

Thankful for you and your tenacity

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This month's column has a different focus to it, and I have to admit, I may steal a phrase or two from my fellow veterinarian and boss, Dr. Jim Bennett. As much as I enjoy writing informative columns for the opportunity to learn, I wasn't in the mood to do a lot of research while watching the April blizzard. Rather, I want to thank you, the dairy producer, for what you do.

Tenacity is defined as the quality or fact of being very determined or persistent. This seems a darn good word to describe dairy producers. Although I have only been in veterinary practice for 3 years, I already cannot think of anyone who is perhaps more "determined" or "persistent". The milk prices are low again for yet another year, but dairy producers keep going. It has snowed yet again after a long and cold winter, but dairy producers do not roll over in their beds. Instead, dairy producers rise and work harder. They get up, move snow, feed and milk cows, and make sure calves are fed, bedded, and comfortable. They thaw waterers and doors. They start or jump vehicles, tractors, and loaders. They pull employees out of the ditch or go get them if cars don't start. In the summer, hot weather also brings on hard work. Fans and sprinklers need repairs and maintenance to keep cows cool. Fieldwork commands attention and doesn't end until we reach winter again. Bunker piles need packing and covering. For my fiancé and me, our date night may be spent in the truck hauling silage. Dairy producers work harder than anyone I've met. I wish we could prevent the long periods of low milk prices, unfortunately, we cannot. What we can do is appreciate what farmers do and thank you for it. We can also tell others about what you do and the challenges you face in this special profession.

So, to quote Dr. Bennett, "...Thank you, from at least one old crusty cow vet. Know that we notice. You are fantastic. You have tenacity and dedication, endurance, stamina, steadfastness, backbone, drive, immovability, pluck, purposefulness and resolution. And, thank God that you do, or the rest of us would be in a real pickle. Because of you, the rest of us get a hot meal at the end of the day."