



NEWS FROM MEDA

NOVEMBER 2010

SUMMING IT ALL UP *by the MEDA Team*

The following articles are summarizations of the 2010 Dealer Meeting Held in October. We wanted to take time and reflect on the highlights of the meeting and keep them fresh in our minds as we start a new year!

I wanted to talk about our 2010 Dealer Meeting. The theme of the meeting was "Creating Your Future". We presented sales volumes on 10 large dairies that had a total of 84,000 cows. The focuses being that the large dairies are the future of our businesses. The cow numbers will stay the same, but will be concentrated on large dairies. The sizes of dairies are changing, "Do our sanitation Programs have to change to keep and attract new business?" The speaker we had on Saturday morning talked about change and the changes that will happen in the next few years. The question is can we have the same sanitation program for both a 50-cow dairy and a 500-cow dairy? What are the advantages a milking equipment dealership has in selling chemicals versus a chemical company selling direct. The obvious answer is service. So how does a milking equipment dealership position its service, both scheduled and emergency, to eliminate the possible threat of a company direct program? That's the change that dealer will have to address if they are going to keep and expand their large dairy.

The way MEDA does business with our suppliers gives us excellent pricing and service. Ecolab is positioned with the M-1 Program and the Margin Max System to provide products at bulk pricing. This gives our dealers an advantage most of our competitors don't have. Milk-Rite has given our dealers an exclusive on the Impulse Liner and Mouth Piece Vent (MV). These advantages won't last forever. The real danger is sitting back and not using these advantages to expand your customer base. If you don't, eventually one of your competitors or an outside distributor or manufacturer will go after your large dairies with direct pricing. Now is the time to look at the future and base your sanitation program on your biggest advantage-service. MEDA can help. If you are interested in sitting down and taking a look at your program and see how it can be improved.

Thanks for your support! Reed

Paul wants to thank everyone who attended this year's dealer meeting, for taking time out of their busy schedules to make the trip to Wisconsin Dells. All of you who did not get a chance, I encourage you to contact a dealer who did and find out what they took away from the meeting.

I would label this year's meeting "The GPS Meeting." I am forever getting grief from friends and family about my use of my GPS in my truck. I have always said "I just follow the purple line and it always gets me to where I am going." Of course it is not without unnecessary turns and detours from time to time but it always gets me to that final destination. I am well aware I can probably find a way to get there in less time than the GPS route. But, if the destination is one I am not yet familiar with, a considerable amount of stress is eliminated by that "Purple Line." If we all just had a few more of those lines in our lives I truly believe the world would be a happier place. Now I am not saying that the meeting was able to show everyone the way to their destination in less time than it takes to move your kids into college, but it was able, in my mind, to help show what it is going to take to get there, and illustrate the people and tools already in place to help you. Change is difficult, sometimes almost impossible, but it is also inevitable. The industry we work in is changing. The meeting was able to look at that change and help us all realize that although it is inevitable it is not inevitably bad. Opportunities exist, always have and always will. As Thomas Edison said "Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work." Work for everyone, dealer, distributor and manufacturer but isn't that opportunity really what we are all looking for? Take a moment to think about what opportunities exist in your dealership. Are they limited by people? Are they limited by equipment? Are they limited by procedures and programs? I encourage you to take the time to honestly evaluate these limiting factors. Identify who and what can help eliminate them and seize the opportunity. As it was also said at the meeting, "you only get one chance to ask some girls to the dance". Large dairies are here, larger dairies are coming and that can be said for all regions. How does one address their needs and become their preferred provider? That is the question and the opportunity.

For those that attended, "Thanks." For those who did not, "Hope to see you next year." Paul

SUMMING IT ALL UP cont'd

BY THE MEAD TEAM

It was sure nice seeing all of you and your spouses at the Dealer Meeting this past month. I hope everyone was able to enjoy themselves. I was glad to see that most of you were able to incorporate your families into the trip. Wisconsin Dells and the Chula Vista offer so much. It seems to be the perfect location. Although if you have any suggestion please float them our way for next year.

“Creating Your Business Future” was the overall theme. Hopefully we were able to bring it home for you with some ideas for your individual businesses. I thought Reed’s study with the 10 Large Dairies provided some excellent information to evaluate your own route program. It created benchmarks as well as identified opportunities. The future lies with bigger dairies! Do you have a large dairy route program? If you would like to perform the same study with your dairies and would like the spreadsheet that was used, please get back to us. You don’t have to recreate the wheel. Thanks to those (5) dealers that participated in the study!

Another opportunity that hit home with me was Tom Wall’s presentation on, “Your Team Creates your Future.” Are you satisfied with your team? Does your team understand their responsibilities? Is your team motivated to sell? Do you feel that you have some holes in managing your team? All very relevant questions that directly apply to our businesses and should be revisited on a regular basis. Tom can be a terrific resource in helping provide direction and organization in developing your team!

There is no doubt that everyone that presented shared OPPORTUNITIES. Paul, Mark & John showed Milk-Rites growth with the IMPULSE Liner. EXCLUSIVITY with the Vented Mouthpiece belongs to MEDA...They work! Let’s use this new sought after innovativeness to enhance our position on existing farms or to go after new farms!

Bill & Lydia provided insight on Dairy Comp as well as showed terrific numbers on the ABS Valiant Products, especially the Pre-Post, Valiant Pre and Shield. All Premium Products and Premium Margins. **Don’t forget to stock up on the Valiant Pre Post, Buy (18) 55’s get (2) 55’s FREE or Buy (11) 55’s get (1) FREE. All orders must be submitted prior to December 1st and delivered by December 31st.**

M1 / Bulk Chemical sales are growing exponentially! They are the future! We now have a barrier dip and soon will have a non-iodine dip also. Take the time to evaluate your program and see if this is something that can work for your dealership.

Jason introduced the new wash-up program called Quality Chexx. It is nothing but a huge resource and I’m glad to see we are better marketing the program. It’s another pro-active approach in helping maintain a system that cleans properly. Thanks to all that signed up!

I hope I was able to provide some value also with the Marketing Support Guide. We’ve got quite a few dealers using the sell-in flyers and having success. If you haven’t tried them, I think it’s just another opportunity to help sell more product. It’s another way to get our Reps out from underneath the umbrella of delivery and get them more into sales. Market specific testimonials have also been popular. We’ve all got producers that are happy with our products...Let’s take that success and use it to get more business. Our website is growing in popularity. Are you using it? We have producers using it!. If you would like to change your page, let me know. We can help with truck decaling, newspaper ads, special flyers, sales meetings, producer meetings and customizable literature. It’s as easy as giving me a call. Change is all around us! Opportunity is all around us! It’s how we take advantage of this that Creates our Business Future! Our Team is ready and stronger than ever!

Thanks so much for all your support this past year and lets make 2011 one to remember! Scott

2010 SANIATION SCHOOL

Our 2010 Sanitation School is set for December 14th and 15th. On the 14th Ken Kirn will be conducting CSA 2010 training. This is a new regulation that went into effect on January 1, 2010 and sets up a point system for the company and driver for any violation of the vehicle. The training is broken into 4 parts of HM 126 126. They are General Awareness, Function Specific, Safety and Security. Ken will be going over the General Training. The training will last approximately 2 hours and attendees will receive a certificate upon completion. It is a training you won’t want to miss.

We do need to know who is attending so Ken can make sure he has enough materials for everyone.

It will be held at the Royal Inn, Stevens Point, WI. Make sure you call now for reservations:

PHONE NUMBER FOR RESERVATIONS IS: 715-341-5110.

Tuesday training will start at 1:00 p.m. sharp! Wednesday meeting will start at 8:00 a.m. sharp!

Milk Quality Challenge Workshop Offers... A NEW APPROACH TO SELL LARGE DAIRIES!

By Scott Horton-MEDA

I recently attended a Milk Quality Challenge Workshop that was put on by ECOLAB in Grand Rapids Michigan. There were 15 attendees, ranging from dealer owners to route specialist, to field reps. We had Bill Schellinger, Route Specialist, from Gehrigs Sales & Services from Rubicon Wisconsin and Dan Von Wahlde and Jason Koerth from ECOLAB that attended from our area. The speakers were Stan Palmer & Jason Koerth from the ECOLAB Agri Team, Dr. Roger Thomson, Vet/Consultant ABS and Dr. Neil Michael from Vita Plus.

Day (1) of the workshop was a class room environment focused on the contributing factors of quality milk. We were able to learn what the plant side expects from the producer as well as developed a much clearer understanding on how premiums are paid out for milk quality from the producer. More importantly we learned how to analyze each area of the dairy's facility, personnel, processes, systems and equipment. All are very important in performing a complete analysis with your existing producers or new potential producers.

Day (2) found us broke into (3) teams of (5). Each team had (4) hours on a commercial dairy farm to analyze and develop a power point presentation as it relates to their specific milk quality program. You had complete access to all aspects of the dairy to help generate your recommendations. A wash-up was performed, flow rates and pulsators were analyzed, milking routines and equipment were observed as well a walk through of the free stall barn and an interview with the producer him self. Once we generated the presentation we had to present it to a panel of judges. This entire format was modeled after the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge. Bill Schellinger and myself were fortunate enough to have our team be chosen as the overall winners of the completion! It was a very rewarding experience for both of us!

The take away from this is that we gained another resource or tool for our arsenal in not only expanding existing opportunities in dairies we currently service, but to go after new business in competitive dairies. More of these big dairies are looking for a more formal-professional approach to communicate concerns as well as opportunities. A power point presentation can make this happen. We have a terrific team consisting of YOUR DEALERSHIP, MEDA, ECOLAB, ABS and MILK-RITE to bring this all together. Let's identify a new dairy and schedule a wash-up. Listed below is a suggested process....

1. Identify an opportunity —New Dairy or Existing Route Customer.
2. Schedule a wash-up utilizing a Rep from our Dealership, MEDA & ECOLAB..
3. Together analyze the dairy's milk quality program and identify the opportunities.
4. Generate the presentation utilizing Milk Quality Power Point template.
 - A. I / Scott Horton can organize the data into the presentation.
5. Schedule an appointment with the Producer utilizing once again the TEAM.
 - A A Rep from your Dealership, MEDA & ECOLAB.
6. Present the data. Presentation should not wait more than (1) week wash-up.
 - A Dealership should be prepared to follow up within (3) days after data is presented..

It's the perfect formula for success. Please contact myself, Paul or Reed to get the ball rolling. We are hoping to conduct at least 1-2 more Milk Quality workshops in 2011.

Good Selling—Scott

400,000 Reasons to Focus on Milk Quality

by Roger S. Thomson, D.V.M. Team Management Concepts

As a veterinarian who is passionate about animal health and producing high quality dairy foods, I am embarrassed as I watch the EU force us (the U.S. dairy industry) to produce milk with a SCC below 400,000. Why haven't we chosen to establish this SCC level on our own? I know the arguments. Our PMO is focused on food safety, not quality and shelf life issues, and there is no research to date that connects a cell count up to 750,000 with any increased disease risk from human consumption. The problem is today's consumer views food safety and quality as synonymous and we need to have the same view.

Ironically this SCC reduction mandate is in direct conflict with a major paradigm shift which is currently underway in the U.S dairy industry. What is the paradigm shift? We appear determined to replace the "Gold Standard" for dairy cow bedding of new, washed, dry sand with something else. I use the term *Alternative Bedding Systems* to describe everything other than deep-bedded, dry, washed, virgin sand in well designed freestalls that keep cows comfortable and clean. Dr. Andy Johnson puts it this way, "Once you walk away from the gold standard, you choose your own poison for milk quality problems".

I know the arguments for this paradigm shift sound reasonable. The increasing pressure from manure management regulations, the cost of buying bedding, the lure from green energy, the wear and tear on equipment to pump and haul sand, the increasing availability of equipment that promises to produce bedding for "free", the improved cow comfort with bedded pack areas and other regional factors. However the dirty little secret is, when you stop using the gold standard bedding, you will have more clinical mastitis and increased BTSCC.

Over the years I have seen versions of the following Alternative Bedding Systems. Chopped straw, whole straw, chopped hay, recycled sand, manure squeezings after a digester (DMS or Bio-Solids), manure squeezings from raw manure, green sawdust, dry sawdust, corn stalks, bean stubble, chopped paper, ground cereal boxes (with cereal), dry grain hulls, dirt lots groomed, dirt lots un-groomed, manure packs groomed, manure packs un-groomed, bare cement, mattresses, deep bedding, shallow bedding, no bedding. I observe tremendous variation in milk quality results from alternative beddings. No two recycled sands or manure solids are the same. It's all about moisture and organic load. Obviously drier is always better. Bacteria die or form spores without moisture. Organic load is the newest measurement offered during laboratory analysis of alternative beddings. Organic loads above 5% appear to increase the risk of clinical mastitis cases. The more organic load in any type of bedding, the greater the risk for clinical mastitis cases. As Dr. K. Larry Smith, Professor Emeritus from the OARDC in Wooster, Ohio and world renowned expert on environmental mastitis pathogens recently said, "Someday I would like to meet the so and so who decided it was a good idea to have dairy cows lay down on their own shit!" I agree with you Dr. Smith.

When it comes to interpreting the CFU counts of bacteria in bedding material, there are no clearly defined cut points to determine good versus bad bedding. 1 million CFU's/gm of bedding has been used as a dividing line in the past. This number came from 1 line in a research paper published several years ago and does not reflect the variation I see on farms that are experiencing increased cases of mastitis from environmental pathogens that are no where near the million CFU threshold. Research 3 years ago by Dr Nigel Cook from the University of Wisconsin suggested that coliform counts in bedding as low as 250,000 appeared to drive an increase in clinical coliform mastitis cases on certain farms. I observed a few farms this past winter that voluntarily reduced the amount of fresh water being used to rinse recycled sand during mechanical separation and subsequently experienced a significant increase in clinical mastitis cases when the sand with a higher organic load was put back under the cows.

So for me the bottom line is, "Cows Don't Lie" and a dairy cow is a nearly perfect, portable, microbiological laboratory. She is constantly reporting to us the delicate balance between Resistance versus Exposure that her mammary gland is experiencing in the environment we ask her to live in.

400,000 Reasons to Focus on Milk Quality cont'd

by Roger S. Thomson, D.V.M. Team Management Concepts

Max Cow Comfort

Strong Immune Function

Excellent Nutrition

80% Smooth Teat Ends

80% Smooth Teat Skin

Excellent Milking Prep

Efficacious Pre & Post Teat Dips

Iodine or Acidified Sodium Chlorite

Correctly functioning milking equipment

Overcrowding

Acidosis/Mycotoxins

Alternative Beddings

Dirty Cows

Hyperkeratosis

Milking Dirty Teat Ends

Teat Dip Formulation Matters

Bleach or Cheap Peroxides

Mal-functioning milking equipment



As the scale shows increasing your cow's resistance will decrease the incidence of mastitis. Conversely, if resistance remains constant but exposure increases, mastitis cases will increase. Your cows will not lie.

Let's use this concept to trouble shoot a dairy with an increased incidence of mastitis this summer. The types of mastitis cases in this herd ranged from Grade 1's (abnormal milk) to Grade 2's (abnormal milk with a swollen quarter) to Grade 3's (toxic mastitis with a swollen quarter). Culture results from clinical cases revealed environmental strepts and coliforms as the predominant pathogens. Several of the Grade 3 cases either died or had to be culled. So what caused this summer time flare-up?

A. Decreased Resistance

1. Heat stress and lower Dry Matter Intakes decreased the herd's immune function.
2. Heavy spring calving lead to overcrowding stress
3. Low milk prices delayed milking equipment maintenance leading to slow take-offs.
4. Delayed take-offs created overmilking and lead to excessive hyperkeratosis

B. Increased Exposure

1. Feed quality changed with a greater risk of molds and mycotoxins in the summer heat.
2. Bedding CFU counts increased in warm weather...especially coliforms.
3. Dirtier cows entering the parlor put pressure on the milkers to clean teats completely.
4. New milkers and a hot parlor lead to dirty teat ends when units were attached.

With decreased resistance and increased exposure the obvious result is increased clinical mastitis. And for every new clinical case, your herd is being infected with 3-5 subclinical cases. Remember these are true infections; they just have normal looking milk so they go unnoticed for extended periods of time. Only the increase in SCC will identify these mastitis cases. This explains why your BTSCC stays high for weeks to months after you make changes to decrease the incidence of new clinical mastitis cases.

400,000 Reasons to Focus on Milk Quality cont'd

by Roger S. Thomson, D.V.M. Team Management Concepts

Because the new 400,000 BTSCC is a rolling 3 month geometric average, you cannot take the risk of just keeping your monthly average under the 400 limit. One expert is suggesting that to be safe you need to keep your BTSCC in the 250-275 range consistently to protect yourself from an unexpected SCC spike pushing your average over 400.

The 3 critical points necessary to reduce and maintain a low BTSCC are:

1. Maintain your milking equipment in good working order. Have it evaluated regularly by a trained professional. Get a second opinion from an independent expert if you have unanswered questions
2. Keep your cows clean and comfortable all the time. Be careful not to eliminate critical feed ingredients during tight financial times. Immune function is important for milk quality and reproduction.
3. The milking prep procedure is critical in reducing new environmental mastitis cases. Low bacteria counts on the teat ends make the difference. Bacteria can be wiped off or killed. Towel work by the milkers is essential with wiping teat ends the most critical step. The germicide in the pre dip must be able to kill 5 logs of bacteria even in the presence of heavy organic loads from alternative beddings.