UW-Extension Fond du Lac County

November 2015

Extension Dairy News

UW-Extension Fond du Lac County

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Crops & Soils Agent

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Requests for reasonable accommodations for disabilities or limitations should be made prior to the date of the program or activity for which it is needed. Please do so as early as possible prior to the program or activity so that proper arrangements can be made.

Autumn is an important and busy time of year as crops are being harvested and final preparations for winter on the farm are taking place. I can attest as I have many items on my "to-do-list" (at home and at work) which need to be accomplished before the next season sets-in. However, nothing can compare to the fall we have in Wisconsin has as the landscape gives way to the beauty of the tress turning colors.

One of the many "to-do" items accomplished this fall is the new look to the ***extension agriculture newsletter***! It was just time for a new look, and I hope you find it "cleaner" and "fresher" than the one previous.

Another major accomplishment is the development of a new ***UW-Extension Fond du Lac County Agriculture website***, a one-stop shop for extension agriculture resources in Fond du Lac County. As we look to the future of UW-Extension, some items will be streamlined for better management. I hope you find the website a good fit. I encourage you to visit http://fyi.uwex.edu/fdlag, bookmark and subscribe to it to receive an email when we post something new. Just as our previous crops and soils agent retired, so will the Fond du Lac County Agronomy site. But no fear! All the agronomy resources on the previous site are included on the new site!

Check us out!
Visit our new website at
http://fyi.uwex.edu/fdlag

Finally, it looks like we are on our way to ***refilling the crops and soils agent position*** at UW-Extension. The position announcement has been posted with applications due mid-November. This position will be a shared (50:50) position with Dodge County. Patience is a virtue when it comes to filling vacancies.

Take time to enjoy the fall weather and happy harvest!

Tina Kohlman
Dairy & Livestock Agent
UW-Extension Fond du Lac County

Managing the Workaholic's Time

The dairy cow is a workaholic. Operating much of her productive lifetime at three times the energy cost of maintenance, meeting her energy needs is essential for production of high volumes of high quality milk and timely breedings. Cow comfort is the foundation to the success of the lactating cow. With only 24 hours in a day, how a dairy operation structures the cow's dairy routine is critical to their success.

Building a Time Budget

Time budgets allocate a certain amount of time toward different, important daily events. Allocating the right amount of time to each task is a true balancing act. The table below outlines one study's findings of the time budgets of the average cow, compared to those in the top 10 percent of the herd for milk production.

Time budgets of top 10 percent compared to herd average (hours)

Activity	Top 10%	Herd Average	Recommendations
Eating at bunk	5.5	5.5	3.-5
Resting	14.1[a]	11.8[b]	12-14
Standing in alleys	1.1[b]	2.2[a]	2-3
Perching in stalls	0.5[b]	1.4[a]	7.10
Drinking	0.3	0.4	0.5
Outside the pen			2.5-3.5

[a,b]Means within a row are statistically significant.

Challenges in the Time Budget Balance

It is clear cows need to accomplish certain behavioral activities each day, and we cannot allow management routines to interfere. The five most common reasons time budgets become unbalanced include:

1. **Prolonged time in the milking parlor.** If cows are to require 12 hours for lying time, no more than 2.8 hours can be spent outside the pen. From a facility perspective, this means cows must be managed in holding pens and milking parlors in a time-efficient manner. In many cases travel and milking time can exceed five hours per day, which can be a big stressor, especially for lame cows. Lame cows take longer to get to and from the parlor and longer trips to the parlor can increase incidences of lameness. Providing quality rubber flooring in walkways and holding pens may be helpful; however, they cannot make up for wasted time away from the freestall barn.
2. **Overstocking in pens, competition for stalls.** Heavy overstocking can decrease lying time, but research shows stocking density must rise above 1.2 stalls per cow for lying time to decline.
3. **Poor stall design.** Stall design often fails to support lying and rising movements or provide a cushioned surface to encourage more than 10 hours of lying per day. Sand remains the gold standard for stall base since it supplies traction and supports the weight-bearing limb rising during the rising and lying movements.
4. **Inadequate heat abatement.** In hot temperatures cows spend less time lying down and more time in the alley under fans and soakers. Provide cows with natural ventilation where possible, lower stocking density in breeding pens, have sufficient fans and soakers in holding areas and keep animals in the holding pen for a shorter period of time.
5. **Excessive time spent in lock-ups.** Keeping cows in lock-ups at the feedbunk for extended periods of time can be detrimental to daily time budgets. It is recommended cows are not locked up for more than two hours per day, assuming one of the hours coincides with fresh feed delivery.

Linking Budgets & Breeding

Many different factors influence reproduction, and cow comfort is one of them. Managing time budgets effectively translates to reproductive performance.

- **The cow comes first.** While a multitude of management tasks must be completed each day, understanding and following the cow's time budgets is important.
- **Timely daily activities.** Rather than guessing how much time it takes you to complete tasks such as milking or how long cows are locked up for herd health checks, record start and stop times of these activities to measure the actual length of activities interfering with natural time budgets.
- **Watch the budget in action.** Track one pen of animals for a day and record how their day is spent. Use this information to help improve your cow comfort program and ultimately lead to improved on-farm reproduction.

-Dairy Cattle Reproductive Council

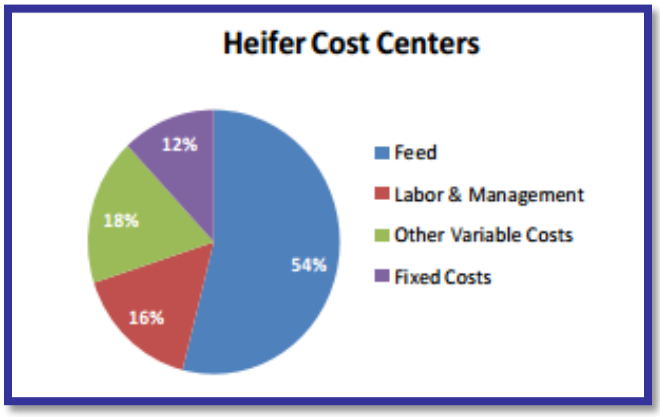
Cost of Raising Dairy Replacements 2015

Raising dairy replacements continues to be expensive. The cost of raising calves and heifers is often the second highest expenditure on dairy farms after milking herd feed costs. In 2013, costs were determined using data collected by UW-Extension agriculture agents from 36 dairy farms and custom calf and heifer growers across the state. However, in the past 2 years costs have changed especially lower feed cost and higher calf value.

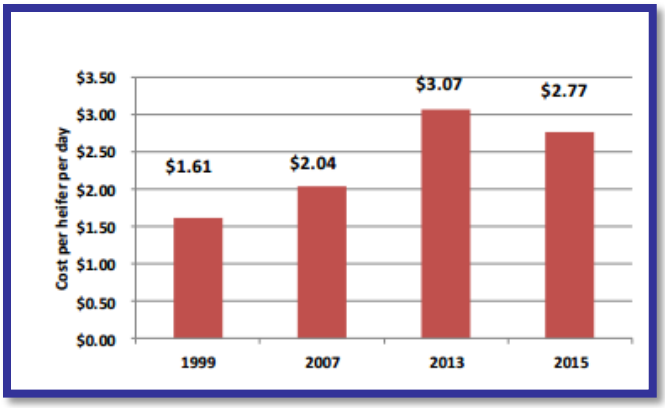
The Heifer Enterprise

Since 2013, feed costs have decreased significantly leading to feed costs decreasing from $1,046 per heifer ($1.71 per day) to $910 per heifer ($1.37 per day) in 2015. Labor and management were the next largest expense at $342 per heifer ($0.53 per day). Other variable costs were approximately $278 per heifer ($0.44 per day) and were similar to 2013 costs with slightly lower interest costs due to lower feed costs, but higher death loss costs due to higher calf value in 2015. Fixed costs averaged $217 per heifer ($0.32 per day).

The average cost for raising a dairy heifer from weaning to freshening (or returned to the dairy by custom grower) in 2015 was $1,736 per heifer or $2.77 per day (range was $2.04 to $4.32 per heifer per day) which is 10% lower compared to 2013 ($1914 per heifer).



Costs associated with raising heifers from weaning until freshening (or when returned from grower) based on the UW-Extension field surveys:



Applications Sought for 2016 Dairy 30 x 20 Grants

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP) are seeking applications for the next round of *Grow Wisconsin Dairy 30 x 20 producer grants*. The Grow Wisconsin Dairy Grant is a flexible grant available to producers to facilitate operational changes, improve profitability, and increase efficiency.

The Grow Wisconsin Grant strives to improve the long-term viability of Wisconsin's Dairy Industry. Recipients of this grant can be awarded as much as $5,000 and would be required to pay a cost share of 20 percent of the total grant awarded.

This grant is designed to provide access to services and resources for proposed dairy farm projects that enhance or develop the current business and/or solve an existing problem or concern on the farm. Customized to meet the needs of individual farms, this grant can be applied to hire consultants with a range of expertise to address specific business needs.

Applications are due to DATCP by December 18th. Application materials and additional information can be found at http://datcp.wi.gov/Farms/Dairy_Farming/index.aspx.

DAIRY 30 20

Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD)

If you are a producer who uses medicated feed for prevention or treatment of disease in livestock, you should be aware of the updated Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD). The VFD is not new as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) ruling was originally issued on December 8, 2000. The goals of the VFD are to:

- Promote judicious use of antibiotics
- Protect public health
- Help limit the development of antimicrobial resistance

The revisions made to the VFD on June 2, 2015 will take effect on October 1, 2015, and you may notice the implications of the revisions when trying to purchase medicated feed. Under the FDA revisions, all medically important antimicrobial medications will be used under appropriate veterinary supervision. The affected medically important antimicrobial products are:

Penicillins	Tetracyclines
Cephalosporin	Macrolides
Quinolones	Sulfas
Fluoroquinolones	Glycopeptides

In order to have a valid VFD, you will need to work with your veterinarian with whom you have established a valid veterinarian-client-patient relationship. This veterinarian will examine and diagnose the animal disease condition and determine if the use of a VFD is necessary. The veterinarian issued written VFD will be needed for anyone who would like to purchase feed containing ingredients which are medically important such as on the above list. Records will need to be maintained by the veterinarian, feed distributor/supplier and the producer.

This is a departure of previous practice and will take time to establish; however, the FDA has mandated the deadline for VFD compliance is December 2016. Now is the time to start the conversation with your veterinarian and feed distributor/supplier about the logistics of the VFD rule.

This is only a brief synopsis of the VFD.

Dairy Cattle Hoof Care Seminar-December 9th

Foot health and lameness are major issues facing today's dairy producers. To help aid with these issues, UW-Extension will be hosting a **Dairy Cattle Hoof Care Seminar** on Wednesday, December 9, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm, Liberty Hall in Kimberly, WI.

The dairy cattle hoof care seminar is sponsored by UW-Extension with financial and "in-kind" support from Appleton Steel Hoof Trimming, Midwestern Hoof Care, UW-Madison School of Veterinary Medicine, and Zinpro. The fee for the program is $35 per person which includes materials and lunch. Registration is due December 2 to the UW-Extension Calumet County Office.

For more information regarding the program or registration, please visit the calendar at http://fyi.uwex/edu/fdlag. Or contact UW-Extension Calumet County Agriculture Eric Ronk at eric.ronk@uwex.edu.

The agenda includes:

- **Footbaths: A Problem Solution or a Solution to Your Problem**, Roger Olson, Zinpro Midwest Dairy Specialist
- **Digital Dermatitis in Dairy Cattle**, Dorte Dopfer, PhD, UW-School of Veterinarian Medicine
- **Hoof Trimming 101, Blocking & Wrapping Demonstration**, Roger Olson, Zinpro and Aaron LaVoy, Midwest Hoof Care, LLC
- **Hoof Trimming Records**, Sarah Mills-Lloyd, DVM, and Eric Ronk, UW-Extension

Temporary Corn Grain Storage Tips

Due to high yields in some areas of Wisconsin, farmers are searching for temporary grain storage options this year. Picking sites that are elevated and have good drainage is the key to storing grain on the ground. The risk of crop loss is higher when grain is stored on the ground then in bins, so ground piles should be considered short-term storage and monitored frequently.

The success of storing grain on the ground depends on a combination of variables that can be controlled, such as site preparation, storage design, use of aeration and storage management, and factors that can't, such as the weather.

Advice for preventing crop loss:

- Select a site that's elevated, has good drainage and is large enough to accommodate the volume of crop being stored and has roughly 130 feet of turnaround space for trucks dropping off the grain.
- Prepare a pad for the grain to rest on by mixing lime, fly ash or cement in the soil to prevent soil moisture from wetting the grain. Make a concrete or asphalt pad if the site will be used for several years.
- Create a crown in the middle of the pad with a gradual slope away from the center for water drainage. Also make sure the area around the pad drains well.
- Run piles north and south to allow the sun to dry the sloping sides.
- Build a retaining wall to increase storage capacity.
- Place only cool (less than 60^0F), dry, clean grain on the ground. Maximize pile size to reduce the ratio of grain on the surface, which is exposed to potential weather damage, to the total grain volume.
- Build the pile uniformly for maximum grain surface slope and avoid creating hills, valleys, folds and crevices that will collect water.
- Form the pile quickly and cover it immediately to minimize its exposure to moisture, wind and birds.
- Install an aeration system to cool the grain so its temperature is uniform and equal to the average outdoor temperature. Cool temperatures minimize mold growth, limit moisture movement and control insects.
- Check grain temperatures and moisture content at several locations in the pile every two to three weeks.
- Frequently check the pile's cover for rodent-caused perforations, damage from wind or ice, worn spots and vandalism, and make repairs.
- Inspect retaining walls for separation or movement at the connections and deterioration of the materials in the walls. Also make sure wall anchors still are holding.
- When removing the grain, load it from the center of the pile to prevent uneven pressure on the retaining wall.
- Try to separate spoiled grain from the pile to limit the amount of grain that needs cleaning, drying and blending with other grain stored in outdoor piles.

Producers also have alternatives to piling grain on the ground, such as storing grain in empty barns and pole buildings used for machinery storage. Here are some tips when using these buildings:

- Make sure the site is well-drained.
- Strengthen buildings to support the pressure of the stored grain. Most buildings were not designed or built to withstand any pressure on the walls.
- Check with the building's manufacturer on how deep to fill the structure with grain.

-Joe Lauer
Corn Agronomist
UW-Extension & UW-Madison, Department of Agronomy

Fond du Lac County
227 ADMINISTRATION/EXTENSION BUILDING
400 UNIVERSITY DRIVE
FOND DU LAC WI, 54935

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
FOND DU LAC WI 54935
PERMIT 110

Return Service Requested

UW-Extension Agriculture Calendar of Events

DECEMBER

3	PQA Plus Certification, UW-Fond du Lac, Room AE-205/206, 6:30 pm
7	Area Soil, Water & Nutrient Management Meeting, UW-Extension Dodge County, Juneau, 10 am to 3 pm
8	Area Soil, Water & Nutrient Management Meeting, Millhome Supper Club, Kiel, 10 am to 3 pm
9	UW-Extension Dairy Team "These Hooves Are Made for Walking", Liberty Hall, Kimberly
10-11	SNAP+ Software Nutrient Management Training, UW-Fond du Lac Room AE-205/206, 10 am to 3 pm
15	Fond du Lac County Holstein Association Scholarship Applications due
17	Fond du Lac County Forage Council Dairy-Forage Day, UW-Fond du Lac, Room UC-113/114, 11am to 2:30pm
31	Fond du Lac County Holstein Breeders Association "Herd Builder" Applications due to UW-Extension

JANUARY

2	Fond du Lac County Market Livestock Project Initial Beef Weigh-in & Identification, Fond du Lac County Fairgrounds, 10 am to 12 noon
5	Agronomy Update, UW-Fond du Lac, Room UC-113/114, 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm
12-14	Dairy Business Association Dairy Strong Conference, Monona Terrace, Madison
12-14	Wisconsin Crop Management Conference, Alliant Energy Center, Madison
20	Shifting Gears for Your Later Years Farm Retirement Meeting, Pizza Ranch, Waupun, 9:30 am-3:30 pm
25-27	Midwest Forage Association Conference, Chula Vista, Wisconsin Dells

We are on the web! Visit us at http://fyi.uwex.edu/fdlag