

FOCUS Management

A Window of Opportunity: Frequent Milking During Early Lactation

By: Jackson Wright

Maximizing milk production is critical to success in the dairy industry. As a result there is constant demand for management tools that increase milk production efficiency. In many species milk production is responsive to the demands of the offspring, and dairy cows are no different.

In fact, in dairy cows increasing milking frequency from twice daily to thrice daily has been shown to increases milk production up to 20%. In addition, frequent m i l k i n g (milking 3 or

more times daily) has been established as an effective management tool capable of increasing milk production efficiency. Currently, many dairy producers have adopted frequent milking throughout lactation as a management practice to increase milk production per cow, however such management practices also increase labor and operating costs associated with milking.

Interestingly, recent research has identified a critical period during early lactation where increasing milking frequency stimulates an increase in milk yield that persists even after cessation of frequent milking. This presents a window of opportunity during early lactation where frequent milking per-

manently increases the milk production capacity of the mammary gland. More importantly, increasing milking frequency during early lactation is simple to put into practice. It has been established that frequent milking only needs to be implemented for the first 21 days of lactation to see long-term benefits on

milk production efficiency. addition, milking intervals do need to be evenly spaced throughout the day. Therefore in a herd of 200 milking 2X daily at 12hour intervals,

2X daily at 12-hour intervals, fresh cows could be milked at the beginning and end of each milking (4X). In this scenario, approximately 15 cows would calve each month; therefore at any given time only 10 cows would be milked 4X.

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2X? 4X?

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Jerry Bertoldo Dairy Management

Genesee County 585.343.3040 x 133 (office) 585.281.6816 (cell) grb23@cornell.edu





Greg Coffta Hispanic Labor Management

Genesee County 585.343.3040 x 139 (office) 585.208.8546 (cell) gjc53@cornell.edu



Nancy Glazier Small Farms Support

Yates County 315.536.5123 (office) 585.315.7746 (cell) nig3@cornell.edu





John Hanchar Farm Business

Livingston County 585.658.3250 x 112 (office) 585.233.9249 (cell) iih6@cornell.edu





James Kingston Field Crops & Soils

Niagara County 716.433.8839 x 238 (office) 585.746.1670 (cell) ik2258@cornell.edu





Mike Stanyard Field Crops & IPM

Wayne County 315.331.8415 x 123 (office) 585.764.8452 (cell) mjs88@cornell.edu





Cathy Wallace Administration

Genesee County 585.343.3040 x 138 (office) 585.343.1275 (fax) cfw6@cornell.edu



Jackson Wright Dairy Management

Ontario County 585.394.3977 x 403 (office)



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Editor: Greg Coffta

Contributing Editors:

Jerry Bertoldo · Nancy Glazier John Hanchar · James Kingston Mike Stanyard Jackson Wright

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Direct all inquiries & correspondence on advertising space and rates to Cathy Wallace, advertising representative at 585.343.3040 x 138 Fax: 585.343.1275

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By law and purpose, Cooperative Extension is dedicated to serving the people on a non-discriminatory basis.

Mission Statement

The NWNY Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops team will provide lifelong education to the people of the agricultural community to assist them in achieving their goals. Through education programs & opportunities, the NWNY Team seeks to build producers' capacities to:

- Enhance the profitability of their business
- Practice environmental stewardship
- Enhance employee & family well-being in a safe work environment
- Provide safe, healthful agricultural products
- Provide leadership for enhancing relationships between agricultural sector, neighbors & the general public.



This would not require any additional labor and only add a modest amount of time to each milking shift. Economic analysis of 4X daily milking from day 1 to 21 of lactation using a \$12/cwt; and taking into account the additional feed costs, labor costs, and miscellaneous costs associated with extra milkings, including inflation replacement, teat dip, and towels revealed a net income of \$92.94 per cow/year. Using these numbers a 200-cow herd could expect a total net income of \$18,588.00 per year.

In herds milking 3X, similar strategies of milking fresh cows at the beginning and end of each milking (6X) have proven beneficial on milk production efficiency. Cows assigned to 6X daily milking from day 1 to 21 of lactation had greater peak milk yields and lactation persistency in comparison to cows milked 3X, producing over 2,000 lbs more milk for the actual 305-day lactation. Moreover, cows milked 6X during early lactation indicated no adverse effects on reproduction and demonstrated a decrease in SCC, which may suggest additional benefits of frequent milking on mammary health. It should be noted that some herds reported a decrease in percent fat and protein in cows milked 6X, however overall yield fat and yield protein were greater in cows milked 6X.

Despite these exciting opportunities, before implementing a management scheme that utilizes increased milking frequency during early lactation, considerations should be made in regards to walking distance to the milking parlor, maintaining milking parlor efficiency, and ensuring cows have adequate feed and water. Cows needing to walk distances greater than 500 feet to the milking parlor may show a decreased response to frequent milking due to increased energy expenditure and additional stress on the feet and legs. In addition, minimizing the amount of time cows spend in holding pens prior to entering the milking parlor will decrease stress and help sustain the increased milk yield in response to frequent milking. Finally, ensuring cows have adequate access to feed and water should be a priority as both are crucial to maximize feed intake and milk production. Ultimately, increasing milking frequency during early lactation is an effective management tool that can increase milk yield and profitability for many dairy producers.

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Ask Extension...

Is it really worth it? Using Corn Fungicides in Western NY

By: James Kingston

The 2010 growing season in WNY was arguably L the best year many farmers had ever seen. High temperatures, timely rain falls, and low disease pressures produced record yields across the region. This was not the case on the eastern side of the state. Many areas in Eastern New York witnessed drought conditions and disease pressures in corn crops that took a toll on yields. Grey Leaf Spot is a serious issue in the southeast region of the state. Fungicides have proven themselves to be an economically viable solution to suppress the disease and protect corn yields. In fields with significant cases of Grey Leaf Spot there was an increase in yield of 22 bushels on average when fungicides were applied. In WNY we are lucky enough to not have the pressure of these corn leaf diseases, so does that mean there is no need for fungicides on corn in WNY? Or will fungicides increase the health of the crop (as we have often heard) leading to increased yields?

This past summer Gary Bergstrom and I conducted a series of on farm side by side trials with Headline, Quilt, and no treatment. Plants were evaluated for leaf disease pressure at the time of application and around 1/2 milkline. It was noted at that all of the trials in WNY disease pressure was less than 10 % on the leaf surface at the time of application and at the follow up inspection. This was consistent across all trials and treatments. Leaves were greener in the treated strips vs. the non treated strips.

At harvest, strips were combined and a weigh wagon was used to determine the bushels/acre of each strip. Samples were taken to determine if the fungicides had any effect on moisture levels. There was no significant increase in yield found from these trials. In most cases the small increase in the amount of bushels/acre didn't cover the cost of application. Moisture was consistent across the different treatments.

So does this mean fungicide on corn has no use in





In the left picture there was no fungicide applied. Photo on right, Quilt fungicide was applied at VT stage. You can see in the left photo grey leaf spot is significant in certain regions of the state by the month of September.

WNY? No! This means in a perfect year where plants were under very little stress in fields that had not been corn for at least 2 years; fungicides didn't seem to play a role in increasing yields. We never know in the middle of July what the weather is going bring for the remainder of the growing season, so it is hard to determine where fungicides pay off. But, we do know if at the time of application there are significant disease pressures, a fungicide application would be a good decision to suppress future disease development.

These trials have also proven more trial work needs to be done in the future over several years. I especially think it necessary to conduct future trials on fields that are in a corn after corn rotation. Next year we are looking to conduct more trials with fungicide use in corn and soybeans. If you are interested in working with us on similar trials in 2011 please let me know. We would be glad to work with you and it takes very little time on your part.

At next week's Corn Congress Gary Bergstrom will present more information on these trials and future work. Hope to see you there.

Rural Tax Education Website:

A Valuable Resource for Preparing 2010 Income Tax Returns



By: John Hanchar

These are four of several useful items that stand out when you visit the home page of the Rural Tax Education website at <www.ruraltax.org>

- Tax Topics
- Related Links
- Hot Topic
- Webinar Announcements

Overview

The purpose of the Rural Tax Education website is to provide farmers and ranchers, other agricultural producers and Extension educators with a source for agriculturally related income and self-employment tax information. The emphasis is on information that is both current and easy to understand. The home page notes that "Tax issues are important for agricultural operations, because income and self-employment taxes are a major cost and also because more and more USDA programs are being linked to a producer's federal income tax return."

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The National Farm Income Tax Extension Committee oversees the website. A variety of contributors provides content. Joe A. Bennett, Cornell University, is a committee member and contributor.

Tax Topics

This section contains fact sheets and articles covering some of the most important income tax and self employment tax topics as they apply to farm business owners. Highlights for this section include: a series of fact sheets covering depreciation; a fax sheet on like kind exchanges (trades) of business assets; and form 1099 information returns, among others.

Related Links

This section contains the valuable IRS publication Farmers' Tax Guide for 2010 Returns. Links to websites and articles also are placed in this section.

Hot Topic

As I was preparing this article, the "Hot Topic" related to self employment tax. The caption read, "For the 2010 tax year only, health insurance purchased by the self-employed producer for himself and family will reduce self-employment income."

Webinar Announcements

The following webinar announcement also appeared "Income Tax Management for Farmers" Dec. 9, 7:30-9:30 PM For more information. ...

Visit the Rural Tax Education website for information on viewing the archived version of this and other webinars.

Acidified Milk and Milk replacer for Group Feeding Calves

January 11, 2011 CCE-Genesee County 420 East Main Street, Batavia 12:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.



Featuring Dr. Neil Anderson from the University of Guelph

Dr. Anderson did some the first work on acidified feeding in North America several years ago. He will speak on the feeding of acidified liquid feed using various delivery systems and share his observations on group housing of calves. Dr. Anderson is passionate about proper calf care and nutrition. We will also have producers present that have adopted this process.

There is no fee or RSVP required for this seminar.

Reproductive Success Stories - Coming to a Theater near You!



Reproductive success in dairy cattle relies on people, cows and programs. To the cow, reproduction means diverting nutrients and metabolic energies away from maintenance, production or growth. Cycling and becoming pregnant becomes a "luxury function" if she is heavily stressed or in a prolonged energy deficit.

It makes economic sense to manage a reproductive program in a way that nutritional, environmental and metabolic stresses are minimized and a very high percentage of sound cows are presented to the breeding window. Few farms have the perfect environment for every cow in every group, but managing through barn constraints takes more people effort. Facility improvements are big dollar items that can become just wishful thinking when you consider the thin margins resulting from milk and feed price pressures today.

"Ov-synch" variants and innovative heat detection programs have improved the odds of cows being caught ovulating more often but sometimes a lot of semen, labor and program-related expenses are consumed in the process. High pregnancy rates do not have to be "bought", however the effort and precision needed to get results without modern aids is not easy.

The 2011 Winter Dairy Management program will showcase four Dairy Farms of different sizes (150, 240, 550 going to 700 and 1200 cows) doing a respectable job getting cows pregnant on time. Producers will tell their story. Technical experts will talk about new genetic tools, breeding strategies, heat detection alternatives and environmental stress. A new Reproductive Cost Analysis spreadsheet developed by Cornell's PRO-DAIRY program will be featured using the four case farms as examples. We look forward to seeing you there.

Winter Dairy Management

Anatomy of a Consistently Favorable Pregnancy Rate

Presented by local Dairy Producers February 1, 2011

Breezy Hill Party House 2875 Merchant Road, Warsaw (corner of 20A & Merchant)

10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Hot Lunch & proceedings included! \$35.00 per person or \$25.00 per person from same business/farm

For registration:

Call Cathy Wallace: 585.343.3040 x138 or Print on-line form available at: www.nwnyteam.org

Topics on this year's agenda:

- ⇒ Case Farm's Anatomy of Success; People, Policies, Practices & Programs
- ⇒ Case Farm's Anatomy of Success; Repro Cost Analysis in Light of Effectiveness
- ⇒ Heat Abatement in an Unpredictable Climate
- ⇒ Useful Technologies & Tools: management Techniques to Improve Your Dairy's Reproductive Success
- ⇒ No Longer Need to Raise Every Heifer Calf? New and Different Breeding Options



For other "live" and video conference locations around the state check the NWNY Team website at:

www.nwnyteam.org















Maintaining Stored Grain Quality over the Winter

By: Mike Stanyard

It was another great grain harvest season for NY producers. However, the record number of bushels of corn and soybean has resulted in a new problem; where to store it all! Grain storage is an important link in protecting your investment and lots of money can be lost in reduced quality when it's time to deliver. Longer term storage has become an important part of the marketing strategy particularly as current grain prices continue to climb. As a result, chemical and cultural management of yield robbing pests becomes even more important.

I have talked about the importance of chemical and cultural control of insect pests prior to harvest in the past but temperature and aeration are also a crucial pest management tool. Dry grain should be cooled to less than 60 degrees F as soon as possible after harvest, and to 20 - 30 degrees F for winter storage. Temperature benchmarks for stored grain:

80°F: The ideal temperature for insect and mold growth.

70°F: Insect reproduction begins to decrease.

50°F: Insects become dormant below this temperature.

40°F: Mold growth prohibited below this temperature.

20-30°F: Grain should be cooled to this range for winter storage.

Stored grain should be cooled by aeration whenever the grain temperature exceeds the average outdoor temperature by 10 to 15 degrees. Expect storage time to approximately double with each 10 degree reduction in temperature. Grain should be cooled to about 25 degrees as outdoor temperatures get colder. Check the condition of stored grain about every two weeks while grain is cooling, then about monthly after grain has cooled for winter storage.

When the fans are off during the winter holding period, they should be covered (with canvas or plywood) to prevent the grain near the ducts from getting too cold during severe winter weather. Large

temperature differences result in condensation in the cold grain. Spoiled grain over the aeration ducts or perforated floor is a common problem caused by not covering the fan during extended off periods. Also look for melting snow on the roof of the bin as a tell-tale sign of temperature problems.

Accumulation of fine particles, weed seeds, and other foreign material interferes with airflow. Such accumulations are prime locations for increased mold and insect activity, which result in localized heating and grain deterioration. Normally, these fines collect in the center of the bin as the grain flows toward the walls.

Several good management practices can reduce the storage risks incurred through accumulation of foreign material. Screening the grain reduces the amount of foreign material and greatly improves long -term storability. Spreaders are used to more uniformly distribute fines throughout the bin and helps provide more uniform airflow during aeration.

A common practice in bins equipped with center unloading hoppers is to unload some grain from the center "core" to remove some accumulated fines. Fill the bin so it is peaked and unload some of the grain (300 to 1,000 bu, depending on bin size). This removes some of the accumulation and increases airflow in the center if enough grain is unloaded to allow the center core to fill with clean grain.

References: "Management of Stored Grain with Aeration", University of Minnesota, http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/cropsystems/DC1327.html



2011 Pesticide Training & Recertification Classes

February 7, 14, 21 & 28 CCE-Ontario County 420 N. Main Street, Canandaigua 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

To receive registration material or for additional information, contact CCE - Ontario County at 585.394.3977 ext. 436 or 427, email nea8@cornell.edu or rw43@cornell.edu. The registration form is available on-line at www.cceontario.org



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Nitrogen Miser

Cold, hard facts about temperature and N loss

By Harold Brecht

As producers move up their planting dates, early spring weather often can feel more like winter than summer. But even as growers begin to plan their fieldwork, keep innud that not even low temperatures can stop the process of nitrogen loss known as volatification.

Recent studies confirm that volatilization can be a problem even when temperatures are near freezing. That's because urease, which causes volatility, is an enzyme, not a Irving organism. It remains active in the soil, where it besaks down urea, even when temperatures drop below freezing.

The good news, however, is that AGROTAIN nitrogen stabilizer also remains active in cold weather. A study by Dr. Rick Engel at Montana. State University compared unprotected urea with urea that had been treated with AGROTAIN. In the first two weeks, between 12 and 20 percent of the nitrogen from the unprotected urea had disappeared into the atmosphere. After that, it reached as high as 30 percent. In contrast, the AGROTAIN-treated urea had lost less than 5 percent of its total N in that same period.

The main indication of the research is that N loss is affected by a number of environmental factors in addition to temperature — such as moisture presence, crop residue, windy or dry conditions, and soil CEC. And with increasing weather variability, stabilized mitrogen becomes more essential for today's growers and applicators. Spring weather can change quickly in most production areas.



Morald Brecht

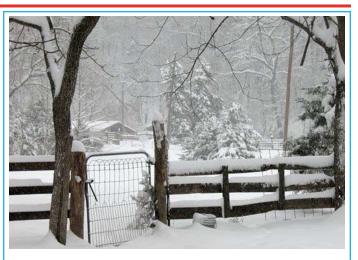
Regardless of the current conditions or the forecast, investing in AGROTAIN, which costs just a few pennies per pound of nitrogen, keeps more N in the soil, whether it is not or cold, we tor dry, is the only product proven to stop nitrogen loss caused by volatilization.

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From North West New York Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops Team

Jerry Bertoldo Greg Coffta Nancy Glazier Cathy Wallace John Hanchar James Kingston Mike Stanyard Jackson Wright

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Agricultura

A Fond Farewell...but not for long.

By: Greg Coffta

hen I started working in this position with the NWNY Team three years ago, I envisioned that my work would be to develop and provide train-



ing classes to Spanishspeaking dairy farm employees. Little did I know, this position would be so much more than out-of-the-box training workshops. As it turns out, the actual curriculum was not even half of what I would provide. Since I began, I have worked with over 60 different dairy producers in 24 counties across the state; many are regular participants with my program. This variety of farms means that I have seen a lot

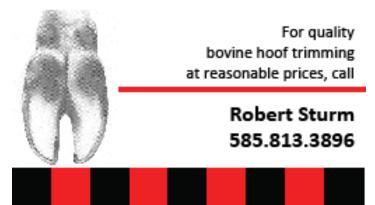
of different practices and have tailored my trainings to each farm. I have taught many employees and employers, but more importantly I have learned that the training isn't really the issue for dairy managers of Spanish-speaking employees. The real issue was a lack of mutual understanding between employer and employee.

The industry here in New York has been increasingly employing this workforce, despite language and cultural contrasts. My role has been to help dairy farmers manage their employees and to help employees understand what is expected of them. The meetings that I facilitated on farms involved a true dialogue between employers and employees, whether it was about job-related topics or about personal and family topics. Too often these two parties have incorrect assumptions about the one another, which have gotten in the way of business and friendship. I hope that my work on the farm and through this column has dispelled these assumptions and has helped make dairy businesses and their communities stronger.

Starting this month I will be taking some time away

from this position to develop another educational career path: teaching. I am on my way to becoming a New York State teacher of English to Speakers of Other Languages. I have been studying part-time for the past couple of years, but now that I have obtained my graduate degree I must fulfill the student teaching requirements. This means that I won't be able to work full-time in the capacity of Bilingual Dairy Support Specialist from January until the middle of May. I will, however, be working a small number of hours weekly to keep this newsletter going strong and to help farmers when possible. If you need to get in touch with me, I will still have the same contact information as before, but my time will be at a premium. At the end of May, I will be back full-time, picking up where I left off. To be honest, I feel that dairy managers and employees that I have worked with are strong enough to be able cope with my absence for a short time, and some managers are even speaking more Spanish! I am heartened by how many dairy managers really care about their Spanishspeaking employees and by how dedicated their employees are- these are the most essential elements for success.

Thank you to all of the dairies that have considered my program's services in the past three years. It has been a pleasure to work with you, and if you think that I helped you- please know that you helped me, too. You've helped me grow as a professional and you've helped me learn about how rural communities are managing the influx of new and diverse people-in my mind, dairy farms are the friendliest places for this immigrant workforce to be.



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Save the Date...

January 2011

- 12 WNY Corn Congress, Clarion Inn, (formally Holiday Inn), 8250 Park Road, Batavia
- Finger Lakes Corn Congress, Holiday Inn, 2468 NYS Route 414, Waterloo
- 21 NY Cattle Feeder's Conference, Holiday Inn, Carrier Circle, East Syracuse
- 22 NY Beef Producer's Association Winter Management Program, Holiday Inn, Carrier Circle, East Syracuse

February 2011

- Winter Dairy Management ` "Notching Up Your Repro Program", Breezy Hill Party House, 2875 Merchant Rd., Warsaw Questions??? Contact: Jerry Bertoldo: 585.281.6816
- 8 Basic Farm Financial Management Workshop, 12:30 p.m. 2:30 p.m., CCE-Orleans County & CCE-Wyoming County, Questions??? Contact: John Hanchar: 585.658.3250 x112 or jjh6@cornell.edu
- 9 WNY Soybean/Small Grains Congress, Clarion Inn (formally Holiday Inn), 8250 Park Road, Batavia
- 10 Finger Lakes Soybean/Small Grains Congress, Holiday Inn, 2468 NYS Route 414, Waterloo
- Basic Farm Financial Management Workshop, 12:30 p.m. 2:30 p.m., CCE-Orleans County & CCE-Wyoming County, Questions??? Contact: John Hanchar: 585.658.3250 x112 or jjh6@cornell.edu
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- 22 Step It Up 2011, Winter Grazing Workshop, location TBD, Questions??? Contact: Debra Welch: 585.786.2251

March 2011

- Managing the Margins, 10:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m., CCE-Genesee Co., 420 East Main Street, Batavia, Registration Contact: Cathy Wallace, 585.343.3040 x138, Questions??? Contact: John Hanchar: 585.658.3250 x112 or jjh6@cornell.edu
- Managing the Margins, 10:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Jordan Hall, 630 North Street, Geneva, Registration Contact: Cathy Wallace, 585.343.3040 x138, Questions??? Contact: John Hanchar: 585.658.3250 x112 or jjh6@cornell.edu