

SPRING 2016

HEIFER NOTES

Growing Our Future™



DCHA

DAIRY CALF & HEIFER ASSOCIATION

MOVING FORWARD



APRIL 11-13, 2016
MADISON, WIS.

Move your business forward at annual DCHA conference



Registration is open for the Dairy Calf and Heifer Association annual conference, April 11-13, 2016 at the Madison Marriott West in Middleton, Wis. This year's conference lineup includes programs and panel discussions about current information calf and heifer raisers need to be competitive in today's market. Topics include nutrition, reproduction, teamwork and much more.

Attendees might already be familiar with one conference speaker, who has more than a quarter-million followers on Facebook. Greg Peterson is one of the Peterson Farm Brothers, whose videos

of pop song parodies have received millions of views on YouTube. Peterson will share his experience using social media to advocate for agriculture and how conference attendees can as well.

Sponsorship opportunities for this can't-miss event are available. Contact kanderson@calfandheifer.org to learn more.

For more information about the 2016 Dairy Calf and Heifer Association Annual Conference or to join DCHA, visit www.calfandheifer.org, call (855) 400-3242 or email info@calfandheifer.org.

This conference has been pre-approved by the American Registry of Professional Animal Scientists for as many as 8 continuing education units (CEU's). Participants can request credits for this event at www.arpas.org or by emailing kelsey@assoqh.org.

UW Vet School and lab tours back by popular demand

The learning won't stop when the conference ends. Make plans to attend post-conference tours and demonstrations at the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Lab and University of Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine. This stop will give attendees close-up views of management techniques used at the prestigious facility. Planned demonstrations include cleaning and sanitizing automated calf feeders, evaluating scouring calves and treating dehydrated calves.

Registration for this exclusive event is on a first-come, first-served basis and is open to a limited number of attendees. Once tour capacity is reached, additional interested parties will be placed on a waiting list.



APPLY FOR THE DCHA SCHOLARSHIP



The annual \$1,000 DCHA scholarship is awarded to a student currently enrolled in an agriculture-related program at an accredited college or university. Applicants must be DCHA members or the children or legal dependents of DCHA members. For more information and to apply, go to <http://bit.ly/2016DCHAScholarship>.

**APPLICATIONS DUE:
February 19, 2016**

To take advantage of a DCHA membership, visit www.calfandheifer.org. You can also interact with DCHA on Facebook at facebook.com/CalfandHeifer and follow @CalfandHeifer on Twitter.

Rumen development and calf growth

RUMEN GROWTH: AN AMAZING TRANSFORMATION



At birth, the rumen is the size of a softball. The rumen grows to the size of a 40-gallon vat when mature.



In the first 8 weeks of life, the rumen increases in size by 150% to become roughly the size of a plastic grocery bag—large enough to fit 2 two-liter bottles.



From 8–24 weeks of age, the rumen doubles 5 times.

You see how your calves grow on the outside. Do you know how they are growing on the inside?

The first 6 months of life are critical to calf growth and development. Within this age, calves achieve 50 percent of their lifetime height and 25 percent of their lifetime weight. A primary driver to achieving these early growth goals is feeding a diet that promotes rumen development through 24 weeks of age.

The rumen is the main site for nutrient

breakdown and absorption in the cow. As a result, the rumen is highly correlated to health and performance. If a calf's rumen is not properly developed within the first 6 months of life, it could result in potential losses in milk production as a cow.

POST-WEANING AND THE RUMEN

Post-weaning diets are critical to maintain growth performance and rumen development, and set up the

transition to forage-based diets. If proper attention isn't given to rumen development, much of what was established in the pre-weaning period could be lost. An abrupt transition to a new feeding program can also disrupt the rumen ecosystem and as a result negatively impact calf growth.

To support rumen development, introduce calves to a grower grain formulated to support rumen development at 12 to 13 weeks of age, free-choice up to 10 lbs/head/day with free choice dry forage. Grower grain helps calves' rumens continue to develop by serving as a substrate for rumen microbes. Properly formulated nutrition programs create a volatile fatty acid (VFA) profile to continue to develop rumen papillae and grow the rumen volume and musculature.

Wait to introduce forages into the diet until calves are 13 weeks of age.

Management tip sponsored by Purina Animal Nutrition.

For more information on how your feeding program can impact rumen development, go to: everybasecounts.com

Conference overview

MONDAY, APRIL 11

The registration desk is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Those registered for the farm tours can join us for lunch starting at 11 a.m., followed by the tours. The trade show will be open during the three days of the conference.

Farm tours and demonstrations

Rosy-Lane Holsteins

This Wisconsin dairy farm's goals are to provide superior Holstein genetics to worldwide markets; utilize and experiment with profitable and environmentally sound technologies for plants and animals; maintain an economically viable business unit with future potential; and produce high-quality milk and receive maximum returns with minimal inputs.

Kutz Dairy Farm

This 2,200-head Jersey dairy pays very close attention to nutrition and the environment of their calves. This tour stop will include an on-farm demonstration highlighting best practices of pasteurizing waste milk.

Monday night's speaker

All conference attendees are invited to Greg Peterson's presentation to be followed by a casual networking reception. Read more about Greg on page 1.

TUESDAY, APRIL 12

The day will kick off with a high-energy keynote from Paul Vitale of Vital Communications. Other professional development sessions will focus on leadership and teamwork. Expect to be inspired to be your best self when you leave the conference.

Management sessions will focus on:

- Using antibiotics in calf raising
- Post-weaned calf nutrition
- Transitioning to organic calf and heifer raising
- Benchmarking heifers to optimize your herd's milk yield and profitability

Producer panel topics will include:

- Dairy beef production
- Building client relationships

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13

Presentations will focus on calf and heifer management. Topics will include heifer reproduction, management techniques to optimize returns on feed investment, best practices in animal welfare to support cattle development as well as consumer confidence, dairy beef production and using knowledge of calf behavior to improve growth, health and well-being.

Producer panel topics will include:

- Group housing and feeding
- Animal welfare programs

Post-conference event at the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Lab and University of Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine

Tours and demonstrations are scheduled in the afternoon. See page 1 for details.

This is a summary of the conference content. For a detailed agenda, visit the Conference page on our website www.calfandheifer.org.

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Heifer Notes is published quarterly by the Dairy Calf and Heifer Association and distributed to all DCHA members and associated organizations through a partnership with Hoard's Dairyman.

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