

## NOVEMBER 2002 - LARGE ANIMAL NEWS

**AFTER HOURS ANSWERING:** As most of you know, we have discontinued using the answering service in Eau Claire, and have gone to an answering machine in each doctor's house. This has worked well. We get your requests directly, and can check our machine from any location.

This system has only ONE DISADVANTAGE. With our current answering system, **there is no person answering the phone who will relay a cancelled call message.** If you call for assistance, you cannot cancel the call once we are on the way to your farm. The only time this tends to be an issue is for a calving. More than once since we changed systems, people called when they thought they might need assistance. They continued trying to deliver the calf, only to deliver it just prior to our arrival. Don't be too alarmed if you have an animal you suspect is having calving difficulty. Calves can survive for hours in the cow in the process of calving. Under most circumstances we receive your message anywhere from immediately after you call to 30 minutes from your call (if we're already out). Our goal is to service the majority of emergencies within 1 – 1 1/2 hours.

**EPRINEX® PRICING:** This year we teamed up with another veterinary practice to purchase Eprinex®. A larger purchase made for lower pricing; something we needed to do to be competitive with other suppliers. Our current pricing will be good through November: 5 liter containers are \$365, 2.5 liter containers are \$212, and one liter containers are \$115. We chose Eprinex® this year over Cydectin® because we felt we saw more lice outbreaks on Cydectin® than were desirable.

When using pour-on products as not only a dewormer, but especially for lice control be sure to remember: **to properly control lice all co-mingled cattle on your farm must be poured** if there is any chance of direct physical contact. If you know for sure that groups will NOT come in physical contact, then it is okay to treat select groups.

When using pour-on products, dose for body weight. Don't assume all adult cows weigh the same. Under-dosing large animals means an inadequate dose. The product used on that animal was merely wasted.

With low milk prices this year there certainly is less interest in investing in products such as Eprinex®. Sadly you still need to worry about lice control, many farms have serious mange problems, and most herds should carefully consider whether worms are an issue for their farm (depending on pasturing practices, etc). If considering product at the 5 liter price, an average cow costs approximately \$4.75 to treat with Eprinex®. If we consider \$9 milk, and a minimal ½ pound per cow response to treatment, it will take around 3 months to pay for the product. I know Merial wouldn't like my ½ pound response example, but it does show that if your cattle are at all affected by worms or lice that the product readily pays for itself. We see a lot of cattle ruined with damaged teats in winter that are directly related to scratching at lice. Mange treatment has been disappointing when spot treating individual animals. There are too many carriers in such herds, making it necessary to pour the herd for good mange control.

These days with low milk prices it is the marginal gains in health and comfort that gain you more milk and profit on cows. Investments in products such as Eprinex® are

definitely a short term out-of-pocket expense, but are a safe bet as a long term gain for your herd bottom line.

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