

Topic of the Month

A Case for DHIA Testing

With the decline in milk prices and the narrowing of the gap between feed and milk price, many dairymen are looking for ways of cutting costs. Recently I met with a dairyman who questioned the value of being on DHIA and using PC Dart to aid in managing his farm. We reviewed his records and discovered two records he could access and utilize to save much more money than his DHIA testing was costing him. On Report 004, which lists cows producing less than 35#, we found 4 cows that were producing less than 20 pounds that were open. These cows need to be culled. Feeding and managing these cows is costing more than the 20# of milk is worth. On report 032 we found that four cows had somatic cell counts of over one million for the last two months. The dairyman was not aware that these four cows were contributing over half the somatic cells to his total somatic cell count in the bulk tank. Having these and other PC Dart records arm this dairyman with the tools to make better management decisions. If you are on DHIA and would like assistance in utilizing these tools, please talk to your herd veterinarian.

Commodity Futures

Source: CME

Corn(May) as of Apr 30	\$3.62
Soybeans(May) as of Apr 30	\$9.78
Soybean meal(May) as of Apr 30	\$318.90
Cheese (May) as of Apr 30	\$1.65
Class III(May) as of Apr 30	\$16.22
Class III(June)as of Apr 30	\$16.34
Class III(July) as of Apr 30	\$16.45

Practice News

Starting June 1 of this year we will be adding a new veterinarian to our staff. Sarah Pickett from nearby Laytonsville Maryland (in western Maryland), who owns some cattle of her own, has spent considerable time in our practice. She externed for three weeks with us during her third year year and returned to spend four weeks with us as part of her forth year food animal rotation. We hope you will join us in welcoming Sarah and her husband Chris to our practice and to Somerset County.

In The News

Drug Residue Testing in Milk Likely to Increase

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) along with state health regulators approved a process this week that will likely increase testing for drug residues in milk. The action was taken at the National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments (NCIMS) held in Portland, Ore.

NCIMS, comprised of state health departments and the FDA, regulate the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO), which establishes rules for interstate shipment of Grade A milk. It meets once every two years to consider changes to the PMO.

The reasons for increased testing were varied, including drug residues found in an FDA survey of nearly 2,000 U.S. dairy farms that was released earlier this spring. See [“FDA finds U.S. milk supply safe”](#) in our April issue.

In that survey, FDA found 16 residues on 15 farms. The violation rate was just 0.7%, but large enough to cause concern that a few dairy farmers are still using antibiotics illegally or not paying attention to withholding periods.

The FDA survey screened for drugs other than Beta-lactams, which already are tested for in every tanker load of milk. Florfenicol accounted for 10 of the 16 violation levels. It is not approved for dairy cattle older than 20 months of age.