CALVING EASE

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Zero Tolerance for Antibiotic Residues

All calf care personnel should have a zero tolerance for antibiotic residues in calves. That is, any calf marketed from the farm should not contain residues from a treatment with antibiotics.

Key steps for preventing or lessen the chances of antibiotic residues include:

1. Establish a valid veterinarian-client-patient relationship to ensure proper diagnosis and treatment of disease.** An example of a validation form for this is included in the 2011 Milk and Dairy Beef Drug Residue Prevention Manual.

2. Implement a preventive calf health program to reduce the incidence of disease. Especially important are programs for newborn care and effective colostrum management.

3. Follow a seasonally-appropriate preweaned calf feeding program that adequately meets the needs of calves for energy and protein both for maintenance and growth.

4. Immediately after birth tag or otherwise identify all calves. And, visually mark all treated calves (tail paint, paint stick).

5. Make a list of recommend or approved drugs for calves. The 2011 Milk and Dairy Beef Drug Residue Prevention Manual contains example forms for listing these drugs as well as forms for beginning drug inventory, record of drug purchases and drug disposal record (see the website address that follows: http://www.nationaldairyfarm.com/sites/default/files/2016-Residue-Manual.pdf

6. Set up written protocols for administering antibiotics for significant health risks. These include antibiotic or drug used, dose, route of administration, length of treatment and withdrawal time.

7. Train all workers, full-time and part-time, in the correct use of treatment protocols.

8. Do not use drugs that are specifically prohibited for use in calves.

9. If extra-label use of an antibiotic is prescribed by the herd veterinarian be certain that written instructions include that the drug is for preweaned calves, dose, route of administration, frequency of use and withdrawal time for calves. Remember, extra-label use will generally require an extended withdrawal time.

10. Establish a treatment record plan. To meet FDA regulations the following facts are the minimum needed: person giving drug, calf ID, date of treatment, drug, route of administration, dose and withdrawal time. Many producers find it useful to write down the date when the withdrawal period expires (that is, the safe shipping date).§

**1An appropriate Veterinarian-Client-Patient (VCP) relationship will exist when: (1)the veterinarian has assumed the responsibility for making medical judgments regarding the health of the animal(s) and the need for medical treatment, and the client(owner or other caretaker) has agreed to follow the instructions of the veterinarian; and when (2) there is sufficient knowledge of the animal(s) by the veterinarian to initiate at least a general or preliminary diagnosis of the medical condition of the animal(s). This means that the veterinarian has recently seen and is personally acquainted with the keeping and care of the animal(s) by virtue of an examination of the animal(s), and/or by medically appropriate and timely visits to the premises where the animal(s) are kept; and when (3) the practicing veterinarian is readily available for follow-up in case of adverse reactions or failure of the regimen of therapy. (American Association of Bovine Practitioners Newsletter, March, 1984).

§Code of Federal Regulations Title 21.21 CFR 530.5. Food and Drug Administration. See http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cdrh/cfdocs/cfcfr/CFRSearch.cfm?fr=530.5

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