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Dairy's Bottom Line

'Issues Management': Producers Need to Be Proactive

Dairy producers see themselves as independent business people. But in a world that's ever smaller and more complicated, that independence is increasingly impacted by government oversight and public sentiment. Issues like animal well-being have emerged at the forefront of the dairy industry. It's crucial, for the future viability of individual farms and the industry as a whole, that every producer be knowledgeable - and proactive - on cutting-edge issues facing dairy.

Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin is holding a National Dairy Issues Forum Nov. 14 and 15 at the Holiday Inn at the American Center in Madison. The aim is for producers themselves to drive the issues and set the industry's direction (versus regulators or a public increasingly unfamiliar with today's dairy operations).

Linda Basse Wenck frequently consults with PDPW on issues management. She's a principal at Morgan&Myers, a Waukesha-based communications company that works with agricultural and food companies, not only helping firms to build brands but also build trust. She's been in public relations 20 some years and works globally.

Her "other life" is in production agriculture. She's originally from what had been registered Guernsey operation in Waukesha County. It is now Basse's Country



There's More to the Business

Dairying today has become more than letting your cows graze the pastures and calling them in to be milked. Many issues have emerged and producers need to be proactive and set the industry's direction.

Delight, a farm near Muskego focused on fresh produce and retail sales, but which is still operated by her parents, Alvin and Carolyn Basse. She and her husband, Max Wenck, also farm. They operate 350 acres in Racine County near East Troy - cash-crop corn and soybeans, almost with vegetable crops from sweet corn to tomatoes to pumpkins, which are sold through her folks' operation.

Wenck's husband is also a partner at Morgan&Myers. He's from a cattle ranch in South Dakota. Today, this couple operates that commercial cow-calf ranch with an on-site herdsman

and frequent trips west.

As if not busy enough, this UW-Madison ag journalism and ag economics graduate is also "Mom" to two boys and a girl - Taylor, 14; Austin, 12; and Andrea, 9.

Living both ends of the food chain - producing food and selling finished products to consumers - Wenck has a broad "vantage point" on national issues potentially impacting Wisconsin dairy producers.

She sees a "confluence" of four trends of which dairy producers should take note.

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Fewer Counties Would Have Negative Effect on Rural Areas

Would consolidating county governments reduce taxes in Wisconsin?

Rep. Sheldon Wasserman (D-Milwaukee) thinks one of the reasons Wisconsin taxes are too high is "because we have too much government."

So last July, Wasserman introduced Assembly Bill 438 aimed at creating a nine-member task force to study the responsibilities and obligations of county government and to develop a plan to reduce the number of counties in this state from 72 to 18 – or fewer.

According to the bill, the task force would include two members appointed by the governor, three members appointed by the president of the senate, three members appointed by the speaker of the assembly and one member appointed by the Wisconsin Counties Association.

The task force would have to submit a written plan for reducing the number of counties to the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) by Jan. 15, 2011.

The Legislative Fiscal Bureau (LFB) looked at the cost of the task force and said the cost was "indeterminate."

That's because costs associated with staff time, preparation of materials and meetings themselves couldn't be determined. Also, the bill does not specify the number of meetings of the task force.

Local costs can't be determined "because it is not possible to know what actions local governments would take in response to the formation of the proposed task force," the LFB said.

So far the bill has four other sponsors, all com-

ing from cities (Milwaukee, Madison and Green Bay). It has been assigned to the Committee on State Affairs, chaired by Rep. Karl Van Roy (R-Green Bay). No public hearings have been held and none are scheduled. Wasserman had introduced a similar bill during the 2005-06 session and it did not receive a hearing.

Doing it backwards?

Mark O'Connell, executive director of the Wisconsin Counties Association, told *Dairy's Bottom Line* "we're very open to talking about the number of counties, but they're doing it backwards and for the wrong reason.

"To look at the number of counties," O'Connell said, "is a fair question. But you have to look ahead 10, 20 or 40 years. Then you have to look at the demographics and population and the services that counties provide.

"Looking ahead is something for demographers, futurists and trend analysts – academics – to get together and discuss and make a recommendation. They might say we ought to have 172

counties," he said.

"What Wasserman is proposing would literally take every four counties and collapse them into one. Now, for some users of government that would work fine," O'Connell suggested. "If you're an electronic user of services, you might say 18 counties wouldn't matter."

"But the 65-plus population will double in the next 10 years and in the next 20 years, the 85-plus population will double. They'll be needing physical services from counties such as transportation," O'Connell said.

"When we look at our population, 13 percent is over 65; in 20 years it will become 21 percent. Those people will consume a lot of services – and will need them for a long time. Many will spend more than half of their lives in retirement and they will need state services delivered by the county where they live," he continued. "We need an expanded version of transportation and our legislators are not opening their eyes to the changing demographics,"

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*'Face of the Future'***Behling's Career Path Headed For the Dairy Industry**

Linda Behling enthusiastically heads into the agriculture field knowing that long hours and hard work are part of the equation. In fact, Linda is eager to be in the barn in the middle of the night for a difficult calving and to work side-by-side with dairy producers to maintain their herd's health. This young, bright and energetic woman is working her way to become part of the forward-thinking dairy industry of Wisconsin.

Linda grew up on her parent's dairy near Fox Lake. Although her family, parents Jim and Diane and siblings Kari and Frank, never milked cows on the farm, they do own about 20 cows that are milked on five different farms in the area. The Behlings consistently raise about 40 registered Holstein heifers. In addition, the family runs about 900 acres of cash crops.

Linda owns about 20 animals that are housed on her family's farm and other farms in the area. She has grown her herd from the original project animals she obtained when she was young.

Growing up on the family farm, Linda was very involved – and although she is in her senior year of college, still is. She works with general calf care, feeding, reproduction, breeding decisions and manages the show string. She is fully in charge of the Wildweed Holsteins show animals. Linda handles selection of which animals will be exhibited at what shows, breaking to lead, clipping and washing. "All that fun stuff that I like to do a lot," she laughs. "I also get my fill of baling hay and straw in the summer."

In addition to being an intricate part of her home farm, Linda has been very active in many organizations

like 4-H, FFA and the Junior Holstein Association.

Linda is a dairy leader in Dodge County and has attended many leadership conferences and congresses. "They're a really good way to see what opportunities are out there in agriculture," she says.

A highlight of Linda's 4-H career was being a member of Dodge County's national champion dairy judging team in 2004. All of her hard work in practices paid off for her and her teammates as they traveled to Scotland in 2005 to judge at the Royal Highland Show.

Linda has also been a very successful FFA member. She joined in middle school and became a member of the judging team. She learned a lot through FFA and was honored to be the FFA national dairy proficiency runner-up in 2005.

As a member of the state and national Junior Holstein Associations, Linda has been a role model for younger members. She has been active in various capacities as a member of Dodge County's dairy bowl team, a contest entrant in advertising and animal awards, and in the showing. She is also a member of the Wisconsin Junior Holstein Activities Committee and the Junior Activities Committee on the national level, a position to which she was elected just this past summer at the National Holstein Convention in Tennessee. In both of these roles Linda will be deeply involved in the planning of the 2008 National Holstein Convention to be held in Wisconsin Dells.

Linda is currently a senior at UW-Madison, planning to graduate in May. She is majoring in dairy science with a natural science emphasis.

On campus Linda is active in many organizations. She is currently the president of the Badger Dairy Club and was a selections chairman for the record-setting 13th Badger Invitational Sale held this past March.

She is a member of the dairy judging team from UW-Madison that placed fourth at the national contest held during World Dairy Expo. Linda was fifth high individual overall.

Linda is a member of the Association of Women in Agriculture where she has served on the alumni committee and worked at Breakfast on the Farm, the club's largest fundraiser.

She is also an active member of Sigma Alpha as a facilitator of the Ag in the

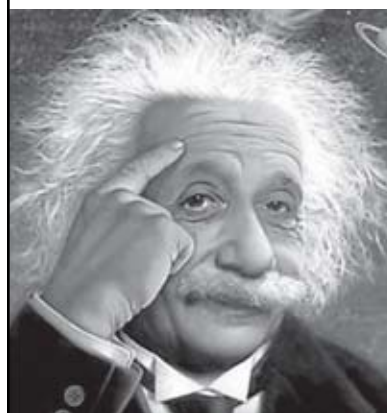
Classroom program and as a past treasurer.

Linda helps recruit students to the UW-Madison campus as a CALS (College of Agricultural and Life Sciences) Ambassador. She provides tours of the campus to potential students and works with Operation Contact, a program where she goes into high schools to inform students about the opportunities at UW-Madison's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

As a role model to youth in the dairy industry, Linda will be a member of the youth panel at the upcoming PDPW Youth Leadership Derby. She, along with three others, will share her experiences in orga-

See Future, on Page 10

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Colorado Study Confirms Link Between Calving Difficulty, Death Losses

The tougher time a calf has being born, the more likely it is to die.

Dairy producers might already know that, but a study conducted in Colorado backs it up. Franklyn Garry, a professor of clinical sciences and the coordinator of Colorado University's department of integrated livestock management, looked at the records of dystocia – or difficult calving – from three dairy farms over the course of a year.

His “most important finding,” Garry says, might be this: “the significant increase in calf mortality with increased calving difficulty. Greater than one-third (37.7 percent) of calves were lost if more assistance than one person was required, compared to 9.5 percent of calves lost if none or one person assisted.”

Here's how Garry and colleagues Tomlinson and Lombard arrived at that and other conclusions.

Three dairy operations in Colorado kept track of all their calvings for one year, giving each fresh cow a dystocia score based on her calving ease or difficulty. These scores ranged from 1 to 5.

A cow earning a score of 1 did not need any help calving, while one getting a score of 2 needed the help of one person. Cows getting scores of 3 needed the help of two or more people to calve, while those earning a score of 4 required mechanical assistance. Finally, cows earning scores of 5 needed surgical deliveries.

Next, each dairy operation documented each calf's subsequent health until the end of the study. This included whether or not the calf died.

Garry and his associates collected data on 6,684 calves. Nearly two-thirds (62.3 percent) of the cows did not need any help calving, giving them dystocia scores of 1.

But more than one-third of

the freshenings (35.5 percent) needed the help of one or two people, giving them scores of 2 and 3. Meanwhile, 2.3 percent of the cows needed either mechanical assistance or surgery, earning them dystocia scores of 4 and 5.

Most (97.5 percent) of the cows freshening were between their first and fifth lactations. As might be expected, first-calf heifers had the most calving difficulty.

Nearly half (48.4 percent) of them needed assistance calving, Garry reports. What's more, 4.4 percent of the first-calf heifers had to have mechanical assistance or surgical deliveries.

Cows in their second through eighth lactations did not fare much better. Slightly more than 30 percent of them needed some sort of calving assistance.

The incidence of calving assistance rose for cows in their ninth lactation or higher. A third of the cows in their ninth lactations needed help, while all - 100 percent) of the cows in their 10th or 11th lactations needed help calving.

Individual farms

Garry and his fellow researchers also looked at the various percentages for the individual dairy operations. The percentages of cows not needing any calving assistance were 61.5, 70 and 56.2 percent.

The per-farm rates for mild dystocia were 37.9, 26 and 34.2 percent. For severe dystocia, the rates came in at 0.6, 4.4 and 9.6 percent.

Overall, the average early calf loss, either born dead or died within the first 24 hours, was 8.4 percent,” Garry points out. “Individual dairy losses were 6.1, 10.5 and 8.5 percent...”

Garry says the incidence of early calf death rose “dra-

See Dystocia, on Page 21

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Issues

Continued from Page 1

The first is that primary food consumers (female and/or “moms”) are looking for food today that’s “good for me, my family and my world,” she characterizes. They’re after more than taste and nutrition, though those remain major motivators as well. Today’s consumers are making selections based on “deeper” motives, such as practices employed in producing that food and their impact on the environment. Food choices are “one of the few things in life they can control as moms,” Wenck explains of being able to “send signals (on how they feel about important issues like animal well-being and environmental stewardship) to the marketplace with their purchases.”

The second trend relates to the public’s “trust,” Wenck continues. Over the

last decade, consumer trust has been waning. People trust government less, business less and the media less. Consumers are more self-reliant, “more aware” and “more skeptical.” They tend to check out food-related issues for themselves and/or rely on their peers for information – versus food manufacturers and oversight agencies.

Third, consumers are looking for food “upgrades,” says Wenck of “something more” and what they perceive as “better.” Thus is emerging demand for organic food and grass-fed products. Along this same line, “less is more,” she adds of consumers seeking less preservation, artificial flavors, hormones and other additives.

Fourth, new technology introduction in production agriculture and the resulting increase in size of operations

– coupled with an urbanizing population – is making dairy farming less familiar to the general public. Today’s consumers are far removed from agriculture and have less understanding of what’s taking place on the farm. That makes it easier for special interest groups to cast doubt about production practices and animal care. Consumers still expect to see “the red and white barn” and “cows dotting the hillside,” says Wenck.

When there’s a “void” between reality (i.e. modern farming techniques) and public understanding, “people will fill it,” she points out, warning that the perceptions won’t necessarily be the “truth.” She maintains it’s a “worry” that the dairy industry has “not kept consumers up to speed.” There’s room for misconceptions on issues like how well the dairy industry takes care of cattle.

“It also sets up opportunities for the industry to be proactive,” she states.

One advantage dairy producers still enjoy in the public relations arena is that farmers are still very well thought of by the nonfarm public. “One of the most precious assets we have yet is consumer trust,” she says, pointing to research that shows farmers rated right up there with teachers and firefighters in terms of public trust and admiration. However, she adds, the dairy industry needs to make sure that trust is maintained.

“You can’t replace it. When trust is gone it’s very difficult to build back. It takes decades. Right now we’re still coming from high ground,” she says, highlighting the importance of issues management efforts like PDPW’s Nov. 14-15 forum.

The primary issues facing the dairy industry, according to this professional issues-tracker, are: Animal well-

being, labor issues (i.e. immigration and its impact on Hispanic labor and employer/employee relations in general), environmental issues (i.e. manure as it pertains to water quality and odor and a host of others), antibiotics (i.e. use in animal production and how it relates to resistance in the human health arena, as well as antibiotics showing up in surface water due to disposal issues) and food safety and food security.

PDPW has been instrumental in the producer-led coalition representing every facet of the dairy industry that debuted creation of the National Dairy Animal Well-Being Initiative at World Dairy Expo in Madison recently. It’s an effort to protect consumer trust and confidence in the industry’s commitment to animal well-being. The coalition introduced the first draft of proposed principles and guidelines during Dairy Expo, that are intended to provide a uniform umbrella of assurance that the industry is meeting its ethical obligation for dairy animal well-being. Eventually, cooperatives, processors or independent companies may incorporate different methods of oversight to verify that the principles and guidelines are being followed on individual operations. (See www.dairywellbeing.org for more information.)

The initiative will be a major focus at the upcoming National Dairy Issues Forum.

Wenck believes this dairy industry approach is important because special interest groups have been able to “cast doubt” on dairy animal husbandry, and going after food marketers with big brands has actually become more effective for animal welfare activities to cause change than to push legislation on Capitol

See Initiative, on Page 16

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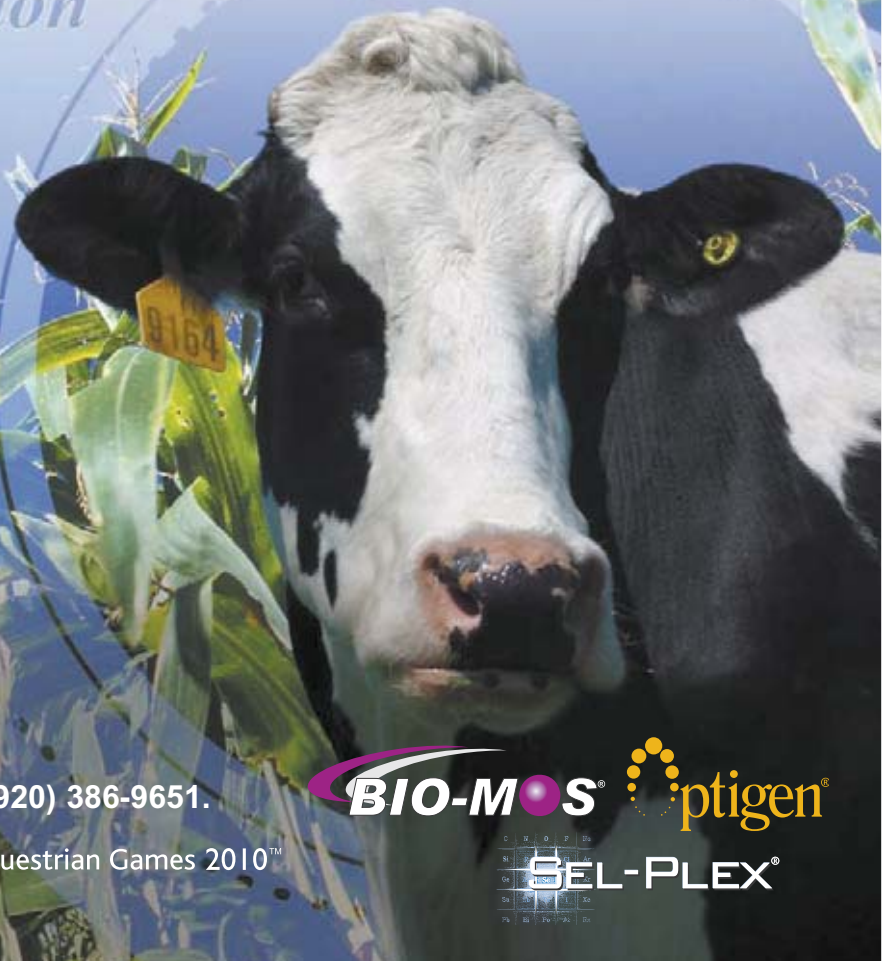
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Counties

Continued from Page 2
he added.

Rural perspective

From an agricultural perspective, rural residents and their communities have a fair amount of interaction with land, soil, UW-Extension, zoning, and surveying services provided by counties.

O'Connell points out "those are human face-to-face type services. You can't get them on a computer - you can't substitute a virtual soil exam for the real thing. The proximity to where that resource is located is important."

Land records are the type of resource for location on computers, O'Connell said.

"In agriculture it's a face-to-face service system. Proponents who favor fewer counties, don't think we

could end up with satellite offices - and then what have you accomplished? You have certainly not changed the delivery system.

"County government performs services that people don't think about - they just take them for granted," O'Connell emphasized.

Some of those "taken for granted services" include law enforcement, foster care, chemical issues, land conservation - "these are things we do that help individuals but that have a larger impact on population," O'Connell said.

"There are a lot of values attached to tilling the landscape," O'Connell reminded. "We need to manage growth and it should be proper growth - and it can't all be green," he added.

By Joan Sanstadt

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– Future

Continued from Page 3

nizations and college to give insight regarding what opportunities are available in today's dairy industry.

To broaden her dairy industry experiences even further, Linda has taken on some very interesting and unique internships the past two summers.

She contacted two outstanding, but different, dairy operations in the state to learn practical, on-farm knowledge. There are lots of people in the industry that are willing to help and are excited for young people coming into the dairy industry, she says.

The summer of 2006 was a new experience for Linda. She was an intern at Crave Brothers Farm near Waterloo. She worked as a herdsman with the fresh cows and transitional cows at the then 600-cow dairy. Previous to this

opportunity, Linda didn't have the chance to work with a milking herd. She learned a lot from this valuable experience which diversified her dairy know-how with the large commercial setting. "I really enjoyed it and they were great people to work with," she adds.

This past summer Linda had the chance to work with Mark and Angie Ulness and family of Valders on their farm, Ragnar Holsteins. This 76-cow family dairy is similar to the operation Linda hopes to own in the future. The focus at Ragnar is on their registered Holsteins and marketing of genetics. "This was a great experience," Linda says. "I learned a lot and really enjoyed working there. It's something I would like to do in the future."

See Behling, on Page 18

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WVDL Has Producers BVD Testing Needs Covered

Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD) affects many cattle herds in the state, and is difficult to control because of persistently infected animals. Persistently infected animals continue to shed the virus thereby being a threat to the herd throughout their lifetime.

But dairy and beef producers in Wisconsin have a phenomenal resource within its boundaries when it comes to BVD testing for persistently infected (PI) animals - the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostics Lab (WVDL).

The Lab uses the newest technology to provide producers with the most accurate and affordable BVD testing available.

WVDL has two locations in the state, Barron and Madison. The Madison WVDL moved to a new, more modern location on campus behind the Vet School on Easterday Lane earlier this year. The new facility replaces the smaller, older building at Mineral Point Road,

and is a state-of-the-art laboratory, where the WVDL staff can continue to develop, and use, the most sophisticated testing available.

"The space for molecular diagnostics is much larger," says Dr. Kathy Kurth, WVDL chief of virology. "We are now able to offer more assays based on molecular techniques than previously."

While the Lab did offer several molecular assays at the Mineral Point Road location, with the additional space in the new building they can offer more diagnostic options to the veterinary practitioner and producer so that animal disease issues can be resolved

sooner and less expensive. One real advantage of these newer techniques is that they provide a result sooner than some of the more traditional techniques like virus isolation. Viral isolation requires the virus to grow and replicate. This can take as long as ten days before results are available.

"There is a difference in viral load between the two infections," she explains about the difference between acute and PI infections. "The virus is the same, but in the PI animal there is a much higher amount of virus circulating."

Around two to three

See BVD, on Page 12

"I like coming to PDPW because I enjoy interacting with other dairymen in my situation."

~Ray Halbur, Burlledge Holsteins, Fond du Lac

"PDPW offers great educational opportunities for all members of the dairy industry, whether you are an owner, herds person or member of the industry."

~Sara Harbaugh, Pfizer Animal Health

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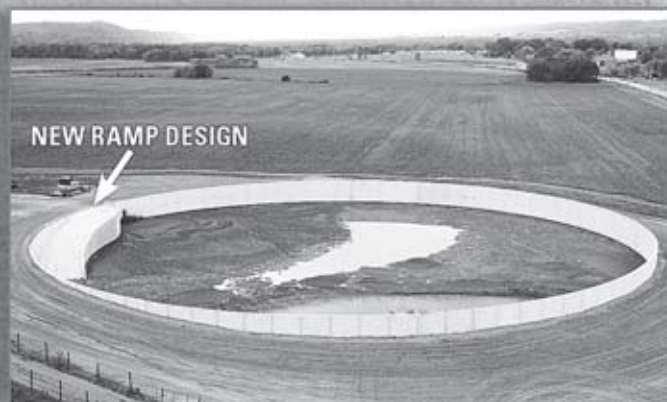
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BVD

Continued from Page 11

years ago the lab switched from using the older "gold standard" test of viral isolation to the ELISA test, which uses an ear notch sample.

"It is an easy sample to collect," she says. "Much of the testing for BVD persistent infection has gone to ear notch testing because it has a lot of advantages."

Included in those advantages are the ease of sample collection and the elimination of interference from antibodies.

The virus is found in large quantities in the ear, making it a good sample and relatively easy to take with a swine ear-notcher.

The lab accepts ear notches in an empty 10 milliliter, red-topped serum tube for testing. Once in the lab, a buffer is added to the tube and the virus moves out of the sample onto the buffer. The buffer is then tested for the

presence of BVD.

"Ear notch testing was a major advancement for the field," she says.

Although a good test, the ELISA test is relatively expensive, and unlike other testing methods it does not allow sample pooling. This means that with the ELISA only one animal can be tested at a time. With the PCR test, samples from 25 animals can be run together in one test.

"The newest test on board is polymerase chain reaction (PCR) which is very, very sensitive," she says. "Because it's so sensitive, we can pool up to 25 ear notches and still detect a persistently infected animal."

The ability to pool individual samples using PCR significantly lowers the price of testing for producers. The cost of a single ear-notch PCR test is \$1 dollar per sample at the WVDL. If there is a positive found in the pool of 25,

then an ELISA test would be administered to each of the individual 25 samples.

"It (PCR) is much cheaper than any of the other tests out there," she says.

The PCR test result is not affected by the presence of proteins and antibodies that could ultimately affect the results of other techniques.

In today's world – rapid results are a necessity and with both the PCR and ELISA tests – results are back within three to four hours.

On occasion for movement and regulatory rules, the individual animal must be tested and in those cases the pooled PCR test would be too expensive to be practical.

To become a PI animal, calves must be infected in the second trimester of gestation. If a calf gets infected with the virus in the first trimester the cow will abort or reabsorb the fetus. In the third trimester calves can become infected, but have enough immune competence to create an immune response to the virus. They are born clear of the virus, and with antibodies.

When a calf is persistently infected, it means it is a carrier of BVD for life. PI animals keep the BVD virus circulating in the cattle population because they are continuously shedding the virus, but do not have antibodies to the virus, so it is difficult to know that the animal is infected unless one looks for the virus. Testing for the presence of the virus is necessary to determine if the animal is indeed a PI animal.

"PCR is a very sensitive test and requires the people doing the test to be very, very careful," she explains about the standards at WVDL. "As an American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) accredited laboratory we maintain the highest standards of laboratory practices."

If there are still questions after the PCR testing is completed, the Lab does additional testing to make sure the results reported are



Ear Notching

Ear notch sampling is easy for the producer, effective and a great screening method. Wisconsin has been a leader in utilizing the most advanced technologies for BVD testing.

as accurate as possible – and that's important when testing around 30,000 BVD samples per year. In total the WVDL runs 1.7 million tests per year.

"The prevalence of BVD is not very high in Wisconsin herds," she says. "But when it is present it's very damaging."

Like several other agriculture colleges and universities, WVDL received a grant after 9/11 to create areas that can safely and securely test and handle foreign animal diseases.

"We got quite a bit of money to develop a bio-safety containment facility," she says. Fifteen employees have been trained in molecular biology in case of an outbreak and are part of the USDA group National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN).

"We are always evaluating new technology," she says about staying on top of new knowledge and equipment. "We work with local biotech companies often evaluating new technologies to make sure that the Wisconsin producers have access to the best diagnostic services available."

A complete listing of available tests, forms, and sample collection procedures for BVD diagnostics can be found on the WVDL website www.wvdl.wisc.edu.

By Sarah Watson

Got Worms?



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Stress Can Be Managed

The dairy business is a rewarding career. It is also one filled with change and tons of decisions at a fast-pace. Pleasure from the day-to-day of business can result in stress that impacts your health. Here are some points to consider. Remember, you are the only one that can really take care of you.

First and foremost, producers must recognize their symptoms of stress and decide to do something about them.

Watch what you eat. Just as those fresh cows (also under a great deal of stress) need top-quality feed to keep them on their feet and get their lactations off to a good start, your body needs nutritious food. Breakfast is an important meal for producers. Breaks for mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks are also helpful, especially during times of intense fieldwork.

With more farm women part of the off-farm labor force, the nutrition of their husbands back home on the farm tends to slip. Not knowing their way around the kitchen, they tend to grab what's handy in the cupboard. It may not be the kind of "fuel" their bodies need to endure the long, grueling hours of harvest time.

Roger Williams, a private consultant in stress management, suggests cutting back on caffeine, sugar and carbohydrates like donuts, white bread and chips, salt and saturated fats. Add more fiber to your diet, and lots of fruits and veggies. During harvest, it's not unusual for some producers to drink a 12-pack of Mountain Dew or Pepsi. All that caffeine and sugar will "fuel a sense of anxiety." Your mind gets to racing and you can "make mistakes you wouldn't otherwise make," he warns.

Regular exercise is another important strategy. "This one is a hard one to understand," Williams admits, noting that most producers think they're getting a lot of exercise. However, it's not the kind they need. What's necessary for healthier living and stress-reduction is aerobic exercise at least three times a week. That's vigorous exercise to get the heart pumping.

In years past, notes Williams, producers had to pitch silage out of the silo by hand, heft bales of hay around, shovel manure. They were physically tired when they went to bed. These days, many spend a portion of their day at a desk, or they're in a skidsteer or "running" here and there, answering a cell phone and dealing with interruptions and employee questions. The exercise is "not

See Stress, on Page 26

"The farm tours are the most valuable PDPW event for our dairy. We have been on several tours and said, "boy, am I glad we didn't do that." We've also been on tours that give us ideas to bring home and use. The tours give us a different attitude of pride in belonging in this industry here in Wisconsin."

-Deb Mielke, Mielke's S-Curve Dairy, Marion



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National Dairy Issues Forum – Determining Dairy's Direction

Consumer confidence and uniting as an industry has never been more important. At the National Dairy Issues Forum, you'll cut to the core of today's issues - revealing trends, dissecting issues and aligning together to shape dairy's destiny.

Day One – Nov. 14

9:30 a.m.

Registration

9:45 a.m.

Forum begins

• **Issues Management: Determining Emergence vs. Crisis Phases - Charlie Arnot, CMA Consulting**

Learn the theory to develop the strategy. Hear from Arnot, an issues management and communications expert, and begin thinking about the state of issues management in the livestock industry. Consider why consumers don't always understand or trust animal

agriculture, and learn how to better communicate and educate them in the future.

• **Who's Calling the Shots? Understanding the Power of Influencers - Kevin Murphy, Center for Food Integrity**

We'll cut to the million dollar question: Who is setting the pace...activists, consumers, customers or are you? As the face of agriculture changes, so do the rules of the game. To influence our future, agriculture needs to re-tool the strategies.

Lunch

• **Science, Values and Ethics - Is Dairy at its Tipping Point?**

Listen as two industry experts debate animal well-being. Hear the yin and yang of the issues around this emotional topic. Marlene Halverson an expert at the Animal Welfare Institute explains that the

issue is "not about the science" and Janeen Salak-Johnson, University of Illinois, provides the science side of the discussion.

• **Hindsight is 20/20 - What Can We Learn from Others?**

Hear from two major livestock sectors as they share their experiences during critical issue management times. They will reveal their situations, the tipping point, how they responded, the outcome, what they learned, and what they would have done differently.

• **Scenario A - Sherrie Niekamp, director of Swine Welfare, National Pork Board**

• **Scenario B - Chad Gregory, senior vice president, United Egg Producers**

6 p.m.

• **Dinner and Q & A Panel**

Network with a full menu of intriguing speakers from the day. Get your questions answered and ruminate on the issues discussion, education and industry strategy. You will never again look at issue management, the dairy industry and the food system the same.

Day Two – Nov. 15

7:30 a.m.

Re-energize with Breakfast

8:15 a.m.

Forum continues

• **Defining the Rules to the Well-being Issue and Driving the Debate - Charlie Arnot**

The National Dairy Animal Well-Being Initiative is an effort to build consumer trust and confidence in the dairy industry's commitment to animal well-being.

• **National Dairy Animal Well-Being Initiative Update (NDAWI) - Shelly Mayer, Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin**

Hear about the work of this national industry-wide stakeholder group and how your input can shape dairy animal well-being.

• **Inside Information on the Proposed NDAWI Principles and Guidelines - Learn the Logic, Hear the Details and Share Your Input - Dr. Gatz Riddell, vice president, American Association of Bovine Practitioners, and John Rosenow, co-chair NDAWI Principles and Guideline Committee and dairy producer**

The NDAWI Coalition is developing the broad principles and guidelines that any dairy well-being program should include to meet our ethical obligation to provide for the well-being of our animals. This session offers an opportunity for industry stakeholders, including cooperatives and producer groups, to review and provide feedback on the principles and guidelines.

Lunch

• **Question & Answer Forum - Take the Bull by the Horns - Keynote speaker, Former Congressman Charlie Stenholm (D-TX)**

Hear Stenholm's definition of taking "the bull by the horns" as we set the record straight on a number of issues, including animal well-being. Stenholm was a member of the House committee on Agriculture throughout his 26-year House career. He served as the committee's ranking Democrat for eight years. Stenholm has earned a reputation for building bipartisan alliances in areas as diverse as agriculture, resource conservation, food safety, Social Security, energy, health care and the budget.

2 p.m.

Adjourn

Register by Nov. 5 online at www.pdpw.org, call 800-947-7379 or send your check to: National Dairy Issues Forum, Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin, N5776 US Hwy 151, Suite 1, Fond du Lac, WI 54937.



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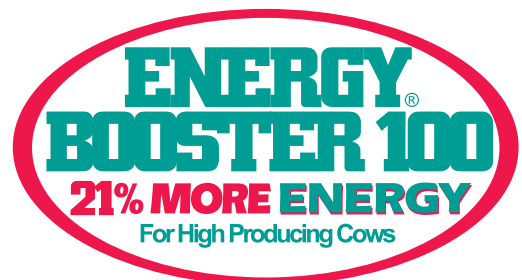
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Initiative

Continued from Page 6
Hill. As noted, consumers are farther removed from the farm, without even an uncle or grandparent farming anymore. Further, Americans are increasingly in love with their pets and some of that sentiment is transferred to animals used in food production.

There are emerging concerns about lameness, tail docking, how pregnant cows are treated, and pasture. The expectation of some consumers is that cows have green grass to eat.

Instead of waiting for consumers for consumers to ask questions, the dairy industry is stepping up to the plate and accepting that they have a moral obligation to make sure cows are cared for in the very best way. That's something producers do "naturally," says Wenck, because well-cared-for cattle are the "most produc-

tive" from a business standpoint. However, the industry needs to let the public know it cares about its animals.

To be proactive, Wenck thinks producers should look at their farms "through the eyes of consumers who don't understand" what they're seeing when they drive by. Areas of attention might include: Cows in the mud, down and sick cows laying so they're highly visible from the road, general farmstead tidiness, and maybe even erecting a farm sign stating "we care."

In the environmental arena, specific ongoing issues include: Farm siting, waste management, odor, traffic on roads, noise pollution and nighttime fieldwork. Some of these are in the realm of neighbor-relations, but they impact public perception of a farm's environmental impact.

Wenck suggests produc-

ers put out a newsletter to neighbors, telling people what they do and why they do it. She notes that a large farm's "neighbors" aren't just close to the main farmstead, but also around their remotest fields. Maybe a producer might want to invite its more broadly defined "neighbors" to a little barbecue and farm tour.

"June Dairy Breakfasts are more important than ever right now," she says of public relations and issues management.

When large expanded dairies in particular are targets of criticism, the tendency is to "close things in," Wenck says. She thinks they should do just the opposite and "throw their doors open" and "bring people in." "Now is the time to open doors" and "reach out."

The advent of digesters is a major PR boost for the dairy industry. Not only is

the manure issue dealt with effectively, but farms are now perceived as contributing to American's energy independence, which puts them in a very positive light with the public.

In addition to animal well-being, PDPW's upcoming Issues Forum will examine issues management and "the influencers" that are calling the shots, and hear from the swine and egg industries. The keynoter is former Congressman Charlie Stenholm (D-Texas).

The cost is \$175 for both days for PPDW members and \$250 for non-members. Register by Nov. 5 online at www.pdpw.org or call 800-947-7379. To reserve a room at the Holiday Inn at The American Center in Madison at a special PDPW price, call 608-249-4220.

By Jane Fyksen

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Passion For the Showring

Linda Behling is a role model for youth in the dairy industry both in and outside of the showring. Here she is pictured with her cow, Kylie, who was named grand champion of the junior show at the Midwest National Spring Show in Madison.

Submitted photo

— Behling

Continued from Page 10

Linda has had many mentors who have helped guide her way into the dairy industry including past 4-H leaders. But, she says, the people who are probably most influential to her have been the ones who house her milking cows. They are Chuck Westphal and Ike and Shelly Meyer. She has consulted these successful dairy producers about her own cows and her future plans. "I have a lot of respect for what they do and how they have done it," Linda says.

Her experience with Mark and Angie Ulness had also been very influential. Linda strongly respects what they have accomplished and their desire, passion and positive attitude for the dairy industry. "They have a very future-driven management style," she explains. "I have a lot of respect for them and look up to them. I learned a lot, not just about cows, but also

about making decisions about my future."

When asked about her future plans, Linda responds, "They change daily."

She is currently considering going into dairy nutrition. "That's something I've realized that I really enjoy doing."

However, her dairy science major with a natural science emphasis gives her many opportunities including veterinary school and graduate school, which she is also still considering.

Otherwise she says that she would also consider working for a dairy breed organization or as a herdsman again.

Within the next 15 years Linda hopes to own her own farm with registered Holsteins. In the meantime, she plans to keep growing her current herd of 20 head and showing those animals. "I will be in the dairy industry no matter what," she says.

By Crystal McNett

Start Your Engines For PDPW's Youth Leadership Derby

It's time to rev up for the fast track at the PDPW Youth Leadership Derby Nov. 3-4 at the Marshfield High School in Marshfield. This weekend conference is stacked with non-stop fun, hands-on labs and workshops, tours and valuable networking opportunities.

Day 1

- 9:30-10 a.m. Registration - Get your track pass!

- Get Into Gear! - We'll share the game plan for the Derby, rev up our engines and ignite the enthusiasm.

- We're Off to the Tours! Our speedy race car will be a big yellow bus for the afternoon as we hit the road to explore the real world of the dairy industry.

- Tour #1 - Wisconsin State Dairy Cheese Company - Our first pit stop will be at Wisconsin Dairy State Cheese Co. in Rudolph, where we'll see the step-by-step process of cheese production from the milk truck to the tasty final product Wisconsin Dairy State Cheese is family owned and operated, and they make Cheddar, Colby and Monterey Jack cheeses.

- Tour #2 - Dorsland Farms - Our next stop of the afternoon will showcase a very unique dairy, Dorsland Farms in Junction City, and we'll explore what makes this business successful. Along with the dairy, the Dorshorst family has a veterinary operation, The Practice Veterinary Service, and an embryo transfer business.

- Tour #3 - Maple Ridge Dairy - Our final lap will be at Maple Ridge Dairy, a commercial dairy owned by Ken Hein, Phil Hein and Gary Ruegsegger. Over the past eight years, the dairy has grown and expanded numerous times. With additional cow housing, the dairy expanded from 300 cows in 1998 to its current operation of 950 cows. The cows are milked three times a day in a Double-16 German Parlor.

- Fuel up with a pizza pit stop when we arrive back at Marshfield High School!

- All-Star Workshops - You will enjoy each lap of these

fast-moving workshops! Hang on tight!

- Lap 1: Leading the Pack to the Finish Line - Tolea Kamm-Peissig and Jake Peissig, ag industry leaders and former Wisconsin FFA Officers will show what it truly means to be a leader.

- Lap 2: Who's Driving? - High school counselor and former Alice in Dairyland, Natalie Parmentier will lead this workshop and will drive you to learn more about yourself and how you can be most effective on a team.

- Lap 3: Taking a "Cash" Course - An agricultural banking expert, Gary Sipiorski from Citizen's State Bank of Loyal, will help you understand the dollars and sense of financial stability.

- Making it to the Winner's Circle - This panel of young dairy leaders will share their experiences of the track past high school. Panelists include Heather Anderson, Linda Behling, Shannon Dwyer and Derek Orth.

- Dairy Idol - This is your opportunity to showcase or sing or acting skills at our very own Dairy Idol competition. Judges Simon "Cow"ell, Randy "Co-Jack"son and Paula Ab"bull" will be on hand to cheer you on.

- Quiet Time - Idle your engines and get some zzz's.

Day 2

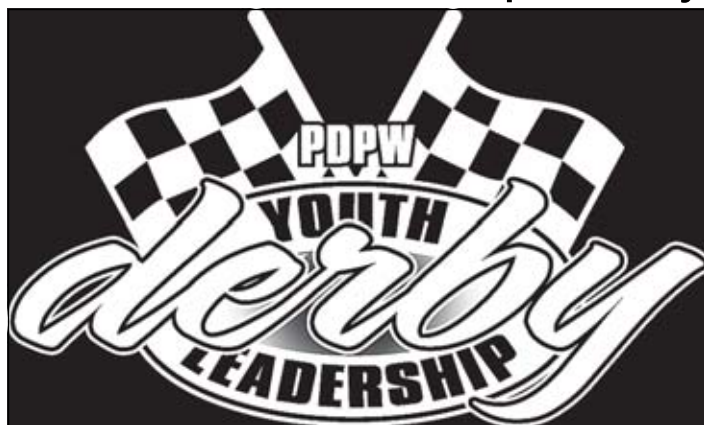
- Breakfast - Fuel Up!

- Jumpstart the Day - After breakfast, you can make your tires squeal as we begin the second day of the Derby!

- Real-Life Learning Labs

- Lab #1: Delicious Dairy - Develop Science Savvy by Exploring Dairy - Dive into a hands-on food science experiment with milk as you learn about the unique qualities of dairy to make the many products we enjoy.

- Lab #2: Celebrating our Role as Animal Care Specialists - This interactive lab, led by Terry Jobsis, UW-Madison research program manager, and Bernie O-Rourke, UW-Extension youth livestock specialist, will help you understand



our important role as animal caretakers and hot to tell your friends about what a great job dairy producers do.

- Lab #3: A Look Inside - This hands-on lab will focus on production - from udder to hoof.

- Drive Yourself to the Winners Circle - Our final keynote speaker, Sam Glenn, will highlight the importance of attitude and how important it is for success.

- Noon - The Finish Line - Derby Concludes - Buckle up and have a safe trip home!

Important Derby Details

- Designed for young people ages 15-18.

- For additional applications or to register online, go to www.pdpw.org.

- Registration fee of \$50 includes all training materials, meals, snacks and entertainment.

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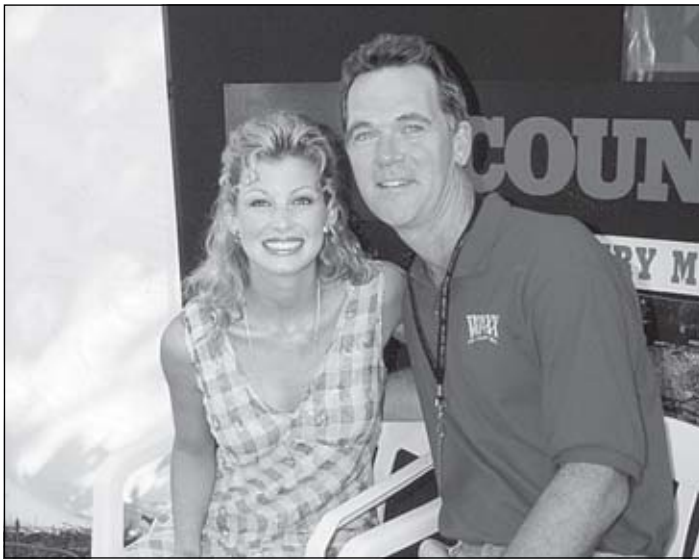
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Broadcaster Connections

In his position as a farm broadcaster for country music station WXX in Eau Claire, Bob Bosold (right) has met a number of agriculture producers and people from all parts of the industry. From time to time he also interacts with hit country music artists, such as Faith Hill, whom he's pictured with above.

Submitted photo

Bosold Enters Hall of Fame For Sharing Ag News

After 30 years on air, one of the most recognizable voices in Wisconsin agriculture was inducted into the Wisconsin Broadcaster Association Hall of Fame. Bob Bosold, farm services director for WXX in Eau Claire, now sits among some of the elite engineers, managers and broadcasters in Wisconsin radio and television.

Bosold can be heard daily across northwestern Wisconsin informing farmers, educating consumers and promoting youth involvement in agriculture.

A city-boy from Madison, Bosold acquired a fondness for broadcasting listening to news programs. He took a journalism class and even stated broadcasting as a future endeavor in his high school yearbook.

"Broadcasting is so neat," he says. "I've always liked it."

Upon graduation, he was enrolled at UW-Madison and then spent a few years in the Service. When he returned home, he was called back to broadcasting and re-entered the University as an ag journalism major.

"Larry Meiller was a guiding light for me," Bosold says. Meiller, who is well-known on Wisconsin Public Radio and a UW-Madison professor, mentored Bosold and invited him to help with the radio show. Bosold took advantage of the opportunity and conducted a number of interviews with college researchers on the program.

When he received his bachelor's degree, Bosold had not yet decided whether he liked radio or television more. However, there wasn't a need to when the perfect opportunity fell in his lap. A broadcasting company in Eau Claire was looking for a second person in the farm department for both radio and TV. On Feb. 14, 1977, Bosold started his 30-year career with WXX.

He continued to work in both broadcast forms for seven or eight years until the parent corporation sold out. At that time he had to face the same decision he once skirted and opted for radio for its longer air time.

"You can't give justice to something like the Farm Bill in a minute and a half," he says of the limited time on television. "You have a better opportunity to explain it on radio."

He added that the cameramen, without knowledge of agriculture, usually captured a different shot than Bosold intended when they were in the field. "That changed the story," he says. "Radio gave me more freedom and ability to tell the story."

These days that story includes anything related to food, farms and fuel. His voice is carried on WXX 104.5 – the FM station – seven days a week, and NewsTalk 790 AM five days a week. He covers news, market reports and consumer information. Aside from a morning, noon and afternoon program, he spends most of his day gathering information. He'll arrive at the station by 4 a.m., is on the air at 5, and usually doesn't leave until 5:30 p.m.

His mornings start with an hour and 15 minute radio program where he covers "straight farm stuff," he says. There's no disc jockey, it's just Bosold and his guests. He'll invite experts in from county ag agents to crop specialists, depending on the topic.

Bosold will talk about everything from commodities, livestock, conservation and everything in between.

"Every day is different," he says, and that's what he likes most about the job. He doesn't spend much time at his desk because he's usually

See Bosold, on Page 24

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- Dystocia

Continued from Page 4

matically” with the more difficult the birth. Only 3 percent of the calvings that did not need assistance resulted in a dead calf.

By contrast, the deliveries needing the help of one person resulted in a dead calf 6.25 percent of the time. And when two or more people had to help deliver the calf, it died 33.8 percent of the time.

The situation worsened with the use of mechanical force. Here, the calf died 50.5 percent of the time. And when surgery was needed to deliver the calf, it died 66.7 percent of the time.

There's more. The harder the delivery, the more likely the calf was to die 24 hours or more after birth, too.

Of the calves needing no delivery assistance, 8.6 percent died after 24 hours. Those needing the birthing assistance of one person had an 8.8 percent death rate after 24 hours. And those that had two people assisting or were mechanically or surgically extracted had a post-24-hour death rate of 14.5 percent.

Later deaths

The Colorado University looked at the numbers for calves that died later due to digestive upset (bloat diarrhea and scours), respiratory infections (pneumonia, coughing and nasal discharge), and “other” causes like fever, injuries and other illnesses. Here, the researchers did not always find a correlation between calving difficulty and these other problems.

For example, 14.5 percent of the calves not needing any birth assistance developed digestive upsets. That compares to 17.9 percent of those needing the birth assistance of one person, but to only 16.9 percent of those needing the help of two people or mechanical or surgical assistance.

Respiratory infections showed a stronger trend. Calves needing no birth assistance developed respiratory infections at a rate of 24.3 percent. The rate was higher – 27.8 and 37.9 percent – for the other two calf categories.

When it came to “other” health problems, 2.9 percent of the unassisted calves developed any. And just 2.2 percent of the calves needing the birthing assistance of one person developed other health conditions. The rate fell even lower – to 2 percent – for calves needing additional assistance.

Garry also offers this evaluation of the numbers.

He says, “Nearly one-and-a-half times more calves died due to illness if they had a difficult delivery. Although calving ease did not seem to impact digestive upset or other illness occurrence rates, respiratory disease was approximately 1.5 times more common in calves that were born in a difficult delivery.”

That means, he continues, “Dystocia does have an impact on calf morbidity as well as calf mortality, both early and later in life. Concentrated efforts by producers to decrease dystocia rates would result in an increased number of calves, as well as improved surviving calf viability.”

Choose right bulls

How to do that? Garry has a couple of ideas.

One is to breed heifers to bulls that score high for calving ease, much the way many beef producers do.

A more drastic step is to simply cull cows that have proven to have difficulty calving, he says.

And a third way, says Garry, is to do a better job training the people who work with cows as they calve, and with the calves themselves.

By Ron Johnson

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Day One - Oct. 30

8 a.m. - Registration

8:15 a.m. - Welcome

- A Look at Dairy in the Rearview Mirror - Jim Harsdorf, dairy producer and former Secretary of DATCP, kicks off the day with an intriguing discussion of the important role of dairy to Wisconsin. Harsdorf goes beyond the basics as he reflects on dairy's impact on our culture, land, economy and education system.

- Growing the Next Generation of Wisconsin Greatness - Honorable Governor Jim Doyle shares his vision for how Wisconsin will continue to grow local

businesses, improve education and continue to invest in our people and land resources. Secretary Rod Nilsestuen, DATCP, articulates how government enables this vision from strategy to action.

- State of the Wisconsin Dairy Industry: Opportunities & Challenges - A direct, real and frank discussion about opportunities and challenges facing Wisconsin's workhorse - the dairy industry. Panel experts: Dick Groves, publisher/editor; *The Cheese Reporter*; Karl Klessig, dairy producer, Saxon Homestead Farm; Bill Oemichen, president and CEO, Wisconsin Federation of Cooperatives; Carl Theunis, Tinedale Farms.

- Defining and Understanding Bio-Energy Judy Ziewacz, director, Office of Energy Independence - Learn about the new and rapidly growing renewable energy industry...Is it a friend or foe?

12:15 p.m. - Tours and lunch

- Tour A - Renew Energy LLC, Jefferson. Be one of the first to see the largest ethanol plant in Wisconsin and a national production leader. Beginning operation in October, our tour of Renew Energy will showcase a state-of-the-art, brand-new facility with cutting edge technologies. Learn about their vision for the biofuel industry, and hear about their new high-protein, low-oil by-product. This is not the average tour, nor is this the average ethanol plant.

- Tour B - Rosy-Lane Holsteins, Lloyd & Daphne Holterman and Tim Strobel, Watertown. Get a firsthand look at one of the nation's most innovative dairy operations. The tour at Rosy-Lane Holsteins will highlight this 750-cow dairy business that milks three times a day and runs 1,200 acres of crops. On this tour, you'll hear and see how this dairy makes their mission a reality.

6 p.m. - Fuel up with hospitality

6:30 p.m. - Dinner and roundtable

A Panoramic View of Rural Issues from Diverse Wisconsin Experts - Lee Engelbrecht, president, Wisconsin Towns Association; Steve Dickinsen, president, Wisconsin Counties Association; Al Ott, representative, 3rd Assembly District, Forest Junction. Enjoy an Evening of Networking and Conversation.

Day Two – Oct. 31

7:30 a.m. - Re-energize with breakfast

- Weighing the Options in Protecting our Natural Resources: Achieving Environmental Sustainability - Matt Otto, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Margaret Krome, policy program director, Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, DATCP Board Member; John Koepke, dairy producer, Koepke Farms, Inc.; Bob Oleson, executive director, Wisconsin Corn Growers Association and Wisconsin

Corn Promotion Board; Moderated by Dennis Frame, co-director, UW-Discovery Farms.

- Growing and Harvesting our Rural Intellect – Roberta Gassman, Department of Workforce Development secretary – How do we retain the intellect that we so successfully develop? Get engaged in the solution to prevent Wisconsin "brain drain."

- Energy Production: Finding the Balance – Bruce Babcock, Center for Agricultural and Rural Development, Iowa State University – Babcock challenges traditional thinking with his assessment of the risks and opportunities associated with renewable energy production. Together we will answer: How do we protect our natural and people resources while developing energy?

- Continuing to Position Wisconsin as a National Agriculture, Fuel and Technology Leader – Dean Molly Jahn, College of Agricultural & Life Sciences, UW-Madison

12:15 p.m. - Lunch

- Update on Livestock Siting – Hear about local issues and what we are learning from the process – Panel members: Jeff Lyon, director, Governmental Relations, Wisconsin Farm Bureau; Steve Struss, livestock siting engineer, DATCP; Rick Stadelman, executive director, Wisconsin Towns Association

- Get the Final Answers – Panel discussion with today's presenters to help you find the solutions. Utilizing Wisdom of the Past to Balance Food and Energy Production – Steve Larson, managing editor, *Hoard's Dairyman*, 2007 World Dairy Expo Industry Person of the Year

3:15 p.m. - Adjourn

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Bosold

Continued from Page 20

out visiting with people. There aren't many walks of life he hasn't interviewed. In the past 30 years he's talked with first year 4-H members on up to the President of the United States.

"It's a new job every day," he says.

Bosold may not have been born into agriculture, but he certainly has lived it. Growing up he spent his summers and school breaks at his uncle's farm in Iowa. The farm had beef, hogs, chickens, corn and soybeans. He learned about dairy through acquired knowledge.

"You can learn anything if you do more listening than talking," he says.

However, with his gift to talk, Bosold says by being there and trying to share agricultural news he can make an influence on the industry.

He recalls being the emcee at the first PDPW Annual

Business Conference and commenting that the dairy industry is one industry that doesn't have a unified voice.

"I'd like to bring this industry together," he says. "That's what I'd like to do."

He also wants to get more people thinking about accomplishing things that are best for agriculture. And this is exactly what PDPW is doing.

"Every organization has its own position on issues. We have to try to make them think about what's good for the whole and not just one," he says.

Encouraging young people to stay involved in agriculture is another passion of Bosold's. He volunteers with 4-H and FFA, assisting with speaking contests and other activities.

"A lot of kids want to stay involved in ag. I try to help them do that," he says.

Bosold enjoys Wisconsin's agriculture because of its

diversity. You can go to Iowa to see corn and soybeans, but here we have vegetables and cranberries and "you don't have to drive that far to see it," he says. "It's not niche marketing ag either," Bosold adds, noting most are of a significant size. "It's top shelf agriculture."

Bosold recently retired from the Wisconsin Agricultural and Life Sciences Alumni Association (WALSAA) Board and served six years on the UW-River Falls CAFES Advisory Board. He's been involved on three separate Farm Technology Days committees in Dunn, Chippewa and Eau Claire counties. An active member of the Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce agriculture committee, Bosold helps put on a large dairy breakfast each year. This past year he also had the honored of serving on the host committee for crowing the 60th

Alice in Dairyland. When he's not involved in agriculture, he teaches fourth grade Junior Achievement.

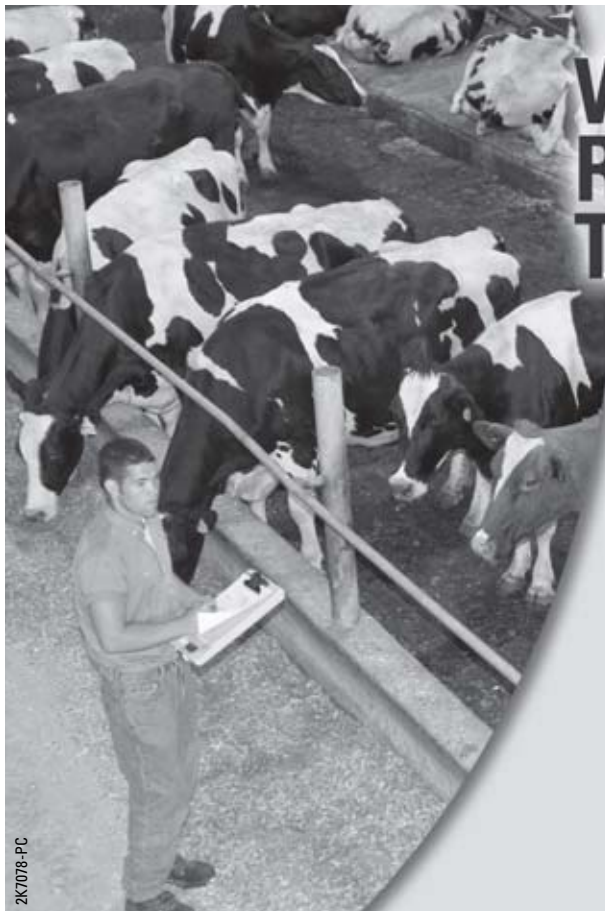
One of his greatest achievements he believes is that just as many people know him by his face as by his voice, which demonstrates how much he loves being around people.

His family includes his wife, Dawn, and two sons, Mike and Matt. Mike is currently serving with the Army in Iraq and Matt will be graduating from high school this year with plans to attend UW-Madison.

When the news spread that he was inducted into the Hall of Fame, many people asked if he planned to retire. Bosold says that he hadn't even considered it and, for now, plans to keep working.

"I don't consider it a job," he says. "It's just a way of life, like farming is."

By Karen Lee



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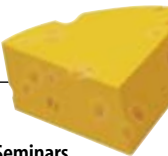
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Stress

Continued from Page 13
the kind that's physically exhausting" as it was in years past.

"One of the best buffers for stress is having a support system," Williams continues of getting involved in organizations (like Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin) and staying connected with people. People need other people. It's essential producers be able to share concerns openly with other producers, who understand the business, and "talk them through," he adds.

However, when you're stressed, it's mighty tempting to blow off meetings you would have ordinarily attended. You may quit going to church. You become "out of touch" with other people, and can start losing your perspective. Williams says just "dropping over" to the neighbor's and "chatting for a few minutes" remains an important way to get a break from farming's stress load.

However, way too many producers isolate themselves, mistakenly thinking they just don't have time to visit with another farmer down the road.

Positive self-talk crucial

Williams maintains that "one of the most important skills a person can learn in life" is how to use "positive self-talk." When you're under pressure, it's easy to "get on a downward cycle" in self-talk, he says.

"When we find ourselves stressed, instantaneously, the chatter in our heads" can turn negative, he warns. "Why is this happening to me now?" "I can't cope with this."

Williams says it's a critical stress-prevention technique to "recognize" negative self-talk the "instant it happens" and intentionally "turn it around" and "make it more positive."

There are four steps: The first is accepting the reality of the situation. "You don't have to

like it," but you need to accept that it "goes with the territory" of the career you've selected, he says. Nothing is quite as stressful as equipment breakdown during harvest. However, it's important to accept that as a "part of farming in a technological age."

Second, nurture yourself. Quickly step back and tell yourself, "I'm an okay person. I'm skilled to deal with this. I've been farming 20 years. I have lots of experience. I can handle this situation." (Conversely, the tendency might be to "beat up on yourself," thinking, "Why am I so stupid? I knew that piece was wearing" or "Why can't I handle this?")

Third, view the calamity or stressor as a "challenge" rather than a "threat." You're more likely to cope in a positive way if you do, Williams remarks.

Fourth, "act with courage," he directs.

Williams credits PDPW with focusing on the positive

aspects of farming and "framing everything in a positive way." That's healthy for the member-producers who participate in PDPW educational events.

He also suggests practicing relaxation. This will need to be a conscious decision for some producers with workaholic tendencies. Do something relaxing every day. During busy times, you may be able to relax for only a few minutes. Taking nice deep breaths can cut stress, versus shallow breathing in the chest. Breathe all the way down into the stomach, he directs. Breathe in, count to three and tell yourself, "I am at peace." Breathe out, counting to three, telling yourself, "I am letting go."

Take relaxation a step further – away from the farm. Attend farm shows, the county fair, or a fall pasture walk. Just get away from the work and worry.

See Relaxation, on Page 30

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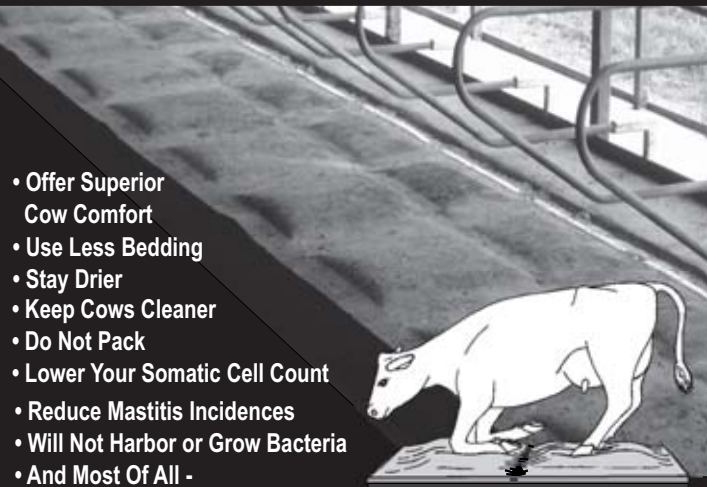


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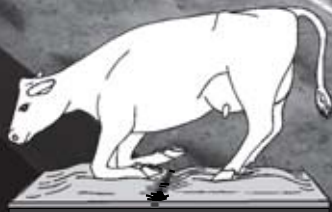
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— Relaxation —

Continued from Page 26

Learn about and practice risk management to reduce the risks – and stressors – in farming. Don't procrastinate and put off necessary financial desk work. Learn more about marketing. Make sure you're adequately insured. Do your homework before undertaking a new construction project.

Mark Purschwitz, with the Farm Medicine Center, says producers need to be proactive not just in dealing with stress but preventing farm injuries and illnesses, too. "You have to look at your farm as a place that is compatible with humans and human nature," he explains. "People get pre-occupied. They work when they're tired. They take short-cuts, make mistakes. Nobody is perfect." The worksite has to take that into account.

"With farmers, stress can build quickly with circumstances," he notes, suggesting they "design a workplace so

when these things happen," injuries, illness or even death don't. That means making sure ahead of harvest that shields are in place, tractors are outfitting with ROPS (rollover protective structures), safe cattle handling equipment is in place.

Producers should do what they can to make their farm safe so they "don't pay an unacceptable price" when stress kicks in. UW-Extension (<http://learningstore.uwex.edu>) has a Farm Hazard Inspection checklist (publication A3619) on its publications page under "Farming" and then "Agricultural Safety."

Purschwitz maintains that producers should "manage" for farm safety by looking carefully at the workplace to create a safer one in order to protect people on the farm – employees, family members, visitors. "Don't take training lightly" either, he warns. "Never assume people know things." Instead, look at all the differ-

ent jobs undertaken on the farm through the eyes of the people doing them. Mentally and physically walk through jobs. Look for places things can happen.

"Good managers anticipate problems before they happen. They don't go from crisis to crisis," he continues, noting that the same can be said for farm safety. Good managers make personal protective equipment available to employees, and it's mandatory to wear for hazardous jobs. Speaking of safety glasses, as one example, Purschwitz notes, "You can't predict which day something will hit you in the eye."

Do the same for visitors. Anticipate safety hazards. He notes, for instance, that some hoof trimmers have been attacked by bulls. The farmer could have prevented that. That's where "the buck stops," Purschwitz concludes.

By Jane Fyksen

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National Dairy Issues Forum	Madison	Nov. 14-15
Hispanic Calf Care Workshop	Madison	Dec. 4
Calf Care Connection	Madison & Green Bay	Dec. 4 & 5
Commodity Marketing Informational Class	Appleton	Dec. 10
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