Animal Health Roundup

Tips to keep your herd healthy.

This month we focus on animal health. Throughout the year, *Hereford World* staff receive information about animal health products — new products or updates about successful products. Unfortunately we don't have the space to run all the information we receive.

On the following pages, we've taken some of the releases we've received in the last year and summarized them for your review. Take time to research new products or programs and determine if they will benefit your program; you never know what new tip can help increase profitability.

We encourage you to visit with your veterinarian and develop a health program that fits your management and herd. A good health plan developed with your veterinarian is key to a successful cow herd.

Improve gain potential for suckling calves

Before calving season starts, you should have a plan ready to maximize weight gains for suckling calves and increase dollars on sale day.

For calves at just 45 days old, multiple technologies are available to help increase the productivity of your calf crop. Along with early vaccinations, you can help increase pounds of gain by collaborating with your veterinarian to select a low-dose implant best suited for your herd.

For cow-calf producers in particular, the extra pounds at weaning that can be achieved by implanting suckling calves far outweigh the actual cost of the implant. When properly used, implants can help to wean an extra 19 lb., giving you at least $25 more per implanted calf when sold.

The long-standing philosophy behind using implants is to match the dose to the cattle based on their nutritional status. For instance, suckling calves on the cow are going to have a lower rate of gain potential and reduced feed intake compared with a heavier animal. In any case, this stage is an excellent time to utilize a low-dose implant. As the calves grow larger and feed continues to get more expensive, looking to a higher-dose implant may be the most practical option.

Proper nutritional programs, parasite control (both internal and external) and implant strategies are all additives and continue to improve health and weaning weights of suckling calves. Best of all, gains during the suckling phase will not adversely affect future performance in the feedlot.

The benefits of implanting suckling calves improve rate of gain, help produce more beef with fewer cattle and rarely affect the price paid per pound at the sale barn. Based on 2009 data, very few producers received a premium when they did not implant their calves. In fact, on average, there was no difference in prices paid per pound for non-implanted vs. implanted calves.

When weight gains of implanted vs. non-implanted cattle are considered — implants produce a heavier animal. Cattle grow bigger and more efficiently, leaving less of a carbon footprint and making them able to use nutrients more economically. Combining implants with other technologies helps us to maintain beef supply with a lower number of cattle because of drought and other factors.

— Gary Sides, *Pfizer Animal Health cattle nutritionist*

Eight factors for confident vaccine selection

Not all vaccines are created equal, and the myriad of choices can be confusing. Your veterinarian is the best resource to help you sort through product information and make science-based vaccine recommendations to provide complete protection for your herd. If your cattle aren't fully protected against respiratory and reproductive diseases, your herd's health, productivity and profitability could be at risk.

"Vaccines need to be carefully assessed and chosen to ensure your operation isn't in danger of a disease outbreak," says Greg Edwards, DVM. "The investment you make in selecting the right disease prevention products also can help reduce the significant costs and labor associated with disease treatment."

Edwards suggests sitting down with your veterinarian to evaluate vaccines based on eight areas of product differentiation and picking vaccines that best fit your management needs and vaccination program goals.

1. **Label indications and levels of protection:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) grants label claims based on demonstrated efficacy for each disease organism in the vaccine. These levels of protection include prevention of infection, prevention of disease, aids in disease prevention, aids in disease control and other claims.
2. **Duration of immunity:** Duration of immunity (DOI) is the minimum amount of time you can expect a vaccine to help protect your cattle, based on the manufacturer's efficacy and disease challenge studies. A vaccine's DOI should help protect during the critical risk period for disease risk. Your veterinarian can help schedule revaccination protocols according to your vaccines' DOI.
3. **Immune response time:** Some types of vaccines stimulate protective immunity more rapidly than others. For example, intranasal vaccines can help provide a quick immune response.
4. **Modified-live virus vs. killed virus vaccines:** Modified-live virus (MLV) vaccines contain live organisms that can undergo limited replication within the body. MLV vaccines can have benefits including rapid immune response, comprehensive immune response and duration of immunity and few post-vaccination reactions.
5. **Route of administration:** Follow the route of administration indicated on the label to help achieve the expected efficacy of the vaccine. Your vaccine choice and preferred route of administration may depend on your management capabilities, and training your employees on administration may be necessary.
6. **Safety of use in pregnant cows and calves nursing cows:** Choose vaccines that are safe for use during pregnancy to help bolster immunity of the cow and enhance colostrum quality. Having

flexibility to revaccinate cows during gestation provides protection against viral shedding and supports herd immunity.

7. **Convenience:** Vaccines come in a variety of combinations that can be tailored to fit your disease challenges and management needs. Your veterinarian can help you identify disease risks based on herd history or geographic challenges. When choosing combination vaccines, remember that DOI and levels of protection may be different for each antigen in the vaccine.
8. **Cost-effectiveness:** Profitability on the operation is important, and cost-effectiveness is always a factor in product selection. Work with your veterinarian to discuss factors that impact a cost-effective vaccine including management time and labor for administration, vaccine combinations, levels of protection, duration of immunity, cost of a potential disease outbreak, and price.

Partner with your veterinarian to select vaccines that provide complete protection for your cattle and optimal results for your operation.

— Pfizer Animal Health

Finding a few more hours in a day

Pull. Re-treat. Pull. Re-treat. With the never-ending task list on any producer's operation, spending less time pulling and re-treating cattle would be a welcome change.

"When producers aren't spending as much time taking care of sick cattle, it can help free them up to focus on other aspects of the operation," says Lee Bob Harper, DVM. "There's not a cattle producer I know who wouldn't benefit from finding a few more hours in the day."

One simple change producers can make to help free up more time is to use effective antimicrobials that allow for longer post-metaphylaxis intervals (PMIs) and post-treatment intervals (PTIs). A PMI is the amount of time one can confidently wait before pulling an animal for first bovine respiratory disease (BRD) treatment following metaphylaxis. A PTI is the amount of time one can confidently wait before considering an animal a nonresponder following first BRD treatment.

"During this interval of time, the treatment should be working to provide effective levels of medication against a disease challenge," Harper says. "Traditional practices may call for treatment administered about every three days until the animal recovers. Every re-treatment adds to the cost, reduces the profit margin on that calf and takes time away from other aspects of the operation."

A product with a PMI or PTI of a week can provide effective treatment levels without the time traditionally spent pulling and re-treating multiple times, Harper says. However, not all products have the ability to continue providing effective treatment levels for a week, and producers should work with their veterinarians to find a product that works best for their operations.

Draxxin®, for example, has been proven to be just as effective up to 14 days after the first treatment. In one study, 85% of cattle were treated successfully after a single injection with virtually no difference in mortality rates or average daily gain between a seven-, 10- or 14-day PTI.

"Better understanding of the PMI and PTI of the treatments used for BRD can help producers carve out more time that may have originally gone toward pulling and re-treating," Harper says. "If they can use a product that works well on the first injection and works for a longer period of time, then producers can reduce the number of doses used overall."

— Pfizer Animal Health

Help fight parasites with five simple steps

Planning for parasite protection becomes top of mind for all producers before fall turnout each year. Parasites can leave a path of destruction on any herd, but controlling them can be as simple as remembering a few key tips.

1. **Read and understand the label:** To help ensure the best possible results from deworming products, it is important to be aware of the label indications for the product being used.

"When deworming time rolls around, it is extremely important to read the label every time to ensure you are dosing correctly, reducing the risk for side effects and not creating resistance," says Gary Sides, Pfizer Animal Health Veterinary Operations cattle nutritionist. "Not giving cattle the full, labeled dose provides parasites the opportunity to become resistant and prevents cattle from reaching their performance potential."

2. **Think about injectable vs. pour-on:** Depending on geographic location, choosing an injectable or pour-on product may differ due to weather differences as well as different types of parasites in the area. Sides recommends treating cattle with Dectomax 1% Injectable in the spring and Dectomax Pour-on in the fall.

For producers in the Gulf States, northwest Oregon, Washington and California, treatment recommendations are reversed to accommodate different parasite control needs. Those producers should treat cattle with Valbazen® and/or Dectomax Pour-on in the spring and Dectomax Injectable in the fall.

"Injectables really do the best job on internal parasites, but lice control is better with pour-ons," Sides says. "I tend to be more concerned with internal parasites since they can do the most to slow down growth, feed intake and feed efficiency."

3. **Store and handle products carefully:** Storage and handling also can have an effect on product efficacy. Most products list the appropriate temperature range for storage on the product packaging or label. It is important to follow label indications closely to ensure that producers are getting the most bang for their buck.

"Regardless of what animal health product you are administering, it is important to check the label before each use," Sides says. "Too often, product labels are taken for granted. Help ensure product effectiveness by storing products at appropriate temperatures."

4. **Practice proper application techniques:** When using pour-on products, remember the importance of using proper application techniques. Avoid applying product onto dirty animals as it can be absorbed into the dirt rather than the hide. Also, it is possible that general herd behaviors such as rubbing and licking can reduce the amount of effective product on the animal.

"Convenience often has its drawbacks," Sides says. "There are some circumstances that keep a pour-on from working as well as it could. Dirt and manure on the animal can reduce the amount of product absorbed into the hide, so it is important to apply pour-on onto animals that are as clean as possible. Rain, snow and sleet can often wash the product from the animal if not given sufficient absorption time, so when possible, plan application around the weather."

When applying a pour-on dewormer, pour the proper dose down the entire backline of the animal, and do not just pour the entire dose on one spot.

5. **Deworm based on geographic location:** Deworming times can also vary depending on geographic location, but it is recommended that producers deworm at greenup in the spring and turnout in the fall.

"Producers should collaborate with their veterinarian to develop a solid deworming program that is best suited for their herd," Sides says. "These factors, as well as numerous other things, can change the recommendation for which products should be used from one herd to another."

— Pfizer Animal Health

Realize the full potential of long-lasting antimicrobials

Multiple viral and bacterial agents contribute to BRD in a bewildering array of combinations. Unfortunately, BRD treatment is going to result in some level of failure. A veterinarian's job is to select treatment options that predictably provide the best treatment outcomes and to institute management changes that allow for antimicrobials to do their job and to give sick cattle a chance to get better.

Regardless of what antimicrobials you are using, if cattle do not have a clean and dry place to lie, are overcrowded in a pen with other sick cattle and/or do not have ample and easy access to palatable feed, then you are going to have poor treatment response no matter what product is used. BRD treatment success is a combination of antimicrobial effectiveness and length of time that treatment is administered. We are extremely lucky to have good choices available for antimicrobial treatments that are effective and minimize cattle handling.

Longer-duration antimicrobials allow us to spread cattle out and allow them to recover in less crowded conditions, or even to return to the home pen, knowing that producers will not have to run them through the chute every other day or even every third day. If your treatment plan does not capitalize on long-duration antimicrobials, then you are probably not realizing the full benefit.

Re-treatments and chronics are a frustrating consequence of initial treatment failures. Multiple studies have identified *Mycoplasma bovis* as one of the most consistent contributors to nonresponsive BRD. It is important to consider proven clinical effectiveness against *M. bovis* when producers and veterinarians are making arrival or first treatment antimicrobial selections.

Most veterinarians make antimicrobial selections based upon clinical outcome, meaning treatment success, morbidity and mortality rates. There is a lot of data available to aid in product selection, but perhaps most relevant information comes from your own treatment records. Remember, this complex is not one drug and one bug. The most accurate measurement is how each antimicrobial performs in the face of clinical disease (meaning the whole array and combination of microbes) and how it performs in your own management setting.

Looking at your own treatment records and collaborating with your veterinarian to select the best treatment option can help the health of your cattle and improve the bottom line of your operation.

— Daniel Scruggs, *Pfizer Animal Health DVM*

Help protect herd health bottom line by choosing the best respiratory vaccination program

When it comes to dealing with BRD, producers and veterinarians rely on vaccinations to help protect their cattle – refusing to gamble with the health of their cattle or their finances.

The good and bad news is that there are more options than ever when it comes to respiratory vaccines.

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Work with your veterinarian to develop a year-round health program.

For this reason, producers should keep several factors in mind when developing a vaccination program.

1. **Talk to a veterinarian:** Veterinarians are familiar with the type of operation, frequency of new stock introductions, weaning practices and shipping requirements, giving them the ability to recommend the appropriate vaccination program to fit the operation's needs and goals. Additionally, veterinarians are familiar with vaccines in the marketplace and are well-versed in the differences between them.
2. **Evaluate all options:** Even when a vaccination program is already in place, it's sometimes necessary to evaluate other options to ensure cattle are well-protected against viruses with which they may come into contact. For example, stocker and feedlot operations may find intranasal vaccines useful, especially on arrival, because an intranasal vaccine can help create an immune response where viruses attack first, helping to stimulate mucosal immunity and helping trigger a quick immune response. But that solution doesn't mean traditional, systemic vaccines should be discounted.

   While intranasal vaccines may help provide a quick immune response, injectable vaccines often can help protect cattle against additional viruses and help provide duration of immunity, helping protect cattle throughout the management phases.
3. **Use what works:** Respiratory disease is the most devastating disease for both cattle and producers, costing the industry up to $1 billion annually from death, reduced feed efficiency and treatment costs. Using vaccines that are safe for use in all types and classes of cattle, help provide immunity, help protect cattle through all stages of production and offer superior label claims, can help ensure cattle will be protected when BRD viruses challenge their immune systems.

   With so many choices, developing a respiratory vaccination program can be a challenge. But assisted by a veterinarian and armed with the necessary information regarding a vaccine's label claims, duration of immunity and the viruses it helps protect against, producers can choose vaccines that will fit their operation and goals.

***— Mike Wells,** Pfizer Animal Health DVM*

Choose vaccines that work overtime

Producers work overtime to keep their cattle healthy. When it comes to protecting cattle against respiratory disease, it's important they choose a vaccine that's working just as hard.

"Cattle moving through the production chain have ample opportunities to develop BRD," says Victor Cortese, Pfizer Animal Health DVM. "For example, a calf that goes through a sale barn, into a backgrounding operation and eventually to the feedlot will have multiple encounters with stressors and viruses that can lead to BRD."

That's why it's important producers choose respiratory vaccines that not only help prevent BRD but also have a duration of immunity claim to help protect cattle through each of these phases, Cortese says. With so many respiratory vaccines available, it can be tough to choose the right one. Veterinarians can help producers evaluate the finer points of each vaccine, including duration of immunity claims.

"Viruses like infectious bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR) virus and bovine viral diarrhea (BVD) virus Types 1 and 2 can lead to BRD, but most vaccines aren't labeled for a specific duration of immunity in relation to those viruses," Cortese says. "In those cases, producers have no information regarding duration of immunity."

To help ensure cattle are protected during weaning or when placed into stocker operations or commingled in a feedlot, Cortese recommends producers talk with their veterinarians about vaccines that can help protect against the major BRD viruses, like Bovi-Shield Gold® 5. According to Pfizer, if administered SC (subcutaneously), Bovi-Shield Gold 5 helps protect cattle against IBR virus and BVD virus Types 1 and 2 respiratory disease for 279 days, as well as other viruses that can lead to BRD, including bovine respiratory syncytial virus (BRSV) and parainfluenza type 3 (PI_3) virus.

"With record-high input and operating costs, producers can't afford to use anything less than a respiratory vaccine with high levels of expected protection," Cortese says. "Choosing a vaccine that helps provide the longest-demonstrated duration of immunity and high levels of protection to help prevent BRD during every link in the production chain can help protect cattle and save producers' valuable time."

— Pfizer Animal Health

Tips for identifying a potential *Mycoplasma bovis* case

BRD can be caused by both viral and bacterial agents, but nailing down the culprit to just one factor can be difficult. When *Mycoplasma bovis* is involved, there may be a few signs that help point producers in the right direction.

"To me, it's important to look at how the cattle are started," says Daniel Scruggs, Pfizer Animal Health DVM. "I think it can be obvious when you have an *M. bovis* problem when you're three and four weeks into the cattle, and you have late pulls and nonresponse issues. The window between 14 and 21 days is a critical time period to identify when you have *M. bovis* problems."

One of the most common infectious agents connected to clinical cases of BRD, *M. bovis* often leads to joint infections, ear infections, weight loss, pneumonia and fever. However, once clinical signs are apparent, it's often too late to treat it effectively, Scruggs notes.

To help avoid the costly effects of *M. bovis*, Scruggs recommends using good animal husbandry to reduce overall stress on the animals and paying close attention to the type of cattle that are purchased. Treating cattle early with a proven antimicrobial labeled for *M. bovis* and other BRD-causing pathogens can help control the disease.

Draxxin® (*tulathromycin*) Injectable Solution is one of a few antimicrobials labeled for treatment and the only one labeled for control of BRD caused by *M. bovis*. In field studies, Draxxin provided superior efficacy against BRD when compared with Baytril® (*enrofloxacin*) Injectable Solution, Nuflor® (*florfenicol*) Injectable Solution and Micotil® (*tilmicosin*) Injection.

Scruggs cautions that bad weather and other factors can contribute to illness unrelated to *M. bovis*, but it's often better to overreact than underreact due to the potentially costly — and deadly — results.

"The number one *M. bovis*-related loss is chronics, which are sold at a discount," Scruggs notes. "The second biggest loss is mortalities, and those animals can take a lot of time and retreatment costs that are never recovered. Then, there are the animals that survive, but go on to be a much less efficient animal."

— Pfizer Animal Health

Calf preconditioning can help boost producers' profits, eliminate buyers' risks

Nearly all cow-calf producers will say their goal is to sell calves for a premium on sale day. However, most buyers will say their objective is to buy healthy calves as economically as possible. While these may seem like competing interests, both buyers and sellers can get what they want with calf preconditioning programs.

Studies have shown that preconditioning programs can help cow-calf producers sell their calves for a premium on sale day — at times adding an extra $6.38 per hundredweight (cwt.). And buyers can reap the rewards of preconditioned calves, too.

Preconditioning programs promote calf growth, enhance immune function and minimize stress during weaning, adding value to calves as they move from the ranch to stocker operations and, finally, the feedlot. While buyers may have to pay a bit more at the time of purchase, they also should see reduced health risks with preconditioned calves with fewer pulls, lower treatment costs, less labor and higher performance.

In fact, benefits to feedlots have been well-documented with research demonstrating that preconditioning programs administered at the ranch of origin meant:

- Decreased morbidity and mortality rates
- Increased net returns in feedlot cattle compared with cattle of unknown vaccination history
- A 0.29-lb. average daily gain advantage when calves were preconditioned for 45 days or longer
- A 7.2% better feed efficiency when calves were preconditioned for 45 days or longer
- A $29.47 per head lower medicine cost when calves were preconditioned for 45 days or longer
- A 3.1% lower death loss when calves were preconditioned for 45 days or longer

What's more, preconditioning programs are easy for cow-calf producers to implement because many are already doing most of what is required including vaccination, deworming, dehorning, castration, water and feed bunk training, and weaning prior to sale day.

To help ensure sale-day premiums for producers and healthy feeder calves for buyers, producers should look for programs that include all of these practices and are third-party verified, demonstrated and backed by a trusted company. Additionally, choosing programs that offer flexibility for calves, stocker cattle and heifers helps producers tailor the preconditioning

program to fit their — and their customers' — needs.

Preconditioning programs do require some additional planning and, in many cases, an analysis of the market in a producer's area. Despite this, calf preconditioning is a smart choice for the cattle industry as a whole, preparing calves for the challenges they will face once they leave their ranch of origin. Finally, preconditioning can help producers enhance the health of their cattle — and their bottom lines — and take some of the risk away from buyers. It's a win for all.

***— Jon Seeger,** Pfizer Animal Health DVM*

Study highlilghts harmful effects of *Cooperia*

The parasite, *Cooperia*, has become the most prevalent internal parasite in U.S. cattle operations according to research data from USDA's National Animal Health Monitoring Service (NAHMS) beef 2007-2008 cow-calf survey. The economic impact of *Cooperia* on cattle productivity, however, has not been studied. Findings from a newly published research study – completed by leading U.S. parasitologists and sponsored by Merck Animal Health – bring to light the negative impact *Cooperia* can have on productivity if your deworming program is leaving these worms behind.

The study demonstrated that *Cooperia* does have a harmful effect on both appetite and nutrient uptake. Calves free of *Cooperia* gained weight 7.4% more rapidly than infected calves, gaining 3.24 lb. per day versus 3.0 lb. per day. The infected animals also consumed 1.5 lb. per day less on a dry matter basis compared to non-infected treatment cattle.

The study was initiated in the fall of 2009, when 200 calves with an average weight of 460 lb. were acquired from the northwestern Arkansas and northeastern Oklahoma region. The animals were vaccinated, dewormed and acclimated for approximately five weeks on a standard growing ration before the initiation of data collection using GrowSafe system feed bunks to measure individual intake and gain.

On day 0 and day 14 of the data collection phase, two pens of 40 calves each were orally drenched with *Cooperia punctata* infective larvae. The two control pens of 40 calves each received a drench of tap water. Data collected included biweekly fecal egg counts, daily individual feed consumption and weight gain over the 60-day test period.

The results – a 7.4% difference in rate of gain and a 1.5 lb. per day difference in feed intake – show that *Cooperia* does have a harmful effect on production. Given the prevalence of *Cooperia* identified by the NAHMS cow-calf survey, it is increasingly important that producers work with their veterinarians to test their animals and ensure their deworming programs are effective against all of the most prevalent internal parasites including *Cooperia*.

— Merck Animal Health

Endectocide leaves more than 90% of *Cooperia* behind in feeder trial

The repetition of using the same deworming drugs year after year has led to the selection of parasites resistant to that class of dewormer. This resistance can result in ineffective treatment and economic losses.

At the termination of a recent on-feed study comparing calves infected with *Cooperia* to calves free of parasites (see "Study highlights harmful effects of *Cooperia*"), the *Cooperia*-infected calves were split into two groups to evaluate the efficacy of deworming protocols. The calves were dewormed with two different classes of anthelmintics.

One pen was dewormed with an injectable endectocide (Dectomax®) and one pen with a benzimidazole drench (Safe Guard®). Fecal Egg Count Reduction Tests (FECRT) were performed on the day of deworming (day 60) and 14 days later (day 74). Test results determine whether an anthelmintic treatment kills the worms in an animal, eliminating the production and shedding of eggs. Efficacy is evaluated as a percent reduction in the average number of eggs per gram from the first fecal egg count to the second fecal egg count 14 days later.

Treatment of infected calves with the endectocide did not remove the *Cooperia* parasites as demonstrated by FECRT results that showed only an 8.8% reduction in average egg counts 14 days after treatment. Meanwhile, treatment with a benzimidazole was shown to be very effective against *Cooperia* as the group of infected calves treated with Safe-Guard showed a 98.1% reduction in egg counts 14 days after treatment.

To verify egg count results, necropsies were performed on three animals from each treatment group. Researchers found an average of 24,600 *Cooperia* worms in the small intestine of the endectocide-treated animals, but only 167 in the small intestine of the benzimidazole-treated calves.

— Merck Animal Health

The impact of *Leptospira hardjo-bovis* can linger

The U.S. cattle industry has not seen significant changes in the clinical syndrome caused by Leptospira hardjo-bovis (LHB), yet the disease continues to burden cow-calf producers with reproduction implications that can become costly and widespread within the herd.

Acute LHB infection may cause sudden temperature spikes, anorexia and lethargy. But, these symptoms can go unnoticed, and often the only indication of infection is a repeat breeder. Once the embryo is lost, LHB causes infertility and delayed breeding. This makes the disease especially economically damaging for cow-calf operators, who struggle to get cows pregnant due to the reduced fertility caused by the disease.

"When left unvaccinated, cattle are vulnerable to *hardjo-bovis* infection when given access to streams and stagnant water or pastures and facilities are exposed to raccoons, opossum or rodents," says Joe Campbell, DVM, Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Inc. "With exposure risk factors as common as standing water or raccoons in pastures, it's important to vaccinate cattle with a vaccine that includes protection for all strains of leptospires that affect cattle."

Once cattle become infected with LHB, they are considered "maintenance hosts" and can spread LHB among the herd through urinary shedding. A single infected animal can shed the virus in its urine for long periods of time and is a major source of infection for other animals.

The Express® FP family of vaccines is one of the most complete modified-live product lines on the market. It protects a cow herd against major reproductive and respiratory diseases, including urinary shedding of *Lepto hardjo-bovis* and persistently infected calves caused by BVD Types 1 and 2. Express FP also aids in the reduction of infertility, abortion and delayed conception caused by *Campylobacter fetus* var. venerealis and leptospirosis caused by five serovars of *Leptospira*.

"Express FP was the first modified-live viral vaccine to offer a written guarantee that calves born to a dam properly vaccinated with Express FP would be free of BVD-persistent infection. This vaccine was created with your herd's health in mind, protecting your cows

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Are you at risk for trich? A trichomoniasis self-assessment

Do you feel like you're in the dark about whether your herd could be at risk for the devastating reproductive disease trichomoniasis? If you do, fear no more; take our self-assessment to identify if you are. Simply answer 'yes' or 'no' to the following six questions:

1. Has trichomoniasis been diagnosed in your area?
2. Do you utilize open-range grazing?
3. Do you purchase mature bulls for breeding purposes?
4. Are breeding bulls purchased for your herd without knowledge of their health status?
5. Is an extended breeding season used?
6. Do you vaccinate for trichomoniasis?

If you answered "yes" to any of one through five or 'no' to question six, your herd is currently in danger of contracting trichomoniasis. According to Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Inc. Professional Services Veterinarian Travis Van Anne, here's why you should be concerned.

Q: Has trichomoniasis been diagnosed in your area?
"Because no fence is cattle-proof and cattle movement from farm to farm occurs, detection of trichomoniasis in your region is a serious issue. Oftentimes, the venereal disease is spread to new herds when infected bulls or cows travel across pasture borders or are sold regionally. The disease is then introduced through sexual contact."

Q: Do you utilize open-range grazing?
"While open-range grazing may be an excellent asset of herds in your area, it increases the risk of unknowingly contracting trichomoniasis due to animals roaming outside of their grazing area and into other herds. Stay in touch with neighbors to learn if trichomoniasis has been identified or tested for in their herds. In the same way, be a good neighbor yourself and talk to your local veterinarian about testing your herd for trichomoniasis very soon."

Q: Do you purchase mature bulls for breeding purposes?
"Using young, virgin bulls is a first line of defense against trichomoniasis infesting your herd. Because the bull can spread it through sexual contact and can contract it from infected cows, the purchase of virgin bulls is an essential herd health measure to stop trichomoniasis."

Q: Are breeding bulls purchased for your herd without knowledge of their health status?
"Test before you buy. This prevention measure is as simple as that. Source your breeding animals from herds that have tested free of trichomoniasis. Always purchase animals from reputable sources. This ensures it will not be introduced to your herd and spread further in your region."

Q: Is an extended breeding season used?
"Because trichomoniasis leaves you with open cows that take longer to get bred, limited breeding seasons should be used (two to three months) to help you and your veterinarian identify patterns of open cows and few cows conceiving early in the breeding season. These two characteristics are key indicators of trichomoniasis."

Q: Do you vaccinate for trichomoniasis?
"The combination of testing, culling and vaccination will give you a great start in stopping this expensive problem. While there is no treatment for trichomoniasis, there is currently one vaccine available that has been proven to aid in the prevention of disease caused by *Tritrichomonas foetus*. TrichGuard® and TrichGuard® V5L, available from Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Inc., are the first vaccines to protect against *T. foetus*."

— Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Inc.

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against all major reproductive and respiratory diseases," Campbell says. "The efficacy of Express FP vaccines has always been our top priority, and we will continue to offer that guarantee on our product."

— Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Inc.

Range Ready helps build a strong foundation for herd health

Seven years ago, Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Inc. helped seedstock producers add value through its Range Ready Health Warranted Breeding Stock program. Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica extended its offering to include the Range Ready Quality Feeder Calf program in 2011.

"The objective of the Range Ready program is to have a calf that is ready to go for the buyer—whether that is a breeding animal or a feeder calf," says Joe Campbell, DVM, Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Inc. "Good health begins with the young calf. The Range Ready Quality Feeder Calf program outlines protocols that help get that calf off to a good start. There is demand in the industry for healthy feeder calves."

The Range Ready Quality Feeder Calf program offers flexibility to begin a vaccination protocol at branding, pre-weaning or weaning. The user-friendly Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica products combined with flexible protocols are a win-win for cow-calf producers.

As an example of the user-friendly products, in two syringes producers can protect calves against IBR, BVD Types 1 and 2, BRSV PI_3, *Pasteurella haemolytica* and *Clostridium chauvoei, Cl septicum, Cl novyi, Cl sordellii, Cl perfringens* Types C & D (7- way blackleg).

Online enrollment helps reduce paperwork for producers. Once the protocol is entered online with one click, producers can print a verification certificate showing what products were administered and when they were given. As a bonus the heifer calves that are kept for replacements can easily be enrolled in the Range Ready Health Warranted Breeding Stock program.

Research has shown an average net return from preconditioning calves of just over $25 per head. Well-planned preconditioning programs, like Range Ready Quality Feeder Calf, help build a solid foundation for the future performance of that calf in the feedlot. Research continues to show that preconditioned calves have lower morbidity and mortality rates once they enter the feedyard.

For more information on both tracks of the Range Ready program, visit *RangeReady.com*.

— Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Inc.

Ensure product efficacy by dosing and storing dewormers correctly

Operating costs continue to rise, making it more critical than ever for producers to ensure they are getting optimal results from their cattle dewormer. To get the best result, it pays to dose and store the product correctly since both factors can affect product efficacy.

To determine proper dosage, it is essential to have an accurate weight of each animal — underestimating weight can lead to underdosing of dewormers. Several methods are available for determining an animal's weight including weight tapes and visual observation; however, using approved and properly calibrated livestock scales is the most accurate and consistent for determining body weight.

Visual observation is usually very inaccurate and not recommended for use when determining medication dosages for which weight is important.

"The average cow in the United States weighs about 1,350 lb.," says Gary Sides, Pfizer Animal Health cattle nutritionist. "However, most producers are generally dosing to a 1,000-lb. cow when many weigh much more than that. By underdosing, we run the risk of allowing parasites to become resistant."

In the U.S., veterinarians, producers and economists estimate annual parasite-related losses to the livestock industry at more than $100 million. Therefore, it is important to administer injectable dewormers, whenever possible, to help reduce opportunity for a pour-on product to be licked off by other cattle, absorbed by dirt on the animal's hide or affected by other factors.

To control parasites — and help ensure optimal performance of your herd — Sides recommends producers look for broad-spectrum dewormers like Dectomax® 1% Injectable.

"By using an injectable product, you ensure that the entire dose gets in the animal," Sides says. "There are less negative effects for injection site lesions, and you can get better plasma and tissue concentration levels compared with a pour-on."

By taking extra precautions with the storage and handling of dewormers, producers can help ensure a product's effectiveness. Be sure to check the label for storage temperature instructions and follow them closely.

"Read the label directions before using any animal health product," Sides says. "This reduces the risk of side effects, tissue residues, along with a multitude of other reasons besides efficacy and cost."

— Pfizer Animal Health