



wanted

Wanted to buy, two week old up to 250 lb. bull calves for good price. Phone 403-380-0124.

New Entrants Assistance Program

Alberta Milk will be accepting applications for the New Entrants Assistance Program until March 31, 2011. Please go to albertamilk.com or call the Alberta Milk office at 1-877-361-1231 for further information.

Johne's Disease Risk Assessment: "Learn to do by doing"

Source: Emily McDonald, Industry Development Coordinator

"Learn to do by doing" is the very well-known 4-H motto that many of us have grown up with. Learning through hands-on experience is a key objective not only in 4-H, but throughout life. It allows people to gain knowledge and skills by actively participating in activities and programs.

Previous issues of *MilkingTimes* have included articles describing the new Alberta Johne's Disease Initiative (AJDI). The AJDI consists of an on-farm risk assessment for the herd veterinarian and the dairy producer's use in assessing risk for Johnes disease. Just like the 4-H motto, producers need an opportunity for hands-on experience regarding AJDI risk assessment.

One of the best ways to learn about these assessments is to participate in an on-farm workshop. This on-farm experience is all about education and awareness of small but effective management changes you can make on your farm, from clean maternity pens to confirming the health history of purchased cows. These workshops are completed on a host farm with an eligible veterinarian and your fellow producer neighbours and friends.

Klaas and Eric Vander Veen hosted a Johne's workshop in early January with 16 producers and seven veterinary students from the University of Calgary in attendance. The two-hour workshop was led by Dr. Betty Jo Bradley of the Livestock Vet Services Clinic in Picture Butte and she explained the risk assessment and facilitated the discussion about Johne's disease and its potential impact to the dairy industry. The workshop featured a walk

about the farm, focusing on the areas identified in the risk assessment, followed by a wrap up discussion. "The producers all got very involved and the feedback was terrific," said Dr. Bradley. "The Johne's workshop was truly a great success!"

Workshop participants suggested that producer management groups, breed clubs, or individual producers and their neighbours should work with their eligible herd veterinarians to conduct more workshops this winter.

Please contact Emily McDonald, industry development coordinator at 780-577-3307 or emcdonald@albertamilk.com for more information about how to access funding to cover the cost of the veterinarian and lunch for your very own workshop.

Remember: the spread of Johne's disease (JD) in herds can be prevented when the following points are recognized:

- The bacteria (MAP) causing JD are mainly spread through manure.
- An infected cow can shed billions of organisms into the environment for years prior to showing any clinical signs of the disease.
- Calves are the most easily infected.
- A small amount of manure is all it takes to infect a calf.
- Only 1-5 per cent of infected cows in a herd will show signs of the disease. The rest of the infected animals will appear healthy.
- Tests of JD do not detect animals in the early stages of infection.
- Management changes implemented to decrease the risk of JD will also reduce the risk of other production-limiting diseases.

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