



DAIRY INFO

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Taking service to another level

Fly Control... An Issue to Tackle on the Farm This Spring & Summer!

Warm weather (and sometimes hot weather) and more-humid conditions are all part of the coming of spring and summer. This creates ideal conditions for flies and other insect pests. That makes this an excellent time to focus on preventing the problems caused by flies for cows and calves, and optimum production goals. Flies can be costly to a dairy herd (especially calves and replacement heifers) by reducing feed intake and helping to carry or transmit diseases and other pathogens. Proper control of flies and their effects can be a challenge for many farmers. Prevention and appropriate management depends upon the fly species in question.

Some of the most common irritating flies are:

1. **Horn flies (*Haematobia irritans*)** - this is one of the most serious and injurious pests for cattle, since they are known for transmitting mastitis-causing bacteria. These flies spend most of their time on the animal and take 20 to 30 blood meals a day. The resulting pain and annoyance interferes with feeding, resting and other routine behaviors of cattle.
2. **Face flies (*Musca autumnalis*)** - face flies are considered to be another significant pest of cattle (and livestock). These flies spend most of their time feeding on mucous secretions from around the eyes and mouth of cattle, while sucking on areas around the mouth. They tend to cause irritation and can spread the bacteria that cause pinkeye.
3. **Stable flies (*Stomoxys calcitrans*)** - the bites inflicted from these flies are very painful. They take 2 to 3 painful blood meals/day, usually on the legs of cattle or other livestock. Stable flies cause cattle to bunch up, stomp and kick.
4. **House flies (*Musca domestica*)** - house flies spend their time feeding on decaying organic matter and spoiled feed. Their eggs are laid in rotting organic matter, such as old hay or manure. This fly species causes mild irritation to livestock.

Preferred practices for managing fly infestation:

1. **Ear Tags** are recommended for flies that spend most of their time on the host. These flies include the horn flies and face flies. Although ear tags are recommended, farmers need to remember there is a *limited lifespan* for ear tags. It is suggested to wait for the fly season to attach the ear tags. If you have attached ear tags previously, it might be worthwhile to review the suggested efficacy date and attach new tags. Another tip is rotating between organophosphate and pyrethrin-based ear tags, as it will slow fly resistance to the chemicals.
2. **Pour-ons** are a fly control method that may assist in protecting against all species. This treatment is labor

intensive and must be repeated often for continued results.

3. **Insect growth regulators (IGRs)** can be used in feed rations to prevent development of several fly species in manure. IGRs should be fed *throughout* the fly season in order to maintain complete control over flies.
4. **Environmental control** is an important element in controlling the house fly population, as a means of reducing their nesting environment. Management is really critical to the success of this approach.
5. Other options for managing flies and problems linked with flies include such things as parasitic wasps, back rubbers and commercially-available traps.

W-S Feed encourages you to work with our representatives in developing a comprehensive approach to dealing with flies and fly-related concerns on your farm. There are a variety of products available to assist your efforts. When used as part of a comprehensive, multiple-approach management system you can effectively reduce fly numbers in and around livestock and help to alleviate many concerns related to these small pests in coming weeks and months. While they may be small, they can bring along a HUGE cost to any farming operation! Ask your W-S representative for more information.

Although there are many recommended management practices for controlling flies, the best fly control strategy varies by geographical location, rainfall, stocking density and management. You may need to use several different forms of fly control throughout the season to ensure better control. It is always a good idea to seek advice from your veterinarian/nutritionist for more definite recommendations specific to your operation.

Effectively working to control flies around your cattle and livestock can contribute to improving the health and productivity of your operation, and aid the development of heifers and calves.

(Edited from an article by the Dairy Calf & Heifer Association, 2012)



*Interested in discussing topics in this newsletter, or want to do a better job feeding and managing your cows Call W-S Feed & Supplies!
Our goal is to help you. That's the W-S commitment!*

VOLUME 3 – Number 4 – April 2013
THE TEAM FOR RESULTS
SOLUTIONS FOR SUCCESS

PLAN AHEAD!

FOR HEAT STRESS BEFORE IT HAPPENS!

Check with me on ideas and tips that can make a valuable difference this summer: reviewing rations, facilities and programs to help reduce the threat and impact of heat stress on your cows. You'll enjoy the difference... and so will the cows!

Adequate Energy in Rations

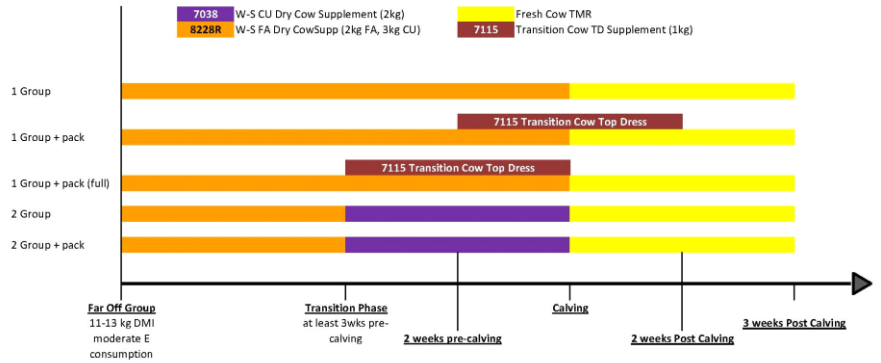
Airflow and/or Sprinklers for Better Cow Cooling

Fresh Clean Water at All Times

Protection from Direct Exposure to the Sun

PROGRAM FEEDING GUIDE DRY COW PROGRAM SELECTION

W-S Feed offers a comprehensive dry cow program that can help make a difference to your operation. The chart below offers product suggestions within the dry and transition timeframe for your herd. Ask your W-S representative for more information and a copy of our brochure: A BLUE PRINT FOR DRY COWS. Managing and feeding dry cows will impact them into and throughout their lactating cycle, while improving your bottom line.



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Dry Cow Program Selection
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CHECK IT OUT!

