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Livestock Biosecurity



How do you treat your **BEER**???

By: Tim Richards, DVM



Okay, now that we have your attention, there is a point... One of the most important and least obvious biosecurity measures involves how we handle livestock vaccines.

We can completely destroy a vaccine by storing and handling it poorly yet to our eye it looks fine. We use it and then *think* we have done a good job processing when in truth we have done little or nothing to protect our herd.

How many times have you gone to a branding or a weaning and looked at the coolers? How many times have you seen the beer kept in a brand new one? Bottles covered up to the neck with ice? Maybe aligned so each brand of beer is grouped? And then we look at the ice chest that contains the vaccine... Old, cracked, with (or without?) a lid. Ice? Maybe...but probably not much. Okay, this tells us where our priorities are, but we are not doing what we should.

Vaccines are fragile. They need to be treated with great care or we will destroy them and thus their effectiveness. This is especially true of the modified live vaccines (MLVs). Remember, these are the ones that are in suspended animation (the freeze-dried powder and fluid that are mixed right before use). They depend on actually being alive and growing to work. The problem is once mixed up they only live for a couple of hours (if refrigerated). If left to get warm—much shorter. If stored at room temperature before mixing, tremendously shorter **if it is still alive at all**.

All right, we bought a new cooler and have the vaccine stored correctly. Now we have to administer it. For the toxoids or bacterins vaccine types, (killed, comes ready to use) they go into a clean syringe and used as directed. For the MLV, we have to mix them but mix them as needed; not all at once. You may save a little time by mixing ahead but any advantage will be more than lost by the deterioration of the vaccine.

Again, do you open all your beers at once, set them out on the fence and drink them one by one while they get warm and flat? No. Most of us keep them as cold as possible as long as possible and only open them right before we are ready for them. The point again? Treat your vaccine like your beer and the quality of what you do will go way up. Oh yeah, beer has a “born-on” date, a vaccine has a “expiration date” - check-it out.



Finally, at the end of the day when we're actually ready for your beer, any left over vaccine, or opened or mixed bottles, should be disposed of. You wouldn't save a half bottle of beer; the same holds true for vaccine. The few dollars you lose in wasted vaccine are nothing compared to the value of the cattle vaccinated with nonfunctional vaccine. *If you wouldn't do it to your beer, don't do it to your vaccine.*

Comments from the *Back End of a Squeeze Chute* - Herbert M "Tim" Richards III, DVM — Kahua Ranch Ltd., Kamuela, Hawaii

National Animal Identification System

Voluntary Premises Registration Guidelines for Montana Producers

A premises is defined as a location operated by an entity that participates in food animal production and/or commerce that is geographically distinct from other livestock production units.

As the NAIS develops, premises identification numbers will be used to identify all places and animals that have potentially been exposed to an animal disease. The process of animal disease surveillance, containment, and eradication may lead to herd tests, holds on cattle movement and sales, or quarantines of property and animals.

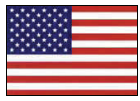
Montana livestock producers who wish to voluntarily register a premises may contact the Department of Livestock at www.mt.gov/liv or call 406-444-9431.



Global Beef News



www.mtbqa.org



USMEF: Economic meltdown hinders U.S. beef exports

Limited credit availability, volatile currency exchange rates and global economic uncertainty will create an uphill climb for U.S. beef exports in many foreign well into next year. U.S. Meat Export Federation international offices report that despite these obstacles, beef products have performed extremely well in 2008, and beef is well-positioned for continued long-term strength.

"We're extremely pleased with the way beef exports performed in the first eight months of the year," says USMEF President and CEO Philip Seng. "But the financial crisis that has plagued us in the past six weeks has obviously had a major impact."



In Japan there will be some slowdown, by Japan is projected to be an extremely steady, consistent beef customer. There, seafood consumption is trending downward, creating opportunities for red meat. The strength of the yen against the U.S. dollar and most other currencies also has enhanced Japan's appetite for imported products. U.S. beef exports are slowed by Japan's policy that limits imports to U.S. beef from cattle 20 months of age or younger. This age limit could be raised to 30 months at some point next year, but this remains a very sensitive and volatile issue in Japan.



U.S. beef has found some success among Korean small retail outlets. The long-term growth opportunities for U.S. beef are extremely bright in Korea, but many challenges must be overcome. South Korea has had a sluggish economy, and the won performed poorly in 2008 versus the U.S. dollar. USMEF says there's no question about the competitiveness of U.S. beef in Korea, but consumer acceptance is the key. Large retailers are still reluctant to sell U.S. beef.



Mexico is currently the largest foreign market for U.S. beef, but the recent devaluation of the peso has caused exports to slow from the record-breaking totals reached earlier in the year. USMEF expects September beef export results to be down about 13% compared to August. The devaluation of the peso is having a big impact in the amount of product flowing to Mexico. There are also problems getting some products across the border, due to tightened and increased inspection operations.



Russia's rapidly emerging market for both U.S. beef and pork has also been slammed by the devaluation of its currency as well as a severe drop in oil revenues and other economic issues. Russia is oversupplied and overstocked. There is a period of correction going on, which could last several months. "In the medium term, Russia is going to be a market of tremendous interest for the U.S, USMEF says.

Beef Study Tour ready to fly . . .

The Montana BQA program in conjunction with BEEF Magazine is sponsoring a Beef Study Tour to BRAZIL.

The Jan 15-26, 2009 tour will focus on beef production systems in Brazil's west-central subtropical regions.

Call us or go to www.mtbqa.org.

Montanans attending:

J.O. Miller & Diana Scollard, Absarokee
Eric & Lea Moore, Miles City
Bill Pelton, Billings
Clint Peck, Billings
Sigrid Pugrud, Billings
Cari Giem, Twin Bridges

Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) programs provide systematic information to U.S. beef producers and beef consumers on common sense husbandry techniques that can be coupled with accepted scientific knowledge to raise cattle and produce beef under optimum management and environmental conditions.

