

LINWOOD VETERINARY SERVICES PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION

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March 2006 Newsletter

General

Thanks to everyone who attended our Linwood Agriculture Day. We were very pleased with the turn out. This event has evolved from an opportunity for customers to get a deal on product into a day of ideas and information exchange. We look forward to next year and hope to have an exciting and informative 2007 Linwood Agriculture Day.

Rabies on the Farm!

Due to the unusually warm weather we have had this winter, wild animals that should be hibernating are actively roaming. There has been an increased number of domestic animals diagnosed with rabies, particularly around Belwood and Owen Sound. This deadly disease can infect all mammals, including cattle, horses, dogs, cats and humans, and there is no cure. Clinical signs can vary and they include: increased aggression, excessive salivation, excessive vocalization, inability to stand, hind-end or tail paralysis, lameness, dull mental status, "yawning" (vocalizing without producing noise), other abnormalities of the nervous system. Treatment will not result in any improvement and the animal will die within a few days. If you suspect you have an animal that may have rabies, contact the clinic or the Canadian Food Inspection Agency for advice immediately. Minimize direct contact with the animal, particularly its saliva or blood. If you must handle the animal, wear gloves and eye protection and wash with soap and water afterwards. Keep children well away from suspicious animals. To minimize the risk of rabies on your farm, vaccinate all dogs, cats and horses.

Calf, Kid and Lamb Management!

Hear ye, Hear ye, Calf scours be gone! I can't believe it; finally after nearly 10 years of trying different management tools, the one we have been looking for has been in Finland all the time. Thanks to Dr. Neil Anderson, the idea and technology of *feeding acidified milk* has been brought to Ontario, now I need you to carry it out and report back to me.

All reports from those farmers who have started with this technology across Ontario state that "*it works*"! This does not apply for suckling beef calves, kids, lambs or large hutch feeders. The extreme cold weather and direct sun in the summer do not allow this system to work in hutches. But if you are a hutch feeder and want to try, give me a call and we can do a trial somewhere on your farm this summer, you will fall in love with this system. Why? Because one, it reduces the labour of having to feed calves/kids/lambs at a set time in the morning and a set time in the evening. You have a set time in the day to replenish the milk. It will reduce scours, and calves/kids/lambs will grow like they would if they were suckling a cow, but with reduced scour risks! Thirdly, you will wean a bigger calf/kid/lamb and earlier. With the 3% quota cut (dairy cows), you are bound to have some extra milk, why not feed it to calves who will drink 10.0 to 14.0 litres a day when left to free access milk. A timed-video camera showed last summer that calves drink on average 7.0 times a day for 7 minutes at a time. This is much different from the two times a day and two minute feeding where the calves slug themselves! You can feed milk replacer, in fact a large veal farm in Finland designed a system which pumped the milk through lines with nipples on the lines so that large numbers of calves can drink (over 1000 in this case, I believe), sanitizing it like a tie-stall milk line.

What are our recommendations? These are the basics. Call for an information sheet.

1. Feed to 2.0 litres of freshly harvested colostrum within 2 to 4 hours after calving or just after calving. Take the rest of the colostrum, acidify it and leave the calf to drink free choice acidified colostrum for 1 to 2 days.
2. Then put the calf in the regular group pen with acidified milk, group calves 6 to 9.
3. Bed really well, they will drink and they will urinate.
4. Purchase Formic Acid from Norwell or Connestoga Dairy or your milk equipment supplier. I have all the details on mixing the acid.
5. Feed at room temperature in the summer (out of direct sunlight) and warm to 20 C in the winter.
6. Mix the night before, stir in the am, pour into the garbage bucket holding the milk, and stir a few hours later and possibly once again. It is good for on average 48 hours. So, feed calves at 1:00 pm every other day.
7. Make sure you check calves everyday, yes they can and will still get sick but at a much reduced rate.
8. It is cheap to try, garbage bucket, 7/16 clear plastic lines, special nipples found at Norwell, some 2 X 4s, bucket heater(do not put directly into milk) and away we go!

Swine

The swine presentation at our Ag day was titled Sustainable Pig Farming. The main point was that farmers should critically look at what pig production adds to or subtracts from their bottom line. In our local herds Farrow to finish is a very good production option but we need to at least partition production by air space. The keys to success are: Productivity + Health + competitive cost of production = profitability. The other option presented was segmented production. We have over 20 people who have requested more information on nursery or wean-finish barn options. The process is slow but we have had a good response from the OSHAB (Opic Swine Health Advisory Board). Customers have requested a copy of the Thumbnail Budget presented at Ag Day so here it is:

• Sow feed cost/year	\$235.00
• Feed cost from 5-25kg	\$13.00/pig
• Feed cost from 25-112kg	#55.00/pig
Estimated feed cost/market hog: \$83.00	
Industry estimate of cost of Production (C.O.P.)	
• 60% feed cost	\$83.00
• 20% facility	\$27.67
• 10% labour	\$13.83
• 10% other	<u>\$13.83</u>
	\$138.33 C.O.P.

Local small sow herds assume lower facility costs etc. therefore Realistic Profit.

50 sows F-F, 16 pigs/sow/year marketed av. \$20.00 profit/pig therefore 16,000 av./year profit

vs. 1200 space nursery

\$200.00/pig space capital cost = \$240,000.00

6.5 turns/year at \$7.00/pig space = 54,600.00 gross income

minus: \$24,000.00 interest + principal cost

minus \$9,750.00 heat + hydro

= \$20,850.00/year profit

We have no agenda regarding these building options. We will continue to provide information as it is generated and continue to help producers achieve the keys to success.

Productivity + Health + Competitive cost of production = Profitability

