

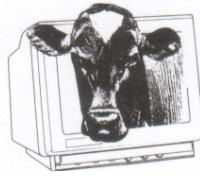


August 2014

Manitoba Dairy Farm Management Group

We mean business

Volume 17 No. 3



Incorporating Cow Comfort into the barn and the budget

MDFMG Board of Directors

Josh Verhoog

Chair 204 429 3248

Albert Wolfe

204 424 5271

Dave Plett

Sec. 204 377 5075

Dominique Chartier

Treas. 204 347 5690

John Georgison

204 633 1055

In this issue:

Cow Comfort **1**

Safety Tips. **1**

OPEN meeting **1**

Wed. 26th Nov

Consultant's **2**

Comments

Producer Profile **2**

Cow comfort is a hot topic currently — and rightly so.

Many producers over the last few years have successfully altered stall dimensions to try to integrate greater cow comfort in the knowledge that comfort, combined with other improved management strategies, will likely generate greater production.

Many of the old barns with cramped accommodation have been replaced with a more modern facility that has a greater degree of cow comfort. (others are vacant) Even barns built 20 ago have already made alter-

tions to stall size and in some cases the feed bunk.

Given that animal welfare regulations (DFC proAction) requires producers to attain a certain standard, is there cash available?

The answer has to be "Yes".

The industry knows and the lenders know that greater comfort generally brings greater production - as long as the main management criteria, including a well balanced diet, are in place.

Animal welfare issues have to be addressed.

When building a new facility, it is easier to combine these specifics into the overall de-

sign, but then the issue becomes; how many other bells & whistles can be included? In every case there are financial constraints that need to be considered.

Cow comfort goes beyond stall size and choice of bedding material. An automated feed system together with some form of robotic milking system probably falls under the ultimate description of cow comfort. That should result in a contented cow.

Other facility types can attain an acceptable level of comfort without necessarily spending nearly so much.

Its all down to the budget!

Safety Tips - Farm equipment on the highways

Summer is the time of the year when we see holiday traffic on the roads, but also when we have the highest concentration of farm machinery traveling from field to farm, or even field to field. Most of this is harvest machinery or trucks

moving the grain.

But, there will also be huge cultivating and seeding equipment moving along our highways. A few tips:

Please be considerate to other road users.

Allow other road users as much room as possible.

Ensure all the warning lights and hazards are operating properly.

You can relate to the size of your equipment; other road users likely will not.

Take extra care when making a left turn; many drivers seem to want to overtake, no matter how big the risk!

Dairynotes Sponsor

Linda Horner 204 371 2376

Marv Kehler 204 392 5014

Edwin Suebzon 519 857 4332

Open meeting Wed 26th November

Tristar will sponsor the first meeting of the 2014/15 winter season, planned for **Wednesday November 26 2014.**

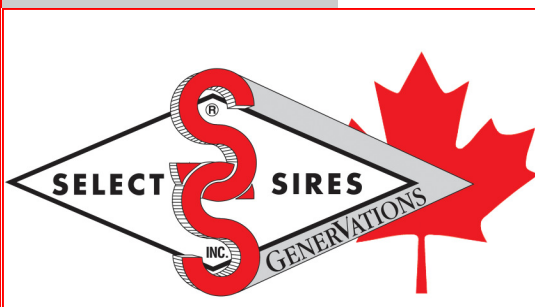
Neal Cohen, the RBC Regional Leasing Manager will be presenting on "Leasing Opportunities in Agriculture".

As well as explaining

the positive effects that leasing can have on a farm's cash flow and income tax position, he will also address both the benefits and disadvantages of leasing against a term loan.

Dennis Dynneson will present on Parlor Performance & the Pursuit of Milk Quality. He has been involved in herd management, cheese factory field service management and has worked for dairy equipment dealerships.

****** To continue to receive MDFMG info emails, please respond to the CASL (mailchimp) email request sent June 30 ******



Dairynotes**Consultant's comments****Vision Statements**

I was able to attend a very valuable face-to-face strategy meeting for the CAFA board of directors in Woodstock, Ontario in early June. As a board we met for a day and a half and then attended the Ontario CAFA conference where over 100 members and guests of the Canadian Association of Farm Advisors listened to some great topics from national ag. advisors.

At our strategy meeting we spent time discussing our **Vision Statement**. That led me to consider the MDFMG vision statement, indicating that we offer producers the opportunity to complete an analysis report with a view to improving efficiencies and

profitability.

My thoughts then turned to **Vision statements** for dairy producers. They are not common in our industry, but after recent negative events, maybe they should be strongly considered as the norm.

Some producers have a written **Vision Statement** that they proudly display in the milkhouse or farm office. Just the fact that such an item is on display, shows that the farm is proud of what they are aiming to achieve. It can have the very positive effect of providing a sense of pride and ownership for employees and a clear message to those visiting.

Some producers engage in educating the general public

in a regular way, by hosting farm tours. Whether these tours are aimed at kindergarten or an adult audience, the message is there. "But kindergarten kids don't read" I hear you respond! No, but their teachers and chaperones do and we as an industry need to portray the positive side of what we do, as often as we can. Those teachers will likely have a huge impact on the kids they teach in the early years of their educational development.

Dairynotes sponsor

Thanks to **Select Sires/Generations** for sponsoring this newsletter for the next 4 issues.

Other **OPEN** meetings
Wed. February 11 2015
Wed. March 18 2015



Roger Mills CAFA
Dairy Business Consultant

Home: 204 326 6332
Cell: 204 371 7526
roger@millmount.ca
www.millmount.ca



Kathy Friesen ACA
AgExpert Certified Advisor
KpF Business Solutions

Home 204 377 4138
Cell 204 371 0984
kathy@friecrest.ca

We enjoy being a part of the MDFMG. It helps us to network with and learn more by talking to other like-minded producers.

The annual analysis reports identify the strengths and weaknesses of our operation. We can then work towards making adjustments to improve our efficiencies and maintain, or even improve, our level of profitability.

Marc & Debbie

Lactaria Holsteins - La Broquerie

The De Klein family moved from the Netherlands to their present location in 1983. Marc & Debbie and their 3 children currently manage the farm where 160 cows are milked through 3 VMS units, which were retro fitted into the existing barn in 2008. The facility also houses the pre-weaned calves.

A new heifer facility was built in 2010/11 which houses all the youngstock and at the same time eases the heifer management. This facility is helping the operation to work towards reducing the age at first calving.

With only 2 full-time employees and some part-time help in the summer, the operation is very labor efficient. 900 acres are cropped, sup-

plying all the forage and hi-moisture corn for the livestock as well as dry corn and soybeans sold as cash crops. The cows and youngstock are fed TMR diets consisting of hay, haylage, corn silage, hi-moist corn and a mineralized supplement.

The farm both registers and classifies with Holstein Canada, as well as using DHI and additional data from the VMS units for herd management purposes.

The manure is stored in a concrete structure and is utilized as a major nutrient on the corn crop, being applied by a custom operator.

The farm owns seeding equipment but works together with a neighbor harvesting the crops. Lactaria supply a triple discbine unit

and 2 silage trucks with drivers, while the neighbor supplies the SP f/harvester and combine.

This makes for efficient harvesting with both parties having less capital tied up in equipment assets and subsequently reduced machinery costs.

