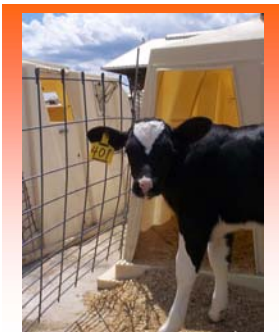


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Raising Healthy Heifers...

A strong foundation is necessary to build a profitable operation and heifers are the foundation of your dairy. How you approach heifer development may represent an area of potential hidden losses or valuable gains. Calves and heifers are vitally important to the future of your entire dairy. Careful attention must be paid to these two groups, even when they are young and non-productive. Your future economic benefits are huge and advantages of a profitable heifer program can be easily calculated. In order to maximize heifer development, with the goal of calving at 24 months, there are several critical things to consider. Attention to these issues can make a productive difference in your calf and heifer program. Consider these items as you review and evaluate your program:



- ◆ Starting right is essential to ensuring quality results! This includes feeding quality colostrum [from the dam] immediately after birth, followed by use of a properly formulated milk replacer until weaning.
- ◆ Feed a quality calf starter within the first few days and maintain intakes until weaning. The Renaissance GET MILK! products have been carefully balanced to ensure calves are getting what they need... when they need it.
- ◆ Ensure adequate nutrition: energy, protein, and other necessary nutrients as the calf/heifer develops. Studies show that heifers lacking adequate amounts of energy, protein, minerals, and vitamins grow more slowly and often have a lower breeding efficiency than properly fed heifers. Deficiencies of energy, protein, phosphorus, iodine, manganese, zinc, vitamin A, cobalt, salt, and water are probably the most common nutrient deficiencies in growing heifers.
- ◆ Group heifers with similar weights, which will enable rations to be targeted to that specific level of development. This will also help to limit competition among heifers. Additionally, by grouping heifers you can more easily locate those that are the correct breeding age and size.
- ◆ In order to help maximize growth, replacement heifers must have dry, comfortable bedding and proper ventilation at all times. Hygiene is critically important. Open housing is excellent as long as shade and wind blocks are provided. The positive impact of ensuring good housing and comfort for calves and heifers is well documented.
- ◆ Provide fresh, clean water at all times!
- ◆ Internal and external parasites can substantially reduce heifer weight gain. A routine deworming and vaccination program is essential to an effective heifer program. Heifers should be dewormed 2–3 weeks from freshening. This will ensure maximum performance early in lactation.

Make the most of your future herd with a well-developed calf and heifer program... and watch your future grow.

(edited from an article by Jud Heinrichs, Pennsylvania State University)

Time to start planning for spring!

With the recently completed harvest and related challenges, it is time to turn our thoughts toward next spring. What hybrids will you plant? Of the multitude of available hybrids and traits, which are the best for your operation - the best for your agronomic and climatic conditions?

What you plant is an investment in your ration program for the fall and winter months. It has a direct impact on how well your cows perform – a direct correlation on productivity and profitability!

If you are accustomed to purchasing seed without checking into the many [other] important aspects available with today's hybrids, your cows may not be getting what is best for them. I'd like to introduce you to hybrids that are developed and research-tested for results. This includes silage-specific hybrids that produce excellent results both in the field and in your rations. These hybrids can help your cows MAKE MILK!

Before purchasing seed this fall (for 2006), let me review what is available and how selected hybrids can meet your needs and goals. Check out the details and make a good investment that will pay dividends in the future. I can also recommend hybrids that work well together, since it is advisable [in many situations] to plant more than one variety on any given farm. Early order discounts are available! Call today.

MYCOGEN ♦ WOLF RIVER Corn Hybrids That Produce Results!

Heifers and Mastitis...

Dairy producers might think that their heifers freshen free of udder infections. However, this is not always the case. Mastitis was a poorly recognized problem in heifers before a study in 1983 (*Oliver and Mitchell et al.*), in which they reported a high proportion of infected quarters in heifers during the precalving period, as well as at the onset of lactation. Since this initial study, several others have reported similar findings of intramammary infection (IMI) in heifers, reaching up to 97% heifers infected at calving (*Pankey et al., 1991; Fox et al., 1995; Owens et al., 2001*). Averages of IMI in unbred or pregnant heifers are as high as those recorded at calving, which indicates that infection often occurs several weeks or months prior to calving (*Trinidad et al., 1990; Oliver et al., 2001; etc.*). All of these studies indicate that IMI in heifers is frequent. The incidence of IMI occurs at a critical time in mammary gland development and may decrease glandular tissue, thus reducing milk production in subsequent lactations. Infected heifers produce less milk during their first lactation, while their SSC is also increased and may persist for an extended period of time.

(edited from an article by Emile Bouchard, University of Montreal, Canada; 2005)

Interested in discussing topics in this newsletter, or want to do a better job feeding and managing your cows? Call me! My goal is to help you. That's Renaissance's commitment to you!

RENAISSANCE ~ FOR RESULTS!

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Planning for winter!



As the temperatures drop it is important to ensure your calves are getting the energy and nutrition they need to maintain body temperature and growth. One way to help ensure demands are met is to increase the amount of MILK REPLACER they receive daily, along with the provision of a quality calf starter such as our GET MILK! line up of products. Ask me about a handy chart that can help to calculate the needs of your calves as temperatures decline this fall and winter. This program can have a positive impact on your calves now... and in the future. Call today for details!

**START 'EM RIGHT!
START 'EM FOR RESULTS!
KEEP 'EM WARM.**

WHAT'S IT LIKE AROUND THE FARM?

Cleaning the barn is not the most desired job around most farms! However, it is a very important job. A regularly scheduled cleaning routine can impact on cow comfort and herd health, as well as keep the environment healthier for people working on the farm. When reviewing your cleaning routine and protocols, it is very important to remember that equipment that is used for cleaning purposes is never used for mixing feed, moving feed, or cleaning feed areas. Many infectious diseases are transmitted by the use of "shared" equipment. Cleaning equipment should also be hosed down and disinfected on a regular basis. It is important to maintain a regime for cleaning waterers, which can harbor numerous pathogens. Write down and post cleaning protocols and expectations, so everyone follows these requirements daily. Reduce health concerns and maximize cow comfort with a clean barn, clean feeding area, clean water (and waterers), and separate equipment. Make a difference before it becomes a concern.

A POINT TO PONDER... There is an ever-changing panorama and beauty to fall. Leaves change and drop, and the landscape takes on a new look as it prepares for winter. Often with the stress of everyday life, the troubling world scene and the concerns that abound all around us, we neglect to acknowledge and reflect on this beauty. Take a few moments each day to contemplate the beauty around you and be enriched by the changing seasons. This can help to give you a new outlook and greater appreciation for life and its many blessings. Enjoy this fall!



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Fall is here...

The silo is filled...

Ready for winter rations?

Check it out!

