

IMPACT

University of Idaho
Extension

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Hoof Care Workshop in English and Spanish

The Situation

Milk is the number one revenue generator on a dairy operation. However, there are many different factors that can impair milk production, and thereby reduce profits. One of these factors is lameness. Lameness in dairy cows reduces dry matter intake, which lowers milk production by an average of almost 800 pounds in a 305-day lactation (2). Lameness can also increase the number of days open by an average of 28 days (4) and increase the culling risk by 30% (1). In dairies studied in the northeastern United States, lameness resulted in a 2% death rate, and it was estimated that the overall cost per case of lameness was an average of \$378 (3). The 2008 Idaho Agricultural Statistics reports there were 382,500 head of dairy cattle that had calved in South Central Idaho in 2007. The amount of money that could be lost due to lameness and its side effects has the potential to add up to a significant loss.

Our Response

The University of Idaho and Zinpro Performance Minerals® teamed together to address the lameness issue in dairy herds, by conducting a Hoof Care Workshop. This workshop was a 1 day event held in both English and Spanish at a producer's facility in late November 2007, at Jerome, Idaho. The first half of the workshop was lecture based and included presentations on the economics of lameness, the overall anatomy of the hoof, diseases associated with laminitis, diseases associated with infection, hoof and claw care (claw trimming and foot baths), effects of nutrition on hoof health, cow comfort, record keeping for lameness, and locomotion scoring to determine lameness. The workshop concluded with a demonstration on locomotion scoring and

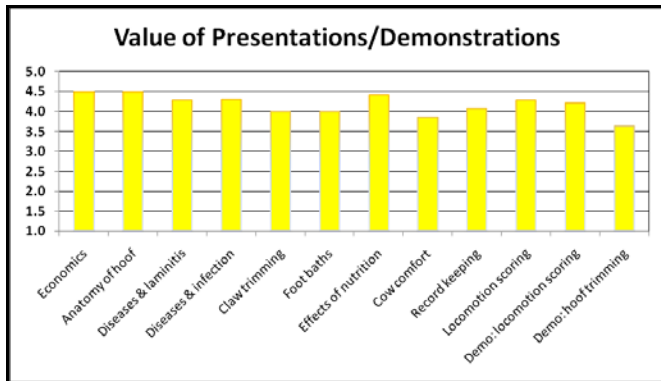
hoof trimming, where the participants received some hands-on experience and were able to try out the new techniques they were taught in the lectures.



Program Outcomes

On the first day 23 people attended the English version of the Hoof Care Workshop. On the second day there were 20 Hispanics in attendance for the Spanish presentation of the workshop. Follow-up surveys were conducted in English and Spanish to assess the value of the workshop and what the participants had implemented as a result. Fourteen of the 43 surveys were returned (8 from the English workshop, and 6 from the Spanish workshop).

The overall value of the workshop was 4.2 on a 1 to 5 scale (1 being of little value and 5 being of great value). On the following page is a chart of the individual presentations and demonstrations and how the participants valued each.



However, the greatest impact is what the participants took back to the dairy and implemented from the workshop. Some comments received from the surveys were:

- “Now we are doing better washing and hoof (claw) trimming.”
- “The bandage now is removed at the time indicated.”
- “We are paying more attention to the walking and claw disorders of cows.”
- “Thanks for the information that I received in this course, I can better understand the owner’s explanations that he gives about claw problems in his cows.”

Many people emphasized the connection they made between cow nutrition and hoof health, such as the amount of fiber in the ration affecting the amount of cud chewing, and ultimately hoof health. Others commented on the importance of detecting problems early on, diagnosing them, and therefore providing the correct treatment.



The information from this Hoof Care Workshop provided the education and resources for dairy

employees and hoof trimmers to address issues that affect the bottom line of dairies across South Central Idaho. From the responses received from the participants’ surveys, it has been demonstrated that the information was valuable and practices have been changed or initiated to deal with lameness by treating the problem, and not just the symptoms. In the end, this educational program will increase the revenues for the dairies through increased milk production, decreased days open, decreased death loss, cows staying on the dairy longer, and reducing the number of culls.

Sources: (1) Cramer, G., K. Lissemore, D. Kelton, C. Guard, & K. Leslie. 2006. The association between hoof lesions and culling risk in Ontario dairy cows. AABP Proceedings. 39:242. (2) Green, L. E., V. J. Hedges, Y. H. Schukken, R. W. Blowey, & A. J. Packington. 2002. The impact of clinical lameness on the milk yield of dairy cows. J. Dairy Sci. 85:2250-2256. (3) Guard, C. 2006. Quantification and the associated cost of lameness on today’s dairies. AABP Proceedings. 39:144-146. (4) Lee, L. A., J. D. Ferguson, & D. T. Galligan. 1989. Effect of disease on days open assessed by survival analysis. J. Dairy Sci. 72:1020-1026.

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