

Topic of the Month

Fall Harvest

It seems like summer just started, but believe it or not, the corn will be ready to chop for silage soon-hopefully. From the cow's perspective, here are a couple of things to keep in mind.

Feeding green chop corn is a little risky. Especially after a rain, there is likely to be elevated nitrates in the plant and if fed before ensiling, it can be toxic to the cow. The ensiling process destroys the nitrates.

Feeding fermenting corn silage, as opposed to fermenter corn silage is risky as well. Every year, we see a spike in twisted stomach cases in cows fed green corn silage. It is usually hot, stinky and unpalatable. Most of the time there will be a drop in production and quite possibly, even a dip in reproduction.

Most of the time, at least 2 weeks of fermentation is necessary to get past the worst of it and the longer the better. If possible, store some early corn silage into a bag 3 weeks before chopping the rest. Even better, plan ahead for next year and find a way to have a well fermented source of corn silage available for a month or so after the last fields are chopped. The cows will appreciate it.

Commodity Futures

Source: CME

Corn(Sept) as of Aug 29	\$3.59
Soybeans(Sept) as of Aug 29	\$10.89
Soybean meal(Sept) as of Aug 29	\$439.50
Cheese (Oct) as of Aug 29	\$2.20
Class III(Aug) as of Aug 29	\$22.24
Class III(Sept) as of Aug 29	\$23.95
Class III(Oct) as of Aug 29	\$22.87

Practice News

- We are now offering on farm IVF services through Semex's lab in Wisconsin. Any bull can be used and any living Semex bull, beef or dairy, is available sexed for IVF. Call for more details.

In The News

Nestlé raises cattle welfare standards for suppliers *from progressivedairy.com*

Nestlé has signed a partnership agreement with World Animal Protection (WAP), which will require Nestlé's suppliers to comply with WAP's animal welfare standards.

According to the Nestlé press release Aug. 21, the agreement will impose stricter animal welfare standards at all farms that supply Nestlé with dairy, meat, poultry and egg products.

The announcement comes just eight months after pizza-making company DiGiorno, a Nestlé property, cut ties with a Wisconsin dairy accused of animal rights abuses. An undercover video released by Mercy for Animals in December 2013 showed workers abusing cows at Weise Brothers Farms near Green Bay, Wisconsin.

The new Nestlé Commitment on Farm Animal Welfare (PDF, 1.4MB) recognizes the "Five Freedoms" of animals: freedom from hunger, thirst and malnutrition, freedom from fear and distress, freedom from physical and thermal discomfort, freedom from pain, injury and disease, and freedom to express normal patterns of behavior.

For cattle, Nestlé wants suppliers to stop "dehorning, tail docking, disbudding and castration without anesthetic and analgesia, veal crates, (and) permanent tethering." Nestlé's general guidelines for livestock will focus on "the responsible use of antibiotics, in line with (World Organization for Animal Health)'s guidance, and the phasing out of the use of growth promoters."

Nestlé's guidelines reference the World Organization for Animal Health's Terrestrial Animal Health Code, chapter 6.9, which requires antimicrobial agents to be used only under a veterinarian's prescription, even as a feed additive.

Upcoming Events

- Somerset County Holstein Sale September 5 11 AM Hillmont Farms Berlin, PA