

Products to Always Have on Hand - Cow Toolbox



By Alex Austin, B.S.

When it comes to owning dairy cows, the question is not if there will be a health challenge, but when. Most producers carry tools on hand to be prepared for a variety of potential issues, from milk fever to mastitis. Some common tools are bottles of calcium, vet wrap, syringes, etc. This article lists

a few Crystal Creek® products that are recommended for dairy producers to carry in their toolbox.

Veterinary Dairy Liniment™

Crystal Creek® Veterinary Dairy Liniment™ is available in both a rub-on cream and spray. It can be used to address inflammation, particularly in the udder. Veterinary Dairy Liniment™ uses contrast therapy to help reduce swelling. The natural wintergreen in this liniment initially warms the tissue increasing circulation and blood flow, while the menthol and camphor components cool and assist the lymphatic system with drainage, providing relief and comfort. The lymphatic system keeps tissue healthy by bringing white blood cells to the area to fight off potential infections. The additional natural plant oils in the liniment contain proven antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties. Being proactive and treating signs of any heating or swelling immediately can help prevent future chronic problems.

Fresh-N-Easy™

Using oral calcium supplementation is a practical approach to preventing both milk fever (clinical hypocalcemia) and subclinical hypocalcemia. The Fresh-N-Easy™ boluses are an easy-to-use calcium supplement to have on hand. The smaller size makes for flexible and easy dosing. One producer's feedback:

"It's so much easier to give these boluses rather than the giant calcium boluses other companies offer. I also like that I can use more or less depending on the size of the cow and how much she needs."

Cows with subclinical hypocalcemia can be a huge expense to operations, as they do not show clinical symptoms. Research has shown, 50% of mature

dairy cows and 25% of first calf heifers experienced subclinical hypocalcemia. Identifying the higher risk cows and providing an oral calcium supplement can decrease the risk of developing clinical hypocalcemia and decreased production. Cows that are at a higher risk have experienced lameness or fluctuating body condition during the dry period, had a history of milk fever, high production during the previous lactation, and/or have had three or more lactations. Other events such as twins or retained placenta also increase the risk.

Super Boost™

The factors that can cause a cow to develop hypocalcemia can also contribute to cows developing clinical or subclinical ketosis. Pairing Super Boost™ with an oral calcium supplement can help prevent this metabolic disease from taking hold. Subclinical ketosis is more prevalent than many realize, with an average of 28.9% of cows developing it by five days postpartum. Super Boost™ delivers two essential nutrients, choline and niacin, that can help a cow during the transition period. During this period, cows dry matter intake is still increasing, but often not fast enough to meet the high energy needs of milk production as well as recovery from birth. The body will then rely heavily on the liver to process body fat quickly to deliver energy. Choline aids in this process, helping the liver to process fat and reducing chances of fatty liver. Niacin is a B vitamin that helps metabolize carbohydrates, fats and proteins in the rumen. This helps to increase dry matter intake and helps reduce body fat utilization.

Many producers may not realize how prevalent these diseases are and the economic cost it can have on their operation. A case of subclinical hypocalcemia can cost \$150 to \$226.46, subclinical ketosis can range from \$129 to \$289, and mastitis can be \$128 to \$444. Identifying these higher risk cows and taking fast steps to treat and prevent further complications are key to a profitable operation and a healthy herd. Keeping these Crystal Creek® tools on hand will help any producer be prepared when the time comes. The staff at Crystal Creek® is here to help. Please feel free to contact us with any challenges or questions.

References available upon request.