



DAIRY INFO

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Taking service to another level!

WATCH OUT FOR SILO GAS!

Silo gas forms as newly stored silage ferments. It can cause serious injuries, severe respiratory distress, permanent lung damage, and even death. In late summer and early fall, when silos are being filled, the danger is at its peak. Corn forms more silo gas than other crops. Silo gas begins to form immediately after forage is put into a silo. This gas includes nitrogen oxide, which changes to nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) in the presence of oxygen. Nitrogen dioxide, not to be confused with nitrous oxide or "laughing gas", is a highly corrosive, toxic gas, which forms nitric acid when mixed with water. It is heavier than air and displaces oxygen. Silo gas also contains carbon dioxide, which is not toxic, but is [also] heavier than air and displaces oxygen. When inhaled, the nitrogen dioxide in silo gas mixes with the moisture in the body, forming nitric acid. This causes severe burning and scarring in the lungs and other parts of the respiratory system. Since it is heavier than air, silo gas will settle on the surface of the silage and flow down silo chutes.

Individuals exposed to silo gas may collapse and die from the gas and lack of oxygen. They may go into respiratory distress, fall down the silo/silo chute or even receive respiratory burns. Symptoms may/may not be evident immediately. Anyone who has been exposed to (or potentially exposed to) silo gas should get fresh air immediately and see a doctor, even if they feel 'better' after getting some fresh air. Prevention is critical to begin with, but proactive care is also essential. To prevent silo gas exposure, the following steps are recommended:

1. Stay out of the silo for 2-3 weeks after filling. This is the peak period of silo gas formation. Keep the silo room closed off from the rest of the barn, and ventilate it to remove any gas that may flow down the chute.
2. Before entering a silo for the first time, run the forage blower for 30 minutes, and leave it running while inside. Also, ventilate the chute and silo room. Always have someone else with you outside the silo to go for help if needed.
3. If you must enter a silo to level off or set up an unloader after filling, do so immediately after the last load is in. Do not wait until after supper or the next day. Run the blower while you are inside.
4. Be aware that the forage blower air may not adequately ventilate a partly filled silo, since silo gas settles down on the surface. Leave silo doors open to allow gas to escape, but be sure to close off and ventilate the silo room.
5. Invest in portable gas monitors to test for nitrogen dioxide and oxygen levels. This is the only way to be certain the atmosphere is safe to enter.

(Edited from an article by M. Rankin, U of WI Extension)

When it comes to silo gas... prevention is critical to begin with, but proactive care is also essential.

Reasons why cows don't eat...

Here are some reasons why cows don't eat. Keep in mind that it isn't always the ration.

- ⇒ **WATER** – do your cows get enough water, and is the water fresh and clean? Make sure water is available at all times, and that water troughs are cleaned and maintained on a regular basis. Water quality is also something to have checked periodically.
- ⇒ **FACILITIES** – do your facilities make eating difficult? Can cows access feed readily and is there feed in front of them all the time? Quality and availability matter.
- ⇒ **RESTING AREAS** – make sure cows have adequate room to lie down, using appropriate bedding materials that offer comfort. It is important that these areas are kept dry and clean.
- ⇒ **FEET PROBLEMS** – is lameness a problem on your farm? Are feet trimmed regularly?
- ⇒ **MASTITIS** – this potentially impacts feed intake, as well as the health and well being of your cows. Evaluation of milking procedures can sometimes help to detect and reduce the incidence of mastitis in your herd.
- ⇒ **VENTILATION** – no matter what time of year it is, cows benefit from good ventilation.
- ⇒ **LABOR** – make certain that your labor force does what is expected. This can have a big impact on how your cows perform. Policies and procedures, as well as protocols for feeding and milking, will benefit your productivity!

PLAN FOR SPRING 2014

Ask for Details

W-S FEED... planting quality!

Time to deworm your livestock!

Winter is coming... and this is an excellent time to deworm your livestock. Worms can cause loss of weight, reduce the rate of gain, and may create other health concerns. Consider deworming ~ an investment that makes a difference. Ask for details today... for results!



Interested in discussing topics in this newsletter, or to do a better job feeding and managing your cows? Call us today. Our goal and commitment is to help you!

VOLUME 3 – Number 10 – October 2013
THE TEAM FOR RESULTS
SOLUTIONS FOR SUCCESS

Calves & Cold!

As temperatures begin to drop it is important to ensure your calves get the energy and nutrition they need to maintain body temperature and growth. One way to help ensure these demands are met is to increase the amount of MILK REPLACER they receive each day, along with a quality calf starter such as our line of products. Ask us about an easy-to-use chart that can help 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! You'll appreciate the results.

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



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Observing cows makes a difference

How much time do you spend watching your cows? Observing your cows on a regular basis is important. Consider these things:

- **Two hours before milking, are less than 20% standing in stalls?** *This is a reflection of cow comfort. A comfortable cow will spend at least 12 hours a day resting (lying down). The longer they stand the greater chance of developing lameness problems. Comfort improves production!*
- **When walking through the milking herd, are 50 to 70% of the cows chewing their cuds?** *Healthy cows chew their cud. This acts as a buffer to feeds and can help increase dry matter intake, helping to prevent lameness, DAs, etc.*
- **Just before feeding, take a few minutes to look in the feedbunk and see if it still contains quality feed - not just cobs or long-stemmed fiber. When you feed, are there cows waiting for their turn to get to the feedbunk for something to eat?** *It is important to keep feed in front of cows all the time. More feed intake often means more milk.*
- **Are water troughs clean, easily accessible after milking, and do they provide an adequate supply of water for all cows to drink?** *Fresh, clean water encourages intakes and aids feed digestion. Make sure there are sufficient water tanks for all your cows!*

October 2013

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CHECK IT OUT!