



January 2016

DAIRY NEWSLETTER

Wishing you a happy, healthy and prosperous new year!

The team of veterinarians and staff at the Kirkton Veterinary Clinic would like to extend greetings to you and your family during this holiday season and wish you nothing but success in 2016.

Thank you for your commitment to producing safe, high quality milk and for allowing us to be an integral part of your dairy's management team. If you have any suggestions on how we can assist you in making your new year's goals a reality, please do not hesitate to contact us, or speak with your herd health veterinarian.

See us at the London Dairy Congress February 4-5, 2016

We are pleased to be teaming up with the London Dairy Congress to bring information and hands on skills to dairy producers from across the province.

The Kirkton Veterinary Clinic will be on hand providing information about the Dairy Tech pasteurizers and associated products. ProVitro IVF Services will also be on hand to provide information about its in vitro fertilization services and other embryo technologies.

In addition, Dr. Reg Clinton will be offering a seminar on Reproductive Technologies, where participants will learn about the reproductive cycle of the cow, synchronization programs and will be taught and able to practice artificial insemination techniques.

Dr. Katharine Found will be offering a seminar on Calf Health Management, where participants will focus on best management practices to improve calf health and provide participants the opportunity to practice essential skills necessary for excellent calf-rearing.

Check out the London Dairy Congress website at <http://www.westernfairdistrict.com/londondairycongress>

Calf Management Club Reminder

We are still looking for 1 or 2 more participants for our Calf Management Club. Please call the clinic ASAP to add your name to the list.

A reminder that a focus farm group organizes topics and discussions around the questions posed, and the experiences gained, by the group participants.

\$25 per farm

Minimum of 3 sessions. Date, time and location TBD (January-April). Lunch included

Call the clinic today if you are interested in being a part of this exciting learning opportunity!

Stall Design

Does your new year have plans for a new facility, or upgrades to your current barn?

With the implementation of animal care assessments as part of the ProAction program, hock, knee and neck injuries will all be assessed and actions may be necessary to reduce the incidence of injury on your farm. Many of these issues can be prevented with proper stall design and adequate, good quality bedding. This will be the first of a series of newsletters addressing stall design with respect to cow comfort and welfare.

Stalls must be the correct size:

Cows require a stall that is large enough to allow the animal to stand up and lay down with ease and comfort.

Stall designs will vary between free stall and tie stall barns, however stalls should ideally match the actual size of cows on your farm. The chart beside provides estimates of stall size for various cow sizes and clearly shows the variation.

| Stall Dimension (inches) | Body Weight Estimate (lb) | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| | 1000 | 1200 | 1400 | 1600 | 1800 |
| Total stall length facing a wall | 96 | 96 | 108 | 120 | 120 |
| Distance from rear curb to brisket locator | 64 | 66 | 68 | 70 | 72 |
| Center-to-center stall divider placement (stall width) | 44 | 46 | 48 | 50 | 54 |
| Height of brisket locator above stall surface | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Height of upper edge of bottom divider rail above stall surface | 11 | 11 | 12 | 12 | 12 |
| Height below neck rail | 44 | 46 | 48 | 50 | 52 |
| Horizontal distance between rear edge of neck rail and rear curb for mattress stalls | 64 | 66 | 68 | 70 | 72 |
| Rear curb height | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 |

Stalls must provide adequate lunge and bob space:

When the cow rises, she moves her head forward in a lunging motion to take the weight off her rear legs, to facilitate rising. The head is lowered, almost to the surface she is resting on, and then "bobs" upward. We refer to the horizontal area in front of the resting space as lunge space and the vertical area at the end of the lunge as the bob zone.

Failure to provide adequate lunge and bob space will alter the way cows use the stalls in subtle ways. Ideally, cows will lie straight in a stall. Lunge and bob space directly in front of the animal, at the same angle that they lie. Therefore, if a stall fails to provide adequate length, a cow will choose diagonal lying and will want and need to side lunge.

Side lunging is often observed in cows in head-to-head stalls when inadequate stall length is provided. Some cows will not lie straight or lunge into a cow facing her, leading to diagonal lying and side lunging. In order to provide adequate length for front lunging, head to head stalls must be 17 ft (5.18m) vs. 10 ft (3.05m) for wall facing stalls.

Diagram 1: Lying position in head-to-head and side wall facing stalls and how it is influenced by stall width and length and the presence of a social obstruction in front of the stall.

