



New York **Simmental** Assn. Newsletter

VOL 2

April/May 2022

NewYorkSimmental@gmail.com 607-423-4888

www.NewYorkSimmental.com

COMING EVENTS & DEADLINES

April 29-31 - NY Cattle Battle, Dutchess Co.

May 7 - Stars & Stripes Sale, Hershey, PA

May 7 - Trowbridge Bull Sale
NYBPA Herd Builder Sale
Finger Lakes Livestock, Canadaigua

July ? NYSA Summer Picnic/Meeting
Tuckaway Farm
Bryan & Sarah Stocks,
New Woodstock

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PICTURE CONTEST

We need quality pictures for the cover of our 2023 NYSA directory. Maybe we will use yours!

Send a copy of your prize picture to:

Jeanne@SimmeValley.com

It must be high quality. Some of the newer phones have high pixel quality cameras.

Our Officers and Directors will choose our cover picture from the entries.

Minutes of the New York Simmental Association
March 12, 2022

1. President Darryl Bunal called the meeting to order at 1:30. He had everyone introduce themselves.
2. Bryce Schuster made a motion to accept the minutes as printed in the newsletter. Anna Dempko 2nd, passed
3. Shawn Murphy gave a Treasurer's Report. We have \$7,975 in our checking account and the NYJSA has \$7,136. We had some discussion on the report. Phil Paradis made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. Bryan Stocks 2nd, passed.
4. Committee Reports:
 - A. Promotion – Jeanne W set up our pull-up and had newsletters and directories at the Farm Show and Art Reynolds, Elm Side Farm had a heifer on display.
 - B. NY Juniors – Bryan Stocks, Jr Advisor. Announced the Spring Preview is on 4-24, Genesee County; and the Cattle Battle is on 4-29.
 - C. Next newsletter will be end of April. We have new Directories.
 - D. NYSF – Dr Scott Schaaake is set up for our judge.
5. OLD BUSINESS:
 - A. Semen order - 490 units. Shipping charges from Werning was \$275. Saved around \$4500 on total order + cheap shipping (\$0.60/unit)
 - B. FARM SHOW – Elm Side exhibited heifer. This was the 16th year. Hot Beef Sundaes were still a big hit. Only had 1 Simmental heifer and 1 Hereford steer on display.
 - C. Taylor added a member application to our web site.
7. NEW BUSINESS:
 - A. EFD – discussed. NYBPA are NOT going to have a tent again this year. Didn't know if it was worth it for us to organize a tent like last year.
 - B. Bryan Stocks volunteered to have the next picnic/meeting.
 - C. Discussed having a photo contest for our cover of the directory. Officers & Directors will choose winners.
 - D. Bryan Stocks made a motion to adjourn. Phil Paradis 2nd, passed. 2:30pm

Respectfully, Jeanne White, Secretary

YOUR HEIFERS ARE COUNTING ON YOU – AND YOU ARE COUNTING ON YOUR HEIFERS

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7SM93 KOCH BIG TIMBER 6850

3133113 / Yellowstone x Lucky Boy / Purebred / Homo Polled / Home Black

- BIG TIMBER is a proven, big-time calving ease sire who works on a wide array of pedigrees.
- He ranks in the top of the breed for registrations and excels for high API and TI.
- BIG TIMBER has seen lots of use in commercial country due to the multitude of good traits he offers.

From Gibbs Farms Cattle, LLC, AL; Triangle J Ranch, NE and Koch Cattle, MT

	CE	BW	WW	YW	MCE	MILK	MWW	STAY	DOC	CW	YG	MARB	BF	REA	API	TI
EPD	15.8	-4.1	75.6	112.3	7.7	28.9	66.7	15.6	9.9	25.6	-0.2	0.28	-0.042	0.52	152.9	88
Acc	0.84	0.94	0.92	0.91	0.71	0.7	0.76	0.43	0.53	0.79	0.58	0.73	0.64	0.76	-	-
% Rank	5	1	60	60	20	15	30	60	75	65	99	20	99	99	15	15



7SM124 WS ENHANCEMENT 25H

3764886 / Proclamation x Beacon / Purebred / Homo Polled / Home Black

- Wow, what an opportunity! Here's a calving ease prospect with overall presence, correctness and eye appeal.
- One of Proclamation's highest-ranking sons from a balanced Beacon daughter.
- ENHANCEMENT is easily justified as a sire to improve lots of categories in your breeding program.

From Wilkinson Simmentals, ND and Gibbs Farms Cattle, LLC, AL

	CE	BW	WW	YW	MCE	MILK	MWW	STAY	DOC	CW	YG	MARB	BF	REA	API	TI
EPD	16.2	-3.8	84.3	129.6	10.5	34.8	76.9	17.6	15.1	47.4	-0.34	0.83	-0.057	1.12	192.7	108.4
Acc	0.48	0.52	0.51	0.51	0.31	0.24	0.33	0.32	0.31	0.52	0.41	0.48	0.44	0.5	-	-
% Rank	4	1	25	25	2	2	4	40	10	5	90	1	95	10	1	1



7SM97 IR IMPERIAL 0948

3210738 / Imperial x Dual Focus / Purebred / Homo Polled / Red

- IMPERIAL provides a stunning red phenotype and creates balanced, moderate-sized offspring.
- He excels for high API and is among the top in the breed for registrations.
- IMPERIAL's heifer-safe Calving Ease and unique pedigree make him a perfect choice for virgin heifers.

From Irvine Ranch, KS; TNT Simmentals, ND and Schnabel Ranch, SD

	CE	BW	WW	YW	MCE	MILK	MWW	STAY	DOC	CW	YG	MARB	BF	REA	API	TI
EPD	17.8	-3.2	61.7	97.2	9.2	18.1	48.9	19.2	17.1	16	-0.49	0.93	-0.076	1.03	194.1	95.7
Acc	0.8	0.91	0.89	0.88	0.54	0.53	0.61	0.36	0.61	0.69	0.51	0.69	0.52	0.68	-	-
% Rank	2	2	99	90	5	90	99	20	3	95	20	1	75	20	1	4

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE TO ORDER!

EPDs as of 4.1.22



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Estrus Synchronization and the Breeding Season Resources to Review for 2022

Aaron Berger, Nebraska Ext Beef Educator

For most producers the spring breeding season is still a ways off, but now is a good time to review the most current estrus synchronization protocols and develop a plan for this year. There are several Extension resources that can be helpful in preparing for the upcoming breeding season.



The first resource is the [Applied Reproductive Strategies in Beef Cattle](#) website, which can be found at [beefrepro.org](#). The content for this website is developed and maintained by the Beef Reproduction Task Force, a multi-state Extension cooperative. At the website is the current recommended estrus synchronization protocols for both heifers and cows along with several resources related to understanding the estrus cycle in cattle.

The Beef Reproduction Task Force also hosts an annual “Applied Reproductive Strategies in Beef Cattle Symposium.” This event is considered to be the premier national event in beef cattle reproductive management and has a long history of providing the latest information on the application of reproductive technologies. Past proceedings for the event are also available at the website and cover a range of topics related to cowherd reproduction — such as nutritional interactions, management and male fertility. They also are offering monthly webinars that one can sign up for and view live, or later watch the archive.

A second resource is a webinar titled [“Principles for Improving Conception Rates with Estrus Synchronization and AI”](#) by Nebraska Extension Beef Cattle Reproductive Physiologist, Dr. Rick Funston. This webinar is available at [beef.unl.edu](#). The presentation gives an overview of principles to remember and utilize to enhance the likelihood for estrus synchronization and artificial insemination success.

A third resource that is extremely helpful is the [Estrus Synchronization Planner](#) developed and maintained by the [Iowa Beef Center](#). This free Excel® spreadsheet tool can be utilized to help identify the best estrus synchronization protocol based on desired goals. The planner also provides a detailed calendar with the correct products to use along with dates and times based on the selected estrus synchronization protocol. Correctly following an estrus synchronization protocol is critical to success. This planner helps clarify details in an easy to use format.

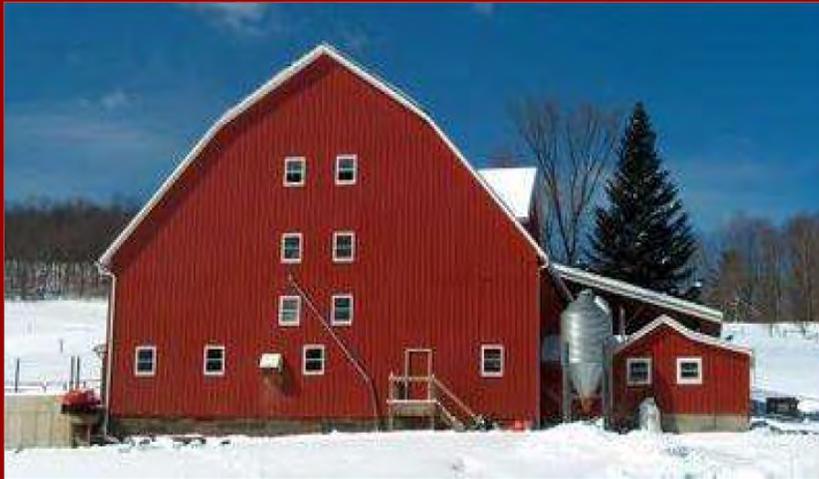
Are you seeking to evaluate the costs and benefits of artificial insemination as compared to natural service? The [Breeding Cost Cow-Q-Lator](#) is an Excel® spreadsheet tool that can assist producers in calculating the costs and value associated with natural service and artificial insemination to help producers compare the two options to each other. This resource is available at the [beef.unl.edu](#) website.

The development of estrus synchronization protocols for beef cattle that can be used for either natural service or artificial insemination has provided greater opportunities for cattle producers to benefit from these technologies. Taking time to review the different options that are available and evaluating how they might be utilized can help producers select the tools that are right for them.

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A Cosmetic Genetic Trait Affecting Simmental Cattle Oculocutaneous Hypopigmentation (OH)

For the past two and a half years, the American Simmental Association has been working with Dr. Jon Beever from the University of Illinois on a specific genetic condition called oculocutaneous hypopigmentation or OH. Animals with OH have uniformly light colored irises coupled with an unusual chocolate coat color. This is not a lethal condition. In fact, the effects of OH seem to be mainly cosmetic. OH is a simple recessive trait meaning an animal must inherit two copies of the mutation to display the trait.

Recently Dr. Beever has found the causative mutation and developed a diagnostic test for OH. Using this diagnostic, an archive of ~245 SimGenetic bulls were tested for OH. The incidence of this particular mutation is very low in the Simmental animals screened to date. The mutation can be traced back to an Angus bull, Sir WMS Warrant, which was likely misdiagnosed as a heterochromia irides HI carrier. Although this mutation possibly originated from the Angus breed, out of over 1,300 Angus animals tested, only one (Sir WMS Warrant) has been identified as a carrier of OH.

Due to the non-lethal nature of this condition and the low frequency of the mutation in the Simmental population, the ASA will not require any testing for the trait. The ASA will add OH to TraitTrac and OH test results will populate the pedigrees similar to other traits. This genetic trait will be treated the same as other largely cosmetic traits like coat color and horned/poled.

GeneSeek has included the marker for OH on the next generation of GGP bovine chip assays. As soon as GeneSeek launches the next GGP-HD and GGP-LD testing, ASA members will have access to these test results. Until that time, individual animals may be tested through Dr. Jonathan Beever at the University of Illinois (jbeever@illinois.edu; 217-333-4194).

Oculocutaneous Hypopigmentation (OH)

Dr. Jon Beever, University of Illinois, November, 2015

In the spring of 2012, the American Simmental Association (ASA) received an abnormality report indicating the occurrence of a newborn calf with "white-colored" eyes and a diluted hair coat (see picture above). All the appropriate DNA samples were collected, used for the validation of parentage, and archived for future reference. Over the next two years, three additional calves were reported to the ASA with similar characteristics. Based on the recurrence of this trait, an investigation was initiated to establish whether the condition was genetic. DNA samples collected from the four affected calves were genotyped using the Neogen GGP-HD. The resulting genotypes were analyzed in contrast to the genotypes of ~80 Simmental sires. This analysis showed clear evidence that the condition is inherited as a recessive trait. Based on these results, the DNA sequence for several genes was analyzed in each of the affected calves. Within one of these genes, a mutation was identified that is predicted to impair the function of the encoded protein. In fact, in mice, mutations within the same gene cause a very similar condition that is referred to as "chocolate", where black mice have a diluted coat color and beige-colored irises (or irides).

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Further investigation, including the genotyping of frequently used sires, indicates the mutation is present at a relatively low frequency in the Simmental population. This is consistent with the very low frequency of affected calves reported over the three year period. Examination of carrier pedigrees reveals the Simmental bull, PVF-BF BF26 **BLACK JOKER** (ASA #1930631), as the most popular recent ancestor with DNA available for testing. However, several of the genotyped carriers do not have this sire in their pedigrees indicating the mutation could be significantly older. Considering this information and the prior description of similar traits in other breeds, namely heterochromia irides (HI) in Angus cattle, the possible origin of this mutation was investigated by obtaining samples from known HI carriers. Although there are very few DNA samples available from these older animals, a sample was obtained for the Angus sire SIR WMS WARRANT (AAA #9196894). Indeed, WARRANT was found to be a carrier of this newly identified mutation. Therefore, it is most likely that the mutation was introduced into the Simmental

population by the use of Angus cattle during the development of black purebreds. The subsequent screening of more than 1,200 Angus sires indicates the mutation has most likely been eliminated from the current Angus population via pedigree selection in the early 1980s.

Based on these data, the scientific literature was reviewed in an effort to understand if there were documented features that clearly distinguish between the oculocutaneous hypopigmentation (OH) and heterochromia irides (HI) traits, both of which had been previously described. It is our opinion that the characteristics displayed by these affected Simmental calves is more representative of OH than it is of HI. Additionally, examination of the human and mouse literature also supports this designation. Thus, we suggest that if both phenotypes exist in the cattle population, WARRANT should be designated as an OH carrier. Further screening of current descendants of Angus HI carriers is being conducted but has not identified any additional carriers of this mutation within the Angus population.

Information contained in reports and literature from the 70s and 80s, and in these current Simmental cases, indicate that this abnormal phenotype has little or no effect on the viability or performance of affected individuals. However, in some cases, a possible sensitivity to light has been reported. Thus, we suggest this mutation be monitored similarly to other non-lethal traits such as coat color or horned/polled. As with any recessive condition, breeders can avoid the appearance of affected calves by restricting matings between carrier animals.





Dealer Spotlight: Simme Valley Feed Focuses on the Customer March 9, 2022

For a young boy from Providence, Rhode Island, spending summers on his aunt and uncle's farm in New York were a highlight. It is there, he first showed Simmental cattle and learned to appreciate the wide-open spaces.

Fast forward in time, Philip Paradis offered to return to Simme Valley located near Groton, New York, to help his aunt Jeanne White after his uncle passed away. At first it was just for a calving season. And, now for the past nine years, Phil has become a permanent partner with Jeanne, who started the Simmental operation with her late husband more than 50 years ago.

"It was quite a change for a kid from the inner city. I was just going to come help with calving for 60 days, and I'm still here over 9 years later," Philip said.

Those early summers showing at fairs with his aunt and uncle foreshadowed what would become a passion for Philip, as he now shows the family's beloved Simmental cattle all through New York and along the East Coast. That is how he discovered BioZyme®-through the Sure Champ® products.

"With Sure Champ, when we are traveling and showing, our cattle never go off their feed or water regimen," he said.

Then, he discovered the same Amaferm® advantage in the VitaFerm® Concept•Aid® products. However, sourcing them wasn't the easiest, so he decided to become a dealer, and he hasn't looked back.

"I'm so glad I switched to the VitaFerm mineral. Concept•Aid has shortened our calving window from 60days to 45 days on natural heats. Getting done calving in 45 days was amazing! BioZyme has created a product that sells itself," Philip said. He uses a lot of signage and word of mouth to share his success with the products and to grow his business. He also uses social media to share what he does on the farm and what shows he will be attending. When he first started, he had three customers. Three years later, he has more than 40 customers. He is trying to diversify his offering, by finding sheep producers to try the DuraFerm® line. He said one of the most popular products he sells is the Country Vet Natural Dog Food. He said his customers appreciate the price point, the way it helps their dogs not feel gassy and how it clears up their skin.

His best advice is to make sure to know what your customers use and don't use so you keep your inventory correct and don't have unnecessary products.

From the city life to simpler ways, Philip Paradis has become a successful BioZyme dealer in New York, living his dream. Thanks for sharing the Amaferm advantage with so many others, Philip!



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Hardware Disease in Beef Cattle

By MARK Z. JOHNSON February 17, 2022



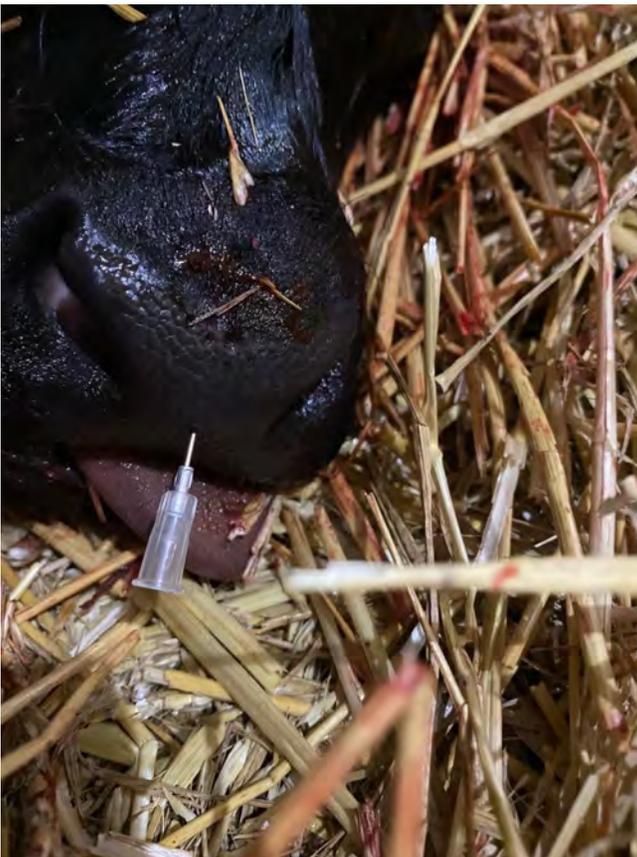
Hardware disease is a common term for Bovine Traumatic Reticuloperitonitis. It is usually caused by the ingestion of metallic objects like nails, screws or wire. The piece of metal settles in the compartment of the stomach called the reticulum. The weight of the object and the anatomy of the reticulum is a virtual guarantee the metal will remain in the reticulum.

Contractions of the reticulum result in the metal irritating or penetrating the lining of the stomach. If the stomach lining is penetrated the object potentially gains access to the heart. This results in several possible scenarios which include local infection, leakage of fluid from the reticulum and the most severe, a puncture of the sac around the heart. Accordingly, hardware disease can be mild, severe or fatal.

Hardware disease can be difficult to conclusively diagnose and clinical signs will vary based on where the hardware has penetrated. Symptoms include the animal standing with its head and neck extended, weight loss, pain, decreased appetite, arched back, reluctance to walk or eat and audible grunting when forced to move.

Producers should consult with their veterinarian if hardware disease is suspected. Successful treatment of hardware disease can be achieved by use of antibiotics and administering a magnet into the fore-stomach using a balling gun.

The best prevention of hardware disease is good management. Keeping pastures and feeding areas clean by picking up wire, metal objects and debris is critical. Placing magnets in feed mills and harvesting equipment is also beneficial. Spending the extra time it takes to eliminate the potential of cattle ingesting sharp metallic objects greatly reduces the risk of cattle getting hardware disease.



Animal Clinic Ltd

March 8

If you have a calf that is born who is showing signs of respiratory distress like shallow or infrequent respirations and does not appear as "with it" as a new born should be. It may be a good idea to try the Jen Chung (GV-26) acupuncture technique. Between the two nostrils as shown below is a acupressure point that when stimulated can increase heart rate, respiration rate and consciousness.

A one inch, 20 gauge needle (a small needle) can be inserted into this area all the way and occasionally given a twist for a few minutes after birth. You can also stimulate the area with a fingernail or stick if a needle isn't handy.

If you want to know more about this technique please give us a call or stop by. <http://www.animalclinicld.com/>
605-842 1854 animalc@gwtc.net

Editors note: This is also an effective way to get a newborn breathing.



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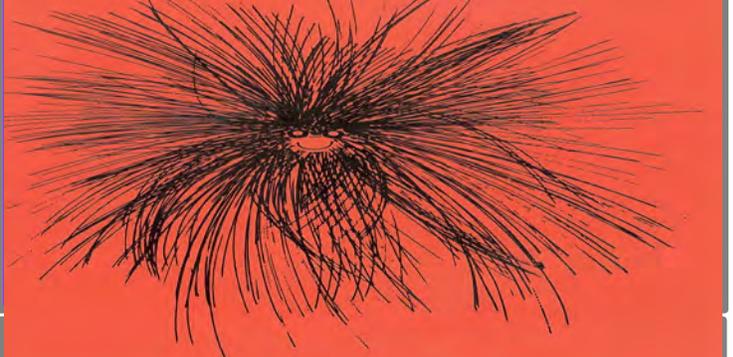
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SALE DATE – May 7th

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Jeanne White
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Paul Beck, Oklahoma State University Extension Beef Cattle Specialist

OSU Extension
Cow/Calf Corner

Nitrogen fertilizer prices have reached over \$750/ton for urea (over 85¢/pound of N), with expectations that it could reach over \$1,000/ton. This is a good time to consider using legumes in our pastures to replace N fertilizers. Forage legumes can fix 50 to 150 (or more) pounds of nitrogen from the air, depending on the density of the legume stand. Clover plantings are often most successful when planting in late winter to early spring (February and early March), so it is time to get this on your mind.

Clovers and most other legumes require neutral pH and proper soil phosphorus and potassium. Hopefully, you have been following Extension recommendations and soil testing and correcting pH and soil fertility issues when fertilizers were cheaper. If you are considering planting clovers first you should soil test the sites you are considering planting. Clovers do not fixate nitrogen as well in acid soils, so pH > 6.0 is a must. If pH, P, and K are adequate or easily corrected in some sites but not others plant clovers in the better sites. Then grass should be grazed or mowed closely, the reduction in plant residue enables good seed to soil contact for better germination and seedling survival.

Frost seeding of clovers is very cheap and effective. To do this, seed is simply broadcast seed onto the soil surface and allowing the freeze and thaw cycles to incorporate it into the soil through frost heave. Success can be enhanced by dragging pastures after you broadcasting the seed to get better contact with the soil. If using a no-till drill be sure seed depth is right, these small seeds should not be planted more than ½ inch deep. Planting equipment should be calibrated to ensure the correct seeding rate. Red clover should be planted at 10 to 12 pounds per acre, but white clover should only be planted at 3 to 5 pounds per acre.

Using high-quality seed of a clover species adapted to you site is also of great importance. Arrowleaf clover is highly productive in sandy loam soils while red clovers prefers loam to clay loam soil but neither thrives in poorly drained soils. White clover does well in poorly drained loam to clay loam soils.

In some recent research, interseeding white and red clovers into bermudagrass was compared to bermudagrass fertilized with 0, 50, or 100 pounds of actual N per acre. For each pound of nitrogen, steer gain per acre was increased by 1.2 to 1.5 pounds, which would cost about 56 cents per pound of gain. Including clovers in the pasture increased total bodyweight gain per acre by over 150 pounds over fertilized pastures, so clovers can be highly cost effective to add to your pastures.

For more information about clovers and other legumes refer to the fact sheet “Forage Legumes for Oklahoma” PSS-2585 by John Caddel and Jim Enis. <https://extension.okstate.edu/fact-sheets/forage-legumes-for-oklahoma.html>

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What You Need to Know to be

a Bottle Calf's Mama, FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 2022

Karla H. Wilke, UNL Cow/Calf Systems and Stocker Management
Hannah Greenwell, Nebraska Extension Educator,

In the beef industry, the goal is to have each newborn calf paired up with a good cow who has adequate milk and plenty of maternal instincts. Unfortunately, there are times a calf ends up without a mother and becomes a bottle calf.

Getting off to a good start

Colostrum is the first milk produced by a cow and should be consumed by the newborn within the first 24 hours, preferably in the first six hours. It contains immunoglobulins, protein, energy, vitamins, and minerals important to immunity and strength for the newborn. If the calf cannot nurse the cow, and cow's colostrum is not available, it is important to give the calf a commercial colostrum replacement which contains around 120 g of IgG.



All milk replacers are not created equal

It is most beneficial to select a milk replacer that is whey based and formulated for calves rather than a general all-purpose milk replacer. Mixing the powder thoroughly with water that is 110-120° F improves digestion and absorption for the newborn. If the calf takes two full (4 pint) bottles (total of 8 pints/day) that is sufficient and supplies adequate nutrition. Feeding more only increases cost and slows rumen development and dry feed intake. Small or weak calves may only take a pint or two per feeding and therefore may need to be fed several times a day until a full bottle can be consumed at a feeding.

Having a great relationship with a veterinarian is critical

The bottle calf most likely had a rough start in life resulting in compromised immunity, and is now living in confined quarters, which are typically conducive to increased pathogen loads. This combination can result in a sick calf requiring antibiotics and/or electrolyte treatment. Fortunately, any decrease in appetite or lethargic appearance can be recognized quickly in a calf fed with a bottle twice a day. Having a relationship with a veterinarian who can recommend effective methods of treatment and rapid intervention is critical for the success of the bottle calf.

Development of the rumen in the nursing calf

The calf nursing a cow in a traditional beef operation begins to eat solid feed within the first month of life. The bottle calf needs that same opportunity for proper rumen development. Dairy research has shown that bottle calves receiving hay or long stem forage, along with some concentrates, develop rumen musculature as well as papillae important for rumination, digestion, and absorption. Additionally, the bottle calf needs clean drinking water to help with not only hydration, but with rumen development and appetite.

Providing the Right Feed

Low quality hay is not palatable for the bottle calf and has a slow rate of passage through the digestive system, reducing the overall intake of solid feed. High quality hay such as leafy alfalfa, immature grass hay, or the opportunity to graze growing grass are better options for the bottle calf. Additionally, supplying a good protein source such as dried distillers grains or a starter feed will encourage rumen development and overall growth of the calf. By providing ample and proper concentrates, you can also prevent the bloated-like appearance characteristic of some bottle calves.

How Long Does the Calf Need a Bottle?

A beef calf is usually eating 1-1.5% of its body weight on a dry matter basis by the time it is 10-12 weeks old. A calf eating this much solid feed is likely ready to be weaned off the bottle. However, the digestive

system is small, and the nutrient needs are high, therefore the calf needs highly digestible feed that has a high rate of passage so the calf can eat small frequent meals throughout the day as the rumen develops and grows.

Points to Remember

Colostrum or colostrum replacer is very important for the calf to consume within 24 hours of birth. A properly formulated milk replacer can provide the nutrients the calf no longer gets from the cow. By one month of age, the calf needs to be consuming high quality hay or grass, concentrate or creep starter, and water. A veterinary/client relationship will be very beneficial to anyone raising a bottle calf. An orphan calf can thrive on a bottle. Producers may find that selling bottle calves as yearlings is a more profitable system than selling as calves as they generally are behind their peers in growth the first 6-8 months.

How Valu-Bull are Breeding Soundness Exams?

Kacie McCarthy, UNL Cow-Calf Specialist – April 1, 2022

Lindsay Waechter-Mead, DVM, Nebraska Extension Beef Educator

We may be finishing the calving season, but it is never too early to be thinking about the breeding season. With the breeding season comes getting those bulls scheduled for their breeding soundness exam (BSE) and ensuring your bull battery are satisfactory breeders.

Breeding Soundness Exam

The American Society for Theriogenology has developed minimum guidelines for a bull to be classified as a satisfactory breeder. A veterinarian will evaluate the bull on the following criteria: a physical examination, scrotal circumference measurement, and evaluate semen quality for motility and morphology. To successfully complete a BSE, a bull must have at least 30% progressive motility (does the individual sperm move in a forward progression), 70% normal sperm morphology (are there any problems with sperm formation), and a minimum scrotal circumference based on age. If a bull does not meet the minimum requirements, he is either classified as deferred (meaning it is recommended that the bull be evaluated again) or as an unsatisfactory potential breeder.

The scrotal circumference tells us the testicular mass. As it increases, so does the daily production of high-quality sperm. Scrotal circumference is also an important measure because it is directly related to the onset of puberty in the bull and his female offspring.

The physical exam is an important part of a BSE. Bulls should be athletic, with sound legs and feet, excellent eyesight and in adequate body condition. The demands of breeding season are extreme, and bulls need to be able to maintain condition throughout the entire season.

Value of a BSE

Ideally, we like to encourage producers to test bulls approximately 4 to 6 weeks prior to the breeding season to ensure that they are satisfactory breeders. This timeframe allows a producer enough time to identify a new bull for breeding if needed. If damage to the scrotum during winter (e.g. frostbite or injury) or other injuries to the bull are identified, giving them ample time to recover will be critical. The production of sperm is a 61-day process, so injuries that occur in March-April may be lingering in May-June. A BSE is a point-in-time measurement, so giving yourself enough time to update your bull battery will be important.

What is the benefit-cost ratio for a BSE? Here's a scenario: Producer #1 skipped BSE last breeding season. His exposed female to bull ratio was 25 head and he weaned 85% of his calf crop at 560 pounds average weaning weight - which adjusts to 476 pounds per exposed cow. If he sold the weaned calves at \$170/cwt, he earned \$809.20 for each calf per exposed cow. The following year resulted in the same weaning weights and exposure ratio, but he tested the bulls. As a result, his weaned calf crop

increased to 87% because he identified and selected fertile bulls by having a BSE performed. This gave him an average weaning weight of 487 pounds per exposed cow, and \$828.24 for each calf – resulting in a change of gross income of \$19.04. The cost of the BSE was \$65 per head (includes exam, freight, and labor), which calculates to \$2.60 for each cow exposed. That gives us the following: \$19.04 (income) - \$2.60 (cost) = 7.32 benefit-cost ratio. In other words, for every \$1 spent on BSE, he gained \$7.32. That is a great insurance policy!

Considerations beyond a BSE

Stocking rate is the number of cows a bull can successfully breed. The nationwide average stocking rate is twenty-five cows per mature bull or fifteen cows per yearling bull. In some systems, stocking rates of up to fifty cows per bull are used, but high stocking rates may lead to later calving cows due to missed heat cycles. Additionally, bull libido (willingness to breed) can be determined only when bulls are on pastures or in pens with females in heat. Bulls may have all the qualifications to pass the BSE, but if they are not actively breeding cows, producers should find different options. Taking the time to watch breeding activity allows for sooner opportunities to catch and correct potential problems, which is much more profitable than waiting for open cows to calve.

Only 60% of a cow is actually used for food — here's the weird stuff that happens to the other 40%

Gene Kim and Jessica Orwig Oct 29, 2017, 9:45 AM

From lipstick to jet fuel, cows provide it all for humans. We checked with the National Cattleman's Beef Association to see what some of the most common, and surprising, products contain cow parts. Following is a transcript of the video.

Cattle — Better known to most as sirloin, brisket, T-bone, short rib, or simply beef. But what you see in the meat aisle is only part of the animal. For perspective, about 60% is harvested for food. The other 40% ends up in places like lipstick and jet fuel.

Let's start with one of the most ubiquitous parts — the fat. The fat that doesn't end up at the butcher's is rendered into a product called tallow. Fatty acids in the tallow give it a slick, oily consistency, which adds to the texture in some body creams, cosmetics, soaps, and toothpaste.

They're also a lubricant in antifreeze, hydraulic brake fluids, and jet engines and are even being tested as a biofuel for planes in the US Air Force. But powering planes is just the beginning.

We also rely on cattle for certain life-saving medicines, like insulin. Bovine insulin is nearly identical to humans'. So, the cow pancreas is often used to make insulin injections for diabetics.

Likewise, the adrenal glands are used in certain steroid drugs. Cartilage helps make medicine for people who suffer from osteoarthritis, and the lungs are used in blood thinners like heparin.

Medicine aside, we even use cattle leftovers in plastic surgery. Collagen — from the hide — is purified and injected into the face for a younger look. But, it turns out that plastic surgery isn't the most common use for collagen.

That title goes to gelatin, which is made from boiling cow bones and hide. Gelatin gives that distinctive gummy texture to foods like certain marshmallows, caramels, gummies, and jams.

There are more than 727,000 beef farms in the US that slaughter roughly 30 million cattle each year. While we usually think about the meat that ends up on the grill, the parts we ignore are present throughout our everyday lives.

Be Prepared to Assist During Calving: Part 1

By TONY HAWKINS DVM March 1, 2022



“I’ve got a calver, doc.” I hear these words from the other end of the line as I roll over and see that the clock reads 2 a.m. As I ask questions – more to wake myself up than to gather information – I realize I’m going to have to leave the comfort of my warm covers. I tell the farmer that I am on my way, as I start to put on layers to venture out into the cold. The drive is groggy, trying to stay awake between sips of cold, stale coffee left in the truck from the day before. As I pull up, the farmer comes out of the house to meet me and we gather all of my supplies and trek into the barn. I am thankful to be out of the wind, but it is still cold enough inside the barn to feel my breath crystallize in my nose. Lying in the corner is a docile heifer with only one of the calf’s feet sticking out. We get her into the squeeze chute, and I confirm that the calf has one leg back. It’s a big calf, but I am able to get the other leg pulled up and safely deliver the calf.

As cattle producers, I know you have all had experiences similar to this. You should never hesitate to contact your veterinarian if needed, but I am going to pass on some things that I have learned to help you feel more comfortable with calving assistance.

When to Intervene During Calving

You should provide assistance immediately if you notice an abnormal presentation of the calf (AKA back feet, only one leg, etc.) or when there is no progress after 30 minutes for a cow or 60 minutes for a heifer.

Performing an Obstetrical Examination

After determining it’s time to intervene, the obstetrical examination is the next step. Proper restraint during examination is crucial. I have done my fair share of calving assistance from the end of a rope, and there is a much higher likelihood of getting hurt or losing the calf without proper restraint. Picture this: getting the calf halfway out, and the heifer decides to jump up and spin from side to side as fast as she can. A squeeze chute or a commercial calving pen is well worth the investment.

During the examination, use plenty of lubrication and stay as clean as possible. You are checking for complete dilation of the cervix and presentation of the calf. If the cervix is not dilated, you will feel a tight ring of tissue about wrist to mid-forearm deep.

Normal calf presentation is both front legs with the head between them. If you are unsure which legs are coming, check the joints. The first two joints of the front legs flex the same way, but the first two joints of the back legs flex the opposite way.

Navigating Common Malpresentations

Malpresentations of the calf will require manipulations to allow delivery. If you get nothing else from this article, please remember this: Do not be afraid to push the calf back in! If there is too much bulk in the birth canal, then it is nearly impossible to safely manipulate and get the legs pulled up.

***Leg back:** Push the calf deeper into the uterus to get the head out of the birth canal. When the cow strains against you, the calf’s head will want to pop right back into the pelvis, so I often turn the head to the side. Find the leg that is back and pull on the knee joint so you can get to the hoof. You must cup the hoof with your hand as you pull the leg into the pelvis, so the foot doesn’t poke through the uterus. With bigger calves, oftentimes you must push back on the shoulder or knee with one arm while the hand that is cupping the hoof is pulling it into the birth canal. When both legs are in the pelvis, straighten the head and deliver the calf.

***Head back:** If the shoulders are engaged in the birth canal, push the calf back to get the head turned. The easiest way to grip the head is by the nostrils or to hook the cheek. In my experience, a good percentage of calves that present this way are too big to be delivered safely, so if you are unable to keep

the head engaged in the pelvis when you start pulling, the calf likely needs to be delivered by Cesarean.

***Backwards:** A backwards calf is one that is presented with back feet coming out. You can pull calves this way, but you have to pull them fast so they don't inhale fluid or asphyxiate. I always use a mechanical calf puller for backwards calves to ensure as fast a delivery as possible. Make sure the tail is tucked down between the back legs before pulling.

***Breech:** A breech presentation is when the calf is coming tail first and both back legs are down. These can be exceptionally difficult to get the back legs up; I would advise seeking the help of your veterinarian for these. If you must try this on your own, you have to get the calf pushed forward out of the birth canal. Then, with one hand you need to push the hock or the rump forward while your other hand cups the foot and flexes the leg into the pelvis. The fun part is having to do it again for the other leg.

Once you have the calf coming the right way, it is time for delivery! Stay tuned for Part 2, where we will discuss safely pulling and delivering a calf. Refer back to my last piece, "3 Tips to Keep in Mind This Calving Season," for best practices to consider. Continue learning and readying for calving season, at ValleyVet.com.

About the author: Valley Vet Supply Technical Service Veterinarian, Tony Hawkins, DVM, attended Kansas State University's College of Veterinary Medicine, where he placed focus on mixed-animal practice. Before joining the Technical Service veterinarian team at Valley Vet Supply, Dr. Hawkins practiced veterinary medicine in Marysville, Kansas, where he was greatly involved in cattle health, including processing, obstetrical work, and servicing the local sale barn. He also is treasured by the community for his care of horses and pets, through wellness appointments and surgery.

Be Prepared to Assist During Calving: Part 2

Here are instructions on how to safely pull a calf.

Remember, a calf can only be delivered once it is coming the correct way. If you missed it, reference my previous article, Be Prepared to Assist During Calving: Part 1, in which I discuss fixing common malpresentation of the calf to allow for safe delivery.

When you are ready to deliver the calf, the first thing you need to do is attach the OB chains. If you only put one loop around each leg, there is a high risk of breaking a calf's leg. To minimize this risk, put the



first loop above the fetlock and then put a second loop (a half hitch) between the fetlock and hoof.

Next, you will want to get the elbows engaged in the birth canal. To do this, pull firmly on one leg with an OB handle attached to the chain. You will often feel a “popping” sensation when the elbow enters the cow’s pelvis; you will then want to do this with the other leg. If you are able to get both fetlocks out at least a hand’s width and the head remains engaged in the birth canal, then the calf is able to be delivered. If the head keeps wanting to turn to the side or doesn’t advance when you start pulling, the calf is too big and will need to be delivered via C-section.

Pulling a Calf: 6 Best Practices

1. Employ help; you might need it. Two strong, able-bodied people can physically pull a calf by hand. If you have the help and the physical capability, I recommend doing it this way. However, there are many cases in which this may not be possible. In the right hands, mechanical calf pullers can make a wonderful tool. I personally use a calf puller for 95% of my calving assistance because it's easier on my back. I don't always have the convenience of having another person available to help, and I feel that a calf puller gives me better control.
2. Avoid trouble for safe delivery. What can cause trouble to both the cow and calf is when the calf puller is used as a lever, bearing down on it. This causes a tremendous amount of force. I recommend that producers use only the ratcheting mechanism of the puller as much as possible. If it gets tight and you are unable to ratchet any further, then you do need to use it as a lever. To do this safely, when the cow strains, pull the rod of the calf puller down (toward the ground if she is standing, toward her feet if she is lying on her side) firmly but not to your full strength. When the cow stops to rest, move the rod of the calf puller back up and ratchet as many times as you can. Continue this process until the calf is delivered.
3. Don't pull forward-facing calves too fast. I commonly see people try to pull the calf as fast as possible, but if the calves are being delivered forwards, this is not necessary and can actually be detrimental to the calf.
4. Offer a little breathing room. It is advisable to release tension on the chains once you get the ribs out to allow the calf moments to breathe.
5. Do your best to avoid hip lock. Rotate the calf 90 degrees before you attempt to deliver the hips. This helps align the calf's hips in an orientation that gives them the most room through the cow's pelvis. Hip lock is a horrible experience, and I pray that you never run into one. If you do, you need to try to push the calf back in a little ways and get him rotated a quarter turn, then change the direction of your pull either angled toward the cow's flank or straight down toward her hocks. A lot of lubrication will be your friend. This can take time. Be sure to release tension on the calf and allow him to rest and breathe. After 20 to 30 seconds of pulling, release tension for about 60 seconds.
6. Act fast to deliver backward calves. Backward calves are high risk due to the likelihood of asphyxiation or aspiration of fluid. There is not a good test for whether the calf will fit through the birth canal, so it requires a judgment call. You have to pull backward calves fast! The calf will start breathing soon after the umbilical cord gets pinched off (maybe 60 seconds), so you can see why speed is so important. I use a mechanical calf puller for all backward calves to ensure as fast a delivery as possible.

I hope the information in this series helps you feel better about your next calving assistance. From the obstetrical examination to delivery takes practice to feel comfortable, so it would be helpful to have an experienced mentor available to help coach you through your first few calving assistances. Do not ever hesitate to contact your veterinarian if you don't feel comfortable, and remember that if something doesn't feel quite right, it probably isn't!

Stay tuned for our next article in this calving series to learn about newborn calf care. Continue learning at ValleyVet.com.

Factors That Contribute to Pregnancy Losses in Beef Cattle

By ELIZABETH CRONIN March 15, 2022

With calving season well underway in North Dakota, cattle producers are working to minimize calf deaths.

The three categories of pregnancy losses in beef cattle include early embryonic death, abortion and stillbirth, according to North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension livestock specialists.

Early embryonic deaths occur within the first 42 days of gestation. After that point, losses are considered abortions. Abortion involves the expulsion of a dead fetus prior to approximately day 270 of gestation, while stillborn calves include full-term calves that are born dead or die in the first 24 to 48 hours after birth. Abortions are also assumed when females diagnosed as pregnant begin showing signs of estrus (heat) or fail to deliver a calf. Identifying a cause in these cases is more difficult as the only specimen remaining to help determine the cause is a blood sample from the female that suffered the presumed abortion.

“Although pregnancy losses in beef cattle are a fact of life, late-term losses are likely the most discouraging,” says Gerald Stokka, NDSU Extension veterinarian and livestock stewardship specialist. “There are often more questions than answers, and trying to find a reason for the loss can be a complex and frustrating process.”

“Within a herd, a single abortion or stillborn calf may not be regarded as significant,” says Janna Block, Extension livestock systems specialist at NDSU’s Hettinger Research Extension Center. “If several of these instances occur, it is a good idea to investigate further.”

Potential Causes of Losses

Common causes of losses include calving difficulty (dystocia), nutritional deficiencies and infectious diseases.

Dystocia can occur if calves are too big or are not situated normally in the birth canal. Stress and lack of oxygen during calving can result in stillborn calves; however, these losses are often attributed to other causes, Stokka notes. Dystocia and stillbirths are more likely to occur in first-calf heifers because of a smaller pelvic area, and in cows that are either overly conditioned or too thin.

Proper vitamin and mineral intake is also essential for placental and fetal development. In particular, deficiencies of selenium, iodine, manganese, and vitamins A and E may result in abortion.

Some abortions in late pregnancy may be due to injury or extreme stress in the cow due to immune challenges and weather-related issues. The fluid-filled uterus provides good protection for the fetus, but pain or inflammation following maternal injury can cause stress and trigger release of hormones in the body that may initiate premature labor, Stokka explains.

Infectious diseases caused by bacteria, protozoa, viruses and fungi often result in abortions and/or stillbirths in cattle. Vaccines are available to reduce the risk of losses from bacterial diseases including brucellosis, leptospirosis and vibriosis. Diseases such as trichomoniasis, sarcocystosis and neospora, which are caused by protozoa, can be more difficult to manage because vaccines are unavailable or may be ineffective.

Common viral diseases include bovine viral diarrhea (BVD) and infectious bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR). Vaccines to prevent losses due to IBR and BVD are available and effective; however, producers need to choose their vaccine protocols wisely.

“It is important to always follow label directions when using modified live vaccines in pregnant cows because off-label use may result in abortions,” Stokka says. “To avoid this problem, producers should vaccinate cows when they are not pregnant or consider using vaccines labeled for use in pregnant cows.”

Calf Loss Diagnosis

Laboratory diagnosis of disease issues that contribute to calf losses can be frustrating because the infectious agents often are undetectable in tissue or blood samples. The placenta often is key to obtaining a diagnosis; therefore, submitting the placenta in addition to the fetus whenever possible is very important, Block says.

“Prompt identification of aborting cows and isolation from the herd is recommended to help prevent the spread of infectious diseases if applicable,” she adds. “It is also helpful to have cows isolated in case blood samples from aborting cows are needed to try to identify abnormalities such as mineral levels and/or antibody titers for infectious diseases.”

The specialists recommend that when collecting aborted fetuses and tissues for analysis, producers should be sure to use appropriate biosecurity measures such as latex gloves and a mask to avoid diseases that can be passed from livestock to humans. The fetus and placenta should be placed in a black garbage bag and kept cool until they arrive at the laboratory. Avoid freezing the fetus and/or placenta unless they already were frozen when they were found.

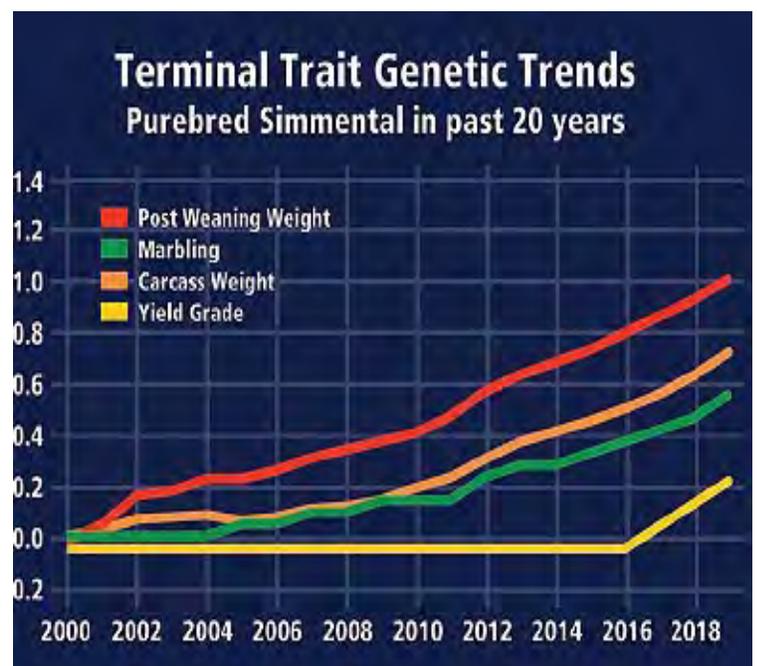
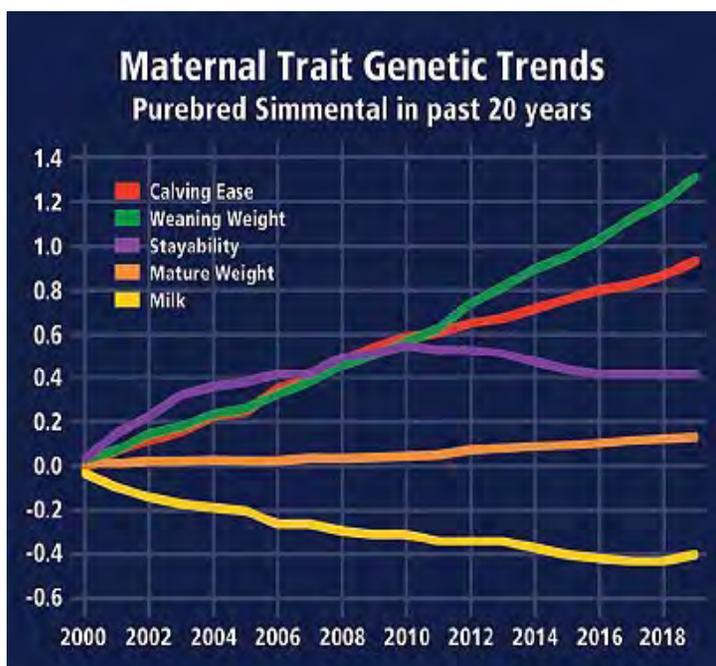
Additional Factors for Determining Loss Causes

Because there are so many potential causes for stillbirths and abortions, it is important to investigate each calf loss individually as well as evaluate the situation on a herd level.

Factors that should be considered when trying to determine the cause of losses include:

- *Cow herd nutrition (feed analysis, mineral supplementation program, potential toxicities/deficiencies, etc.)
- *Cow's age and number of offspring
- *Vaccination program (types of vaccines used, when administered, etc.)
- *Body condition score of cows at calving
- *Length of calving, calving difficulty, and whether or not assistance was used
- *Presence of any visible abnormalities in the calf
- *Cloudy eyes in the calf indicating it has been dead for several hours

“Although diagnosis is not always possible, even with necropsy or laboratory analysis, sample submission to the NDSU Diagnostic Laboratory is encouraged if abortion rates are in excess of 1 to 2 percent,” Block advises. “Producers should work closely with their local veterinarians for assistance and advice with diagnosis, and to develop future herd health and vaccination strategies to minimize losses.”





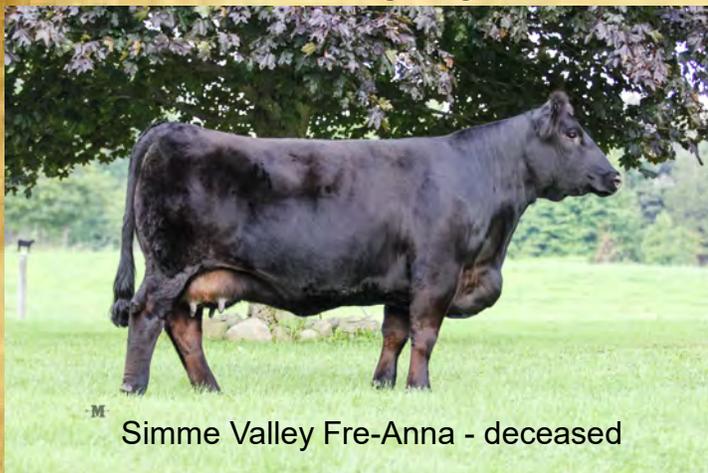
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