of 2.5 mg/kg (0.25 mL/22 lb) BW. Do not inject more than 2.5 mL per injection site.

CONTRAINDICATIONS
The use of DRAXXIN Injectable Solution is contraindicated in animals previously found to be hypersensitive to the drug.

WARNINGS
FOR USE IN ANIMALS ONLY.
NOT FOR HUMAN USE.
KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN.
NOT FOR USE IN CHICKENS OR TURKEYS.

RESIDUE WARNINGS
Cattle
Cattle intended for human consumption must not be slaughtered within 18 days from the last treatment. Do not use in female dairy cattle 20 months of age or older. A withdrawal period has not been established for this product in pre-ruminate calves. Do not use in calves to be processed for veal.

Swine
Swine intended for human consumption must not be slaughtered within 5 days from the last treatment.

PRECAUTIONS
Cattle
The effects of DRAXXIN on bovine reproductive performance, pregnancy, and lactation have not been determined. Subcutaneous injection can cause a transient local tissue reaction that may result in trim loss of edible tissue at slaughter.

Swine
The effects of DRAXXIN on porcine reproductive performance, pregnancy, and lactation have not been determined. Intramuscular injection can cause a transient local tissue reaction that may result in trim loss of edible tissue at slaughter.

ADVERSE REACTIONS
Cattle
In one BRD field study, two calves treated with DRAXXIN at 2.5 mg/kg BW exhibited transient hypersalivation. One of these calves also exhibited transient dyspnea, which may have been related to pneumonia.

Swine
In one field study, one out of 40 pigs treated with DRAXXIN at 2.5 mg/kg BW exhibited mild salivation that resolved in less than four hours.

STORAGE CONDITIONS
Store at or below 25°C (77°F).

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Q&A: Do I have to have a lagoon?

Ag engineer, John George of Ag Engineering Associates, answers reader questions on construction, design and regulations. This issue's topic: are lagoons absolutely necessary?

Reader Question: "I have seen reference to feedlot runoff controls which don't require a lagoon. Is it possible for a feedlot to be "in compliance" without a lagoon?"

John George's answer: The Clean Water Act (CWA) requires CAFOs that have a discharge or intend to discharge to have a "permit" authorizing said discharge. The permit will require a level of pollution control performance based on a reference technology identified by EPA as constituting the Best Available Technology economically achievable (BAT) for CAFOs.

The BAT reference technology for feedlots is a stormwater runoff detention basin (aka a lagoon) capable of containing all stormwater runoff from a 25 year, 24-hour precipitation event, plus any other wastewater. Many regulators and others mistakenly consider "building and operating a minimum-sized runoff detention system" as the only compliant technology under the CWA. However, the CWA focuses on "performance," and any technology can be employed that provides equal or better performance to BAT. Reverse osmosis and ultra filtration were unheard of, or were mostly theory at the time when BAT was defined for many of the discharging industries. Today, however, these and other high performing technologies are widely utilized



Settling bench and vegetated treatment area below a drovers alley.

for water treatment by several categories of dischargers since they are both more efficient and effective than BAT.

For CAFOs, there has been relatively little utilization and acceptance of alternative technologies for several reasons. Runoff detention (aka a lagoon) is often the simplest and most economical technology for CWA compliance where most of the largest CAFOs exist.

In 2003, however, I and the Iowa Cattlemen's Association sought and received financing from USDA-NRCS to invest in gaining knowledge and experience for an alternative technology that delivers CWA compliant performance without lagoons. There was and is a lot of red tape to overcome. However, there are now a number of success stories in Iowa and other areas that do not use detention structures. I have designed and have a few examples of well proven CAFO water pollution control systems that are fully compliant and which don't have a solids settling basin or runoff detention lagoon as part of the system. Advantages include simple operation and maintenance, no dewatering requirement, and low odors due to the lack of long term or permanent feedlot runoff storage.

FL

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Go with the Flow

...Or at least know where your flow is going!

BY TERRI QUECK-MATZIE

It's been a long wait for rain. And now, Mother Nature seems determined to make up for lost time. Excessively wet weather throughout the Midwest and other regions of the country has helped replenish subsoil moisture and nourish crops, but it has created problems for livestock operations charged with proper manure management.

"Extreme weather events are not new," says Angela Rieck-Hinz, Iowa State University Extension Field Agronomist for north central Iowa, where she specializes in crop and manure management issues, "but they do seem to occur more often these days, and that means producers need to be prepared with an emergency action plan."

She says the plan should address issues such as power loss that prevents use of pumps and augers, how to handle liquid manure if structures fail, and ventilation issues. All family members and employees should be familiar with the written plan – before bad weather strikes.

There are other precautions to take before the rains come. Rieck-Hinz says keep open lots scraped to reduce the amount of manure that might wash off the lot and make sure settling basins are ready to function at full capacity. Check outdoor liquid manure storage structures to maintain freeboard storage requirements, and if needed, haul a few loads to maintain

storage capacity when heavy rains are forecast. For earthen basins at full capacity, find alternative storage in advance. Be sure to protect the integrity of the earthen berm and respect freeboard requirements. Keep grass and weeds mowed and remove trees. Check pumps and pipes to make sure they are functioning correctly.

Rieck-Hinz says do not stockpile manure in waterways. Stockpiles

"The main thing is to identify potential problems ahead of time, and fix them so runoff from the feedlot and the feed storage area are not hitting the water source, even under extreme conditions."

of open feedlot manure should be located high on the landscape, according to state and local regulations, of course.

Proper drainage of clean water is important as well. Make sure all mechanisms for water diversion are properly functioning and



downspouts are clear of debris, to keep water off of lots and pens.

"Producers need to be tuned to what can happen," she adds.

Once the rains have come, the real work begins — starting with a thorough inspection to determine if and where water and manure might be flowing. "If this water reaches a stream, it is considered a discharge so make notes and plan to make corrective actions when conditions are suitable," says Rieck-Hinz.

"Producers should look at this as a worst case scenario," she adds. "Walk below the lot, and see where the water is flowing, where it's ending up. Then you can make needed changes before the next time."

If land application is necessary to reduce stored manure quantities, consider using hay or pasture land. Application on saturated soils may not be possible. Land with flat slopes and fields with a low P-index rating are best. Stay away from streams and waterways.

It may be necessary to work with neighbors to find appropriate locations, identifying alternate application locations ahead of time, and listing them in the emergency action plan.



Rieck-Hinz says it is important to work with the state regulatory agencies. “We often see them as the inspectors, but they are here to help; and they can offer guidance.” That especially applies to finding alternative measures for manure dispersal if an outdoor storage structure is in danger of overtopping. “Land-application, even on saturated soils will be preferable to overtopping earthen basins or lagoons as overtopping can sometimes cause a blowout of the entire storage structure,” says Rieck-Hinz.

She adds it is crucial to keep accurate records, as always, to show proper maintenance and operation of the facility’s manure management system, and keep the lines of communication open when there are problems.

Feedstuffs can be a concern

Storm run-off involves more than the manure pit. Heavy rains and running water also affect feed storage areas.

“It’s important that silage leachate is not running into streams and other waterways,” says Rieck-Hinz. Silage leachate is high in nitrogen, and a potential hazard to water quality and aquatic life.

“Not only are state regulatory agencies and EPA watching for this, but feed is a valuable commodity. It needs to be cleaned up if it’s not where it’s supposed to be,” says Rieck-Hinz.

There are preventative measures that can help. Keep mixing and loading areas clean by pushing feed spills back into commodity storage, and only uncover what is necessary

to meet immediate feeding needs. Routinely check for leachate and direct any runoff away from streams and road ditches.

“The main thing is to identify potential problems ahead of time,” says Rieck-Hinz, “and fix them so runoff from the feedlot and the feed storage area are not hitting the water source, even under extreme conditions.” **FL**



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¹KEYSER ET AL., 2007, J. ANIM. SCI. 85: 1254-1273.

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Beef and heart health

A new research study, funded by the beef checkoff and the National Institutes of Health-supported Penn State General Clinical Research Center, published in the June 19, 2014 issue of Journal of Human Hypertension, shows that a heart-healthy diet that includes lean beef can reduce risk factors for heart disease.

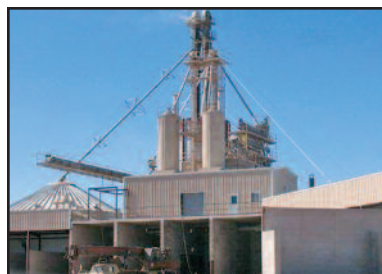
Myth: Saturated fat is bad.

Conventional Wisdom: Many researchers have now begun to reevaluate the role of saturated fats in heart disease. A review of more than 70 clinical studies raised questions about current guidelines related to fat intake, which generally restrict the consumption of saturated fats and encourage consumption of polyunsaturated fats to prevent heart disease.

Furthermore, many people may be surprised to know that beef con-

tributes 10 percent or less of saturated fat and total fat to the American diet. And, about half the fatty acids found in beef are monounsaturated fatty acids, the same kind found in olive oil and avocados. The recently published study in the Journal of Human Hypertension conducted at Penn State also shows that a dietary pattern rich in fruits, vegetables and low-fat dairy, that includes lean beef, even daily, can reduce risk factors for heart disease, including elevated cholesterol and blood pressure.

This study shows that nutrient-rich lean beef can be included as part of a heart-healthy diet that reduces blood pressure, which can help lower the risk for cardiovascular disease. The DASH eating plan – Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension – is currently recommended by the American Heart Association. **FL**



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 **MERCK**
Animal Health

A New Test for Ranking Forage Quality

Hay quality has a big influence on animal performance. Beef producers often use analytical tests, and look at the test results for crude protein (CP) and fiber components (ADF and NDF) when sending in hay samples. Some producers use an index system to compare the nutrient value of various batches of hay. The index gives you just one number that predicts the quality of a hay sample, making it simpler to evaluate and compare forages. There are two indexes that have been available for use. RFQ (relative feed quality) is a good equation, but costly, so most people use RFV (relative feed value) when evaluating forages and it has been the industry standard for

more than 20 years.

A newer index works better, according to Fred Muller, DVM, and Lynn Van Wieringen, PhD, ruminant nutritionist at Ag Health Laboratories in Sunnyside, Washington. Their lab has been doing feed analyses for many years, and recently began using DOMI (Digestible Organic Matter Index), a formula created by Cumberland Valley Analytical Services (CVAS), a major feed analytic lab in Maryland.

Van Wieringen says it's nice to have an index value—just one number—rather than having to compare multiple numbers. “If you are looking at different alfalfa hay samples you may look at some of the various nutrient analyses but it is

nice to have one number to help with the ranking,” she says.

“We’ve known for quite awhile that there is a need for a different ranking system. One of the limitations when using RFV is that it merely looks at two fiber values—the ADF and NDF—to come up with the one number,” says Van Wieringen. “It does not take into account other nutrients in the hay, such as crude protein. It also does not take into account the digestibility of the fiber. Another problem is that soil contamination (dust, etc. in the hay) will elevate the ash content and can skew the RFV value downward. A large portion of the ash will show up as fiber, in this test,” she explains.

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By contrast, the DOMI gives a more accurate indication of hay value because it removes the ash and indigestible fiber from the equation. It looks at the digestible organic matter which contains the nutrients such as crude protein and readily available carbohydrates.

CVAS generally reports the DOMI as pounds of organic matter per ton of feed. "If you have a value of 1300 pounds of digestible organic matter in a ton of hay, that would be better than hay with 1100 pound value,"

says Muller. This index makes it simple and easy to understand.

"A slide presentation on our website includes a graph that shows DOMI versus RFV on various samples. If you look at various feeds that have a RFV of 170, let's say, there is a wide spread in the DOMI of those feeds. I use this chart to show people how there is a lot of variation between what the old RFV would tell you and the actual DOMI. Some of those feeds will have very good DOMI numbers

and good performance in livestock, and some will not be as good as the RFV predicted—and the cattle won't perform very well on those," explains Muller.

"If you pick a single DOMI and then look at the range of RFV on various feeds, some of those will differ by 20 points. At 1300 DOMI some of those samples will be as low as 140 RFV and some as high as 160 RFV. So which are you getting? You don't really know, using that old index. We are excited about using the DOMI as a better tool to help people buy better feed or get better performance than what we used to be able to predict with the old RFV index," he says.

"Our goal is to help producers more accurately evaluate forages so they can select better quality feed that will help their cattle perform better," says Muller. "We want to help people implement feed analyses and interpret the results." **FL**



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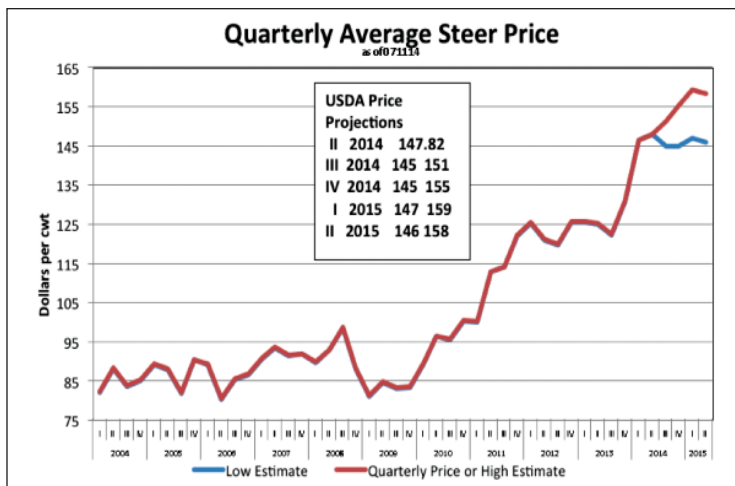
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Bears or bulls?

The last couple of weeks in the cattle market gave hints to the bears in the marketplace that, technically, the high may have been posted for the year. There are a lot of bears that can't believe this bull market will continue to impress into fall and winter. Admittedly, the tendency for the cash cattle market to erode into midsummer has been fairly consistent over the years. Will this year be different? Probably. In "normal" years, cattle decline into summer because of increased supply and reduced demand. This year is shaping up to be different because demand, domestically and international (US exports) are holding stronger relative to supply. The cattle market needs increased supply before price depreciates. It is simply going to take longer than a year to recover from 3 to 4 years of drought and contraction in the US cattle herd.

USDA each month gives updated quarterly price projections. The chart indicates a fairly healthy market going forward based on USDA data.

However, these projections could be low given the current cash market. It is interesting that USDA is indicating a price peek in the first quarter of next year. Although these estimates continue to show optimism over



the next few quarters, there are downside possibilities if consideration is given to increased beef imports from countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Mexico to name a few. It is the underlying lack of ground beef that is causing the most concern. The question of whether or not the cattle industry is pricing itself out of the market is a possible issue. But, all-time record high beef prices, so far, doesn't appear to have slowed beef demand. We are optimistic the cattle market, both fats and feeders into next year. However, at these price levels, producers should consider the use of put options to gain downside protection. In the past, outside events have crushed the cattle market and the cost of doing business today dictates the prudent use hedge strategies to fit the producer's goals. The use of futures to hedge at these levels can require huge amounts of capital while long put options define the risk.

Speaking of risks, the corn market is in a down-trend that maybe overdone. A lot of negative news has been thrown at this market and you have to wonder how cheap corn price needs to get before it begins to have a value for end users. Bears in the market base their ideas on the excellent growing weather the US is experiencing and higher yield prospects. It is still a long time before harvest and there is time for this market put in an early harvest low. Even at current price levels livestock producers might want to consider bull call spreads using the March and/or July contracts to lock in feed use for the next year. **FL**

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Are You Partner

BY DON TYLER

Every year I speak to college classes about going back and joining the family business. I give them a list of 10 questions they need to ask themselves before they make that decision, and 10 questions that they need to ask their family members before they enter the family business. Their body language suggests that these questions create some obvious signs of distress.

I always encourage them to be sure that any arrangement is in writing. This should include their compensation, benefits, specifics of time off, expected work hours and a Job Description that outlines their responsibilities. We would do this for any employee we would hire and they should be treated no different.

I recommend that family members should work as an employee for the company for a couple of years before they become financially invested in it as a partner or shareholder. This allows us to monitor their behaviors and determine if they are fit and capable to be a financial participant. On the other hand, if they want to engage in financial arrangements for their own entities such as renting land on their own, feeding their



Material?

own cattle, buying equipment, etc. they can do that as soon as they want—but they should borrow the funds from a lender, not from the family, and they should have to keep their own books.

If a family member—or any other person—wants to become a partner in the business, there are several criteria and issues that should be considered.

Here are a few “Red Flags:”

- If your mom is still washing your underwear, you aren't ready to be a partner.
- Any pattern of substance abuse, especially if it has resulted in a criminal record—including a DUI.
- Consistent relationship problems—either poor choices in personal relationships or an inability to develop proper businesslike, professional relationships with neighbors, employees, vendors or other individuals. ►



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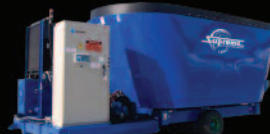
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Partner Material... from previous page

- Lack of commitment to the hard work that is needed to complete the tasks and diligently perform their duties in difficult situations.
- Lack of passion for the industry and the family business.
- Insensitivity to the company and the family's reputation in the community.
- Emotional immaturity or inability to handle the pressure of the day-to-day demands of the business.
- Irrational, unpredictable behavior.
- A pattern of poor decision-making.

As an example of these concerns, one client whose brother had joined the business 10 years ago was wondering why they kept having problems with him and his commitment—he had been through four “serious girlfriends” in the last four years, had a string of DUI’s, and couldn’t be counted on to be on time during the busiest times of the year—and that was before he was brought in as a partner! The clear warning signs were there, they just weren’t heeded.

Positive Signs of Their Partner Potential:

- Living independently, paying all of their own bills.
- They are the first one there in the morning, regardless of the plans for the day.
- Keen ability to solve problems.
- Good with people—regardless of their status, position or relationship to the company.
- Personally respected in the community.

- Educated in a related field and have proven their ability to apply that knowledge to their work.
- Future-thinker—has plans for the future and sees how they can make it better for everyone.
- Passion about the history of the family, the business, and a desire to maintain that reputation.
- Clear understanding of the issues that affect the family business, their industry and the local community.

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These two checklists—both the Red Flags and the Signs of Potential—are not complete lists and you should determine for yourself other criteria that you feel are

essential for your situation.

For a copy of the “10 Questions You Should Ask Yourself Before Entering the Family Business” and the “10 Questions You Should Ask Your Family Members” send an

e-mail to dhtyler@frontiernet.net and I would be happy to forward them. **FL**

Don Tyler is the owner of Tyler & Associates, Clarks Hill, IN. For more information on these and other employee management topics, contact him at 765-523-3259 or don@dontyler.com

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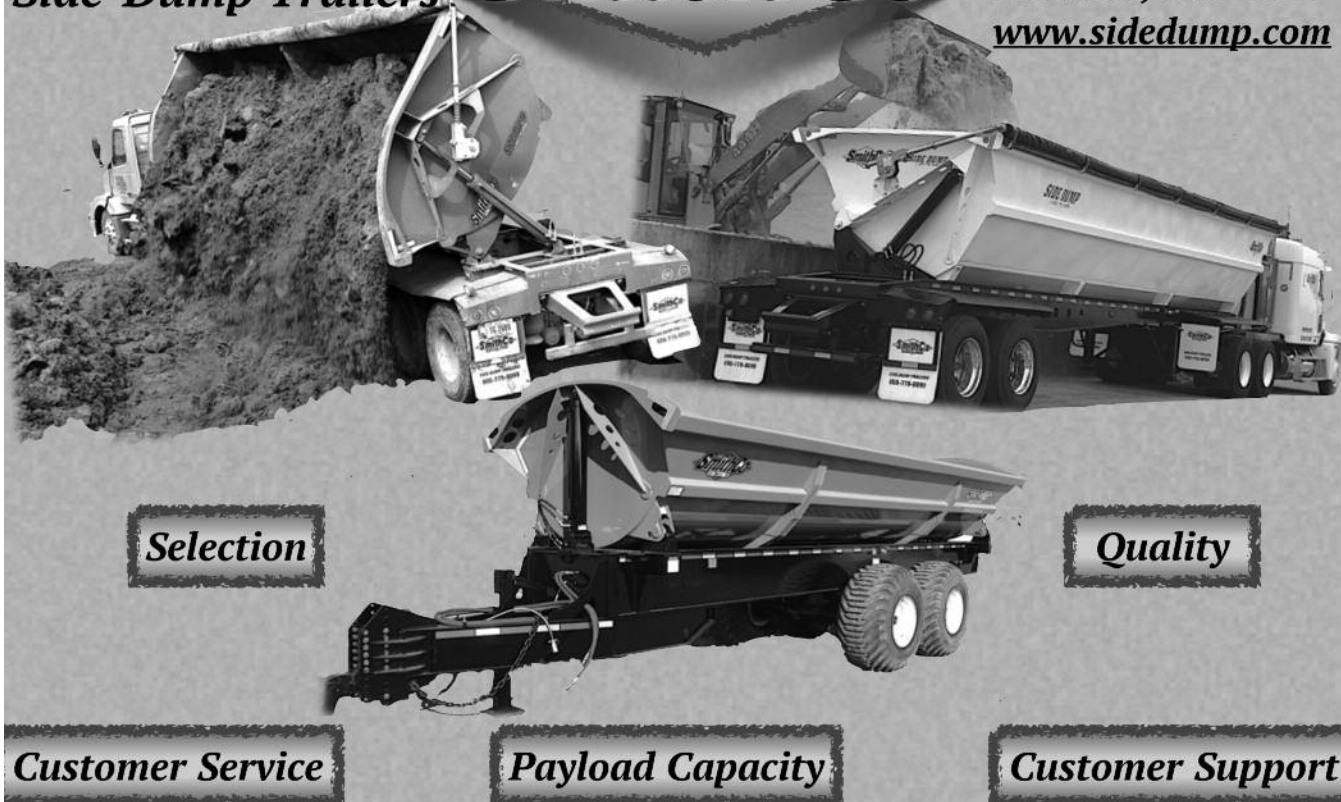
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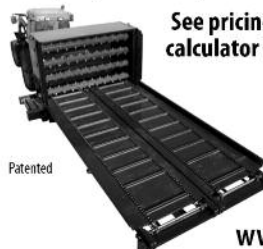
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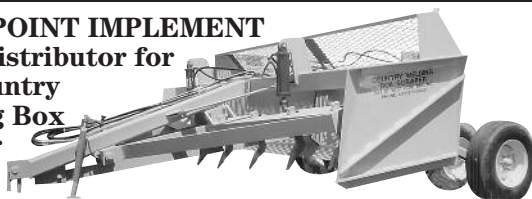


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