

~Dairy Details~

Produced by Northern Valley Dairy Production Medicine Center

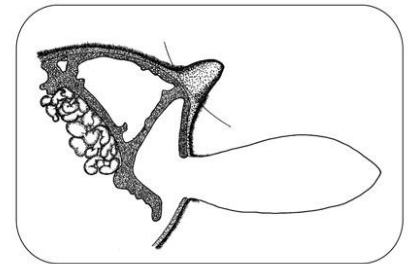
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Dirty Jobs: Dehorning

Dehorning... some farmers (and veterinarians) would almost consider this a dirty word. It's usually one of those jobs that no one likes to do, but isn't optional on today's dairy and beef farms. Dehorning cattle significantly decreases the risk of injury to people and other animals. These animals are easier to handle and transport and will get high prices at the sales barn. This is the first of a multiple part series on how to make dehorning less of a "dirty job" and more tolerable for both the humans and animals who are involved.



There are many methods to dehorning cattle, with some being far superior to others. Improving the dehorning methods we use is important for consumer perception and animal welfare, an issue that all producers need to be conscience of.

Sawing/Cutting:

This method can be used on a wide range of ages of cattle, using different tools depending on the size of the horn. A disbudding tube (top picture to the right) can be used on very young calves that have not yet developed horns, just horn buds. It is used to mechanically remove the horn producing epithelium from the skull. A scooping motion is used to cut underneath the horn bud. There will be some bleeding. For larger sized animals with large horns, a barnes dehorner (bottom picture to the right) or gigli wire will be needed to remove the horns (See pictures). Hemorrhage, infection, and fly strike are big risks when using these methods. The use of cutting methods is by far the most painful of all the methods that will be discussed here. Between that and the risks, we recommend avoiding these cutting methods if at all possible.



Hot Iron Burning:

Hot dehorners come in a few different sizes and can be powered by electricity or gas. It can be used on calves that are as young as a week old all the way up to a few months old before horns are formed. They are made with hollow ring that is heated to cauterize the horn bun, thus killing the corium to prevent horn growth. The hot ring is placed over the horn bud, and held in place for 10-15 seconds while the operator rotates the ring back and forth until a "copper ring" forms around the bud. The horn bud will usually fall off within 4-6 weeks. The risks of the burning method include the operator getting burned (or burning the calf where you don't want to) and burning too deep into the calf's skull (this can cause damage to the calf's brain). However, burning is bloodless and heals fairly quickly.

Caustic Dehorning Paste:

Paste dehorning is becoming more and more commonly used. A caustic paste is used to chemically burn the cells of the horn bud. It must be done within the first week of life. The main risk is if the paste doesn't stay over the horn bud and burns the calf on other areas of its body, such as the eye. However, many people like this method because there is a minimal open wound and it is by far the least painful of all dehorning methods. More details and tips for making paste dehorning successful on your farm will be discussed in next month's newsletter.



New Alfalfa Drench Mix Available at Decreased Cost!

We recently got in a new alfalfa based drench mix (very similar to the AAS mix we've been selling). It is substantially cheaper at \$67.50 per 50 pound bag. 50 pound Bags (or single doses) can be picked up at the clinic. We unfortunately cannot drop ship this new product.

Boehringer Ingelheim Fall Rebate Program Details

Dates: September 18- November 20

Rebate: 5% rebate on cumulative purchases over \$500 on products listed below

Eligible Products:

- Pyramid
- Presponse
- Express
- Triangle
- Ivomex pour-on
- Eprinex
- Synanthic



EPRINEX Special

Dates: August 14- October 16

Details: \$290.37 for 5 liter with Merial rebate coupon of \$20.00

EPRINEX® Quantity Calculator: Dosage 1mL per 22lbs.

Animal Type	Cattle #'s	Average Weight	Total Weight
Lactating Cows			
Dry Cows			
Bulls			
Heifers			
Feeder Calves			
Totals			

Total Weight / 22 lbs. = Total mL of EPRINEX® Pour-on needed

_____ / 22lbs. = _____ Total mL of EPRINEX® Pour-On needed

Total ml of EPRINEX® Pour-On needed X 0.001 = Total liters of EPRINEX® Needed

_____ X 0.001= _____ Total liters of EPRINEX®

Contact our office if you have any questions about any of these programs!

Visit us at www.dairymed.com or www.facebook.com/northernvalleydairy