

Vol. 36 No. 340

June 2021

Hello Summer!

The other weekend I was on call driving around our beautiful countryside, and it appeared like all southwestern Ontario smelled like manure! What welcome sights (and smells!) this time of year holds... longer days, green growth bursting forth from the land, animals out on pasture, and the sweet smell of fresh cut hay.

As the hustle and bustle of fieldwork continues into these long, hot summer days, let us not forget the creatures under our care and the summer stressors they experience. In this newsletter, I will briefly review heat abatement, fly control and mastitis prevention.

Heat abatement

A dip in a pool, lake or pond, and then sitting in the shade with a gentle breeze and a tall, cold glass of iced tea is my idea of cooling down on a summer day! This might not quite be feasible for our livestock, but we can provide shade, air movement and refreshing water for them. It is one thing to have shade and fans in a dairy barn, but for animals out on pasture shade is also very important. Our calves, heifers and dry cows must also not be forgotten when it comes to heat abatement. If you ever aren't sure of the air quality for a group of animals, get in the pen at their level and see what it feels like.

In our humid Ontario summers, a mist is not enough to cool an animal down. They need larger size droplets of water (a good soak!) and then air movement to evaporate those water droplets off them. Soakers in holding areas or at a feed bunk can help cool animals.

Fly control

Are you noticing animals more frequently kicking off the milkers or not laying down as much? Flies can cause animals to be significantly agitated and decrease production. Oilers, sprays, tapes, pour-ons... you name it there are a ton of different products that could be used; however, a clean environment and air movement would be my top factors for fly control. Where there is livestock, we are bound to have flies, but keeping stalls, pens, and alleyways clean along with good ventilation will drastically help in reducing the burden of flies around the animals. Again, don't forget the youngstock where flies and maggots can appear quite quickly in their pens and on open wounds and scouring backends. Please talk to your veterinarian about specific products that could be used on your farm for additional fly control.

Mastitis prevention

Bacteria love to grow in warm, humid environments (also known as Ontario summers!). E. coli and Klebsiella are two common environmental mastitis pathogens found on farms and may have quite devastating effects. It can cause a watery mastitis, often a hot swollen quarter, and potentially a fever and systemic illness. Most often, it is our fresh cows that are most susceptible and is more frequently seen in summer months. Clean, dry bedding and walkways and appropriate milking procedures are critical. Using a teat sealant at dry off is also beneficial and ensuring it is administered with a clean and proper technique. Finally, there are vaccines available that significantly reduce the severity of illness and death loss due to environmental mastitis. If you have noted a few cases of watery mastitis in the past couple years, it would be worth talking to your veterinarian about the vaccines and to develop a protocol for your farm.

May you, your family and your creatures have a happy and healthy summer!

Dr. Chantal

Fly Control Have you heard the buzz?

Large animal technicians are now offering fly prevention in combination with dehorning services. Ask your large animal tech for more information!



Upcoming stat holidays

The clinic will be closed Canada Day Weekend, July 1st – 3rd. As always, veterinarians will be available 24-7 for emergency service. The Saturday fee schedule will remain unchanged from non-stat weekends.

