**NAVAN VETERINARY SERVICES MAY NEWSLETTER**

This month’s newsletter will summarize Part 2 from our annual spring producer meeting hosted together as a joint meeting with Navan and Rideau St. Lawrence Vet Clinics. Again, Dr.Robert Tremblay was our guest speaker. The second part of the talk that say was titles **Targeted Dry Cow Treatment.**

* The 3 main expectations we have for dry cow treatment are: i) Cure an existing udder infection, ii) Prevent a new infection from occurring during the dry period and iii) Reduce the risk of clinical mastitis hen the cow freshens.
* Although the National Mastitis Council still recommends blanket dry cow therapy, there is a growing movement in many countries, including Canada that is questioning the rational of using important antibiotics in cows that are not actually infected.
* Like it or not, the Canadian government is scrutinizing the use of all antibiotic use in agriculture, particularly those classes of antibiotics that are deemed especially important in human medicine. Effectiveness of existing drugs is reducing faster than the development of new ones.
* In 2017, Dr. Tremblay was part of a European panel of mastitis experts to discuss the logistics of implementing a selective dry cow program… to provide guidance to producers and vets on what constitutes a “high risk vs low risk herd”. The discussion involved blanket dry treatments, and selective dry treatments with an internal teat sealant.
* Because many European countries had already implemented selective dry cow therapy, they had some data to analyse.
* The group proposed looking at the **herd** and **individual** cows as high or low risk.
* Their definition of a high-risk **herd**, and one that should use blanket treatment were : i) bulk tank SCC of greater than 250,000 cells/ml in 2 of the past 6 months, ii) a herd with a Strep ag problem and iii) a herd experiencing exceptional, unavoidable, specific risk periods of mastitis.
* At the **cow** level, high risk cows were defined as ones that have more than 200,000 cells/ml on at least one of the past 3 test days before drying off and cows that had a clinical mastitis event in the same time frame ( past three test days) before dry-off.
* All cows, regardless of dry treating with antibiotics or not, benefited from the use of an internal teat sealant.
* At the cow level, the use of California Mastitis Test (CMT) was as good as electro conductivity and almost as good as SCC in predicting a mastitis event. This old but very cost effective and accurate tool will become an important part of the decision to dry treat or not.

Some of our producers have already ventured down this road. Trying to get a cow down to 12-15 kg of milk before abruptly drying her off is important. They have had to pay extra attention to the cow’s environment in her dry and transition housing. Clean, dry, comfortable and a balanced ration will go a long way to keeping her stress free with a strong immune system. Selective dry cow therapy can see an economic benefit if implemented with careful decision making.