

Valleywide News



VALLEYWIDE VETERINARY
SERVICES

5 Ways to Make More Milk That Cost (Almost) Nothing

Dr. Elizabeth Martens

Milk prices and forecasts for the near future are looking good, so let's talk about small ways to make more milk from a veterinarian's point of view. Preventing disease, not overcrowding, maintaining a skilled workforce and feeding the highest quality forages are undoubtedly the most important big things to manage for milk production, but each of these are also worth a few minutes' thought to make sure you're doing the best you can at the little things too.



1. Ensure quiet, calm and consistency in and around the milking parlor. The stress hormone directly counteracts oxytocin and prevents milk let down. Calm, relaxed cows will milk out quickly and completely - giving several pounds more milk per day than cows that are even just slightly stressed.

2. Maximize opportunity for water intake. Milk is mostly water. When cows have to compete to access water, or if the water source is dirty or tastes bad, cows will consume less water and in turn consume less feed and make less milk.

3. Perfect the milking routine. Cows that are not well stimulated to let down milk when the machine is attached give 7 lbs less milk PER MILKING, with compounded long-term drops in milk yield if poor prep happens frequently. Beyond milk loss, there's damage to teat ends and increased incidence of mastitis.

4. Make sure calves are getting adequate passive transfer of immunity at birth. The first 12 hours of a calf's life impacts future milk production! Calves need 1 gallon of clean, quality colostrum as soon as possible after birth. Monthly surveillance of blood total proteins to make sure this is happening is a very important and underutilized step in raising calves to be healthy, high producing cows.

5. Let the cows use the whole pen to eat and rest. Drop feed along the *entire* bunk—not leaving space on the end out of reach of feed until it is pushed up several hours later. Any headlocks without easy access to feed are reducing bunk space, meaning you are overcrowding more than intended. Repair broken or unusable stalls right away, each stall bed that cows are unwilling or unable to use properly are not only a waste of space but an injury risk.

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Backorder Update

Calvary 9- all sizes
Oxytet 100 - DISCONTINUED
Ceftiflex- 4g & 1g
Estrumate- all sizes
Express 10 HB- all sizes
Guardian- all sizes
Coronavirus- all sizes
Ultrabac 7- all sizes
Syringe: 12 mL, 20 mL, 35mL, 60mL

Allocation

Excede- 250mL (Varies from week to week for 100mL)
Dexamethasone 250mL
Syringe: 6ml

STARTING 2025 LA- 200 Liquamycin will be DISCONTINUED

Aspirin—Not Allowed in Food Producing Animals Dr. Elizabeth Martens

The news is spreading quickly – On October 16th we found out that Aspirin is explicitly illegal and of high regulatory concern to the FDA. This comes after the HPAI outbreak in California dairies exposed the widespread use of Aspirin without any milk withhold and the subsequent presence of the drug in milk.

Aspirin is actually found in milk for 5 to 7 days after it is first given, yet since it was never FDA approved, it never went through the safety and residue testing to get a proper label, it has been used without any withhold for a long time. We know that some people have aspirin sensitivities, so producers should be really clear on why this is important to avoid. Aside from that, consumers need to be confident that milk is not adulterated with medications - that's so important to our food system!

Ideally, a company would submit their aspirin product for FDA approval so it can be labeled with an appropriate milk withhold time. It is a low profit product and the approval process can be costly, which is why it hasn't yet happened and is unlikely to happen in the future.

FDA has considered Aspirin to be a low priority for a long time because it was likely used fairly rarely and diluted out in milk beyond a level that would risk human health. Actually, Aspirin is used quite frequently on some farms because it's considered a treatment option with no need to withhold milk.

Another important point is that there is a similar, also inexpensive product (flunixin meglumine i.e. Banamine) that works much better, and is labeled with a 36 hour milk withhold. For people who can't give medication in the vein there is a topical option with 48 hour withhold. Both products are at full concentration working in the bloodstream within 15 minutes of application. Aspirin is mostly inactivated in the rumen, and it's unpredictable how much or when it arrives in the cow's bloodstream. If an animal actually has pain or fever that needs to be treated, flunixin is the better medication to use.



Green Mountain Dairy Discussion Group

1st meeting Thursday, November 14th 12 noon Dr. Bill Stone
“Have a Forage Management Meeting on Your Dairy”

Our dairy producers' lunch discussion group is starting up again in November!

As always, monthly meetings will be on Thursdays or Fridays at the Addison Town fire hall at noon with free lunch, interesting topics, and discussion encouraged.

If you would like to receive email or text invitations and haven't in the past, call or email our office to get on the mailing list.

We hope to see you there!

