

More research needed, Bozeman official says

Weak calf remains as mystery in Montana

Much more research needs to be done before the problem of weak calf syndrome is solved. That's the opinion of Dr. Richard Derks, head of the Montana Veterinary Research Laboratory at Montana State University. Derks addressed the 27th annual Montana Nutrition Conference recently on this relatively new calf disease. The conference was sponsored by the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station.

He said the disease was first recognized in the Salmon Chautau area of Idaho in 1966 and had been spotted in the Bitter Root area of southwestern Montana as early as 1964.

Severe involvement of a number of herds occurred in the 1975 calving season throughout the mountain valleys of western Montana. Dr. Derks said. Cases also were reported in the Lewistown area and some other isolated herds.

He said death losses due to weak calf syndrome ranged from five to 40 percent in individual herds with many of the

surviving calves producing poor weight gains during the spring and summer growing period.

According to a report from Hamilton veterinarian Dr. J. S. Ward, it's too early to tell if weak calf will be a severe problem during the 1976 calving season. Most ranchers are just beginning to calf at this time.

Last year's losses ranged from 9 to 40 percent among Bitter Root herds, one of the more severe outbreaks of the past several winters.

Definite figures are not yet available from Montana Board of Health sources. Dr. Ward commented. Of 29 ranches asked to participate in a weak calf study, some 18 responded. The data is now being tabulated in Helena.

Derks said studies indicate an involvement of pregnant cows, the fetus and newborn calves in this syndrome. Pregnant cows apt to give birth to a weak calf usually show loss of appetite and weight loss during the last two months of pregnancy. The animals have an elevated temperature and labored

breathing. Calves of such animals, in numerous studies, were usually severely affected and could not withstand many of the stresses of the first days of life after birth. The absence of maternal instincts in ill cows was often observed, who also lessened the calves' chances for survival, according to Derks.

Derks also said an increase incidence of abortion and stillbirths has occurred in many herds with a history of weak calf syndrome.

Most weak calves develop signs typically the syndrome within 10 days after birth, Derks said. The symptoms include being weak and unable to stand and nurse, a reddened and crusted muzzle and lameness. Hemorrhages may be seen in the eye area. Most temperate areas usually normal but will decline below normal as death approaches. Affected calves also often will stand in their own back.

Severe diarrhea, dehydration and other complications are usually observed, Derks said mortality is extremely high in untreated cases.

Many factors involved. Derks said a fairly large number of environmental and management factors may contribute have lessened the severity of an outbreak in a given herd. Losses have been higher during colder seasons. He noted that enough cases have been seen in winter weather to eliminate inclement weather as the primary cause.

Conspicuous of the herd into a small area prior to and during calving, probably contributes to more weak calf syndrome according to Derks, as well as more diarrhea problems.

The level of nutrition also has been reported as an important factor. The most conclusive comes from a study of 1966 in Idaho which indicated a direct correlation between weak calf syndrome and the level of crude protein intake per cow per day during the last 60 days of pregnancy.

Derks said researchers have come up with some conclusive evidence on what may cause the disease, but that much still needs to be done. For example, he said, attempts to isolate microorganisms from weak calves have met with varied success. A study of other infectious agents associated with weak calf syndrome and other disease, such as brucellosis, show that these agents in weak calf herd tend to add to creating their own primary disease problems, but are not the causative agents of weak calf syndrome.

A series of vital agents have been isolated from tissues of weak calves over the last several years by investigators in Montana, Idaho and Iowa, according to Derks.

Researchers have come up with a number of treatment procedures used with varying success to increase the survival rate of weak calves.

Blasod treatments, electrolyte therapy, antibiotics and a number of supportive therapy procedures have been tried. Much of the supportive therapy is to prevent the dehydration and shock that occurs with the accompanying diarrhea or calf seems that is a contributing and closely associated problem in most weak calf syndrome herds.

Several vaccine trials and the use of new drugs such as thiamine are being studied to determine their effectiveness in preventing the heavy losses seen with weak calf syndrome.



CHANNEL OPENING — Ralph Boland, left, Fish and Game department administrator, and Dr. Donald Reschmuth, right, stand at the inlet of the old dead river channel south of the Woodside Bridge. The channel was cleared out last year in order to get water flowing more evenly under the Woodside Bridge. The officials toured

Bitter Root summaries

Stevi meeting set

Citizens in the city of Stevensville and Stevensville school district are invited to participate in a citizen review meeting scheduled at the school here in Stevensville on Wednesday, Feb. 18, at 7 p.m. in the county planning board.

The second draft of the comprehensive plan will be the topic and the subject of the opening remarks of President Phil Lusk.

Area representatives include Mrs. Lois Howard, Bill Bartholomew, Mrs. Lois Howard, Carl Bartholomew, Alan Kelley, and Bill Bartholomew. The meeting will be held to receive the comments, suggestions and questions offered by the area residents regarding the second draft plan. Each of the members have copies of the plan for their own use as residents.

At the conclusion of these citizen review meetings throughout the county, the citizens' input will be reported to the planning board and modification of the plan will be considered before the plan is taken back to the people at a scheduled public hearing.

After consideration of the recommendations received at the public hearing, the planning board will recommend the final draft of the proposed comprehensive plan to the board of county commissioners.

Event set Sunday

A joint Bitter Root fair will be held Sunday afternoon at the Woodside Campground. All three campgrounds in the Bitter Root area will be open.

The event will begin with a potluck at 1 p.m. with the carnival to follow. Bitter Root and the Bitter Root Campgrounds are open.

Two elk killed

The reported Bitter Root hunting on ranches in the Bitter Root area has been going on since the first of January. Two elk have been killed, both in the Bitter Root area. The hunters are from the Bitter Root area.

Election called

The trustee positions in the Stevensville school district are up for reelection in the upcoming board elections. Those that will expire are Bill Rogers, Stevensville, and Art Evans of Lone Rock. The Stevensville school board meets Tuesday, Feb. 16, at 7 p.m. in the school building.

Other business at the Tuesday meeting, the board will be asked to appoint a person to attend the planning board meeting on Feb. 18. The board will also be asked to appoint a person to attend the planning board meeting on Feb. 18.

UM official to speak

A noted economist from the University of Montana, Dr. J. S. Ward, will be the guest speaker at the quarterly membership meeting of the Bitter Root Chamber of Commerce, Tuesday, Feb. 17, at 7 p.m. in the chamber building.

The speaker, who serves as director of the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the university, will talk on Montana's current economic outlook.

The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. in the chamber building. Bitter Root residents should be made through the chamber office in Hamilton and will be limited to 100 members and guests.

Eight inches of snow

Storms at Lone Rock Wednesday night brought conditions following a four inch snowfall Tuesday. With an additional four inches of snow on Wednesday night, the total snowfall was eight inches.

The snow was not a problem for the Lone Rock residents, who are used to the snow. The snow was not a problem for the Lone Rock residents, who are used to the snow.

Board to meet

The Ravalli County planning board will have a meeting at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 17, in the chamber building. The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. in the chamber building.

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Should city disincorporate? meeting set here Feb. 25

By Kay Jones

The Hamilton city government study commission has been looking into the possibility of disincorporating the city and the Bitter Root school district. The city is set to hold a public hearing on Feb. 25, at 7 p.m. in the city hall to hear comments on the issue.

According to Bill Whitlock, chairman of the commission, disincorporation would mean that the city of Hamilton would be a part of the Bitter Root school district. The city would then be a part of the Bitter Root school district.

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The main advantage of disincorporation would be a reduction in taxes, he said. Hamilton residents pay an additional amount of taxes to support various

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Whitlock said there are few examples of disincorporation in the state and most cities have disincorporated because they were losing population. The city of Hamilton is not losing population.

Whitlock stressed that the study commission is open-minded about the issue of disincorporation and merely wants to get feedback on whether it is a viable option to solving Hamilton's problems.

The study commission is in both the county and incorporated cities are required to place an alternative form of government on the ballot before Nov. 2, 1976. Disincorporation is not strictly speaking an alternative form of government as such alternatives as the commission members form, and the town meeting form are, but the law allows study commission to offer it instead of an alternative form.

Report due June 1

By June 1, 1976, the latest study commission report, published, a report on its proposed recommendations and held at the city hall on Tuesday, Feb. 25, at 7 p.m. in the city hall.

The study commission will also be asked to recommend a form of government for the city. The study commission will also be asked to recommend a form of government for the city.

Bloedel speaks

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Impact of Bitter Root condemnation suit could raise Colstrip cost figure

HELENA, MT. — A spokesman for the Northern Plains Electric Co. says a recent Montana Supreme Court decision regarding an easement on a rancher's land to create a route of obtaining easements of Colstrip 1 and 2 and 3 and 4.

All MPE's reference was to a court decision upholding a rancher's \$20,000 award to a Stevensville rancher, Sam Wolfe, as compensation for an easement for a power transmission line across his property.

The ranching couple contended they should be paid the fair market value of the 20 acres if there were said to be small tracts of land in the area.

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denied to considering the rancher's entire ranch, not an small parcel, said a spokesman.

The utility argued that the value of the easement at \$20,000. The utility argued that the value of the easement at \$20,000.

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NATL OFFICIAL TO SPEAK — Bitter Root residents will have the opportunity to hear Philip A. Guarno of Washington, D.C., deputy national chairman of the Republican National Committee, at the traditional GOP Lincoln Day dinner in Stevensville, Monday evening. The event will get underway with a roast beef dinner set for 7 p.m. at the Elks temple. Guarno is a businessman, banker, civic and political leader who also is presently serving as director of special projects for the GOP National Committee. He is making three speaking appearances in Montana this month and local officials urged all citizens interested in government to attend the Monday banquet.