

mon practice to alleviate foot pain and encourage rapid recovery has been the application of various devices to the healthy claw, in an attempt to prevent the cow from bearing weight on the diseased claw until healing is complete. Published methods include attachment of a wooden block with acrylic adhesive,¹ and building up the claw with a layer of plaster cast material.² A plastic "elevators" slipper which is attached to the foot with nylon cord and tape which has a build up under the medial or lateral claw has been marketed.³

All of the above procedures have some inherent disadvantages. The foot preparation for attachment of the wooden block is time consuming. The cow's foot must be restrained until the acrylic hardens which can be delayed in cold weather. The plaster of paris is not durable enough for use in wet concrete free stall operations. The plastic "Shoofs" do not fully remove weight from the injured claw. If a claw is of unusual shape, the shoof does not fit or stay on well.

In order to overcome these problems, I have been using 3" fiberglass cast as a material to construct a buildup under the good claw. Fiberglass cast is waterproof, extremely durable under barnyard conditions, easy to apply, and rapidly cures. One roll is sufficient to treat one foot. The brand we use is "K-CAST" manufactured by Kirshner Medical Corporation, 10 West Aylesbury Rd., Timonium, MD 21093. Order number 2828-03. We charge \$9.70 per roll for the material.

Application

After the foot is trimmed and the injured claw bandaged, the cast material is activated by dropping in a bucket of hot water for about 15 seconds. One wrap is made around the pastern as an anchor, being careful to leave it loose enough so the hardened cast material will not cut into the skin on the front or back of the pastern when the cow is walking. Then the material is folded back and forth

over the bottom of the good claw to form a build-up. One final wrap is made around the toe and pastern to finish the wrap off. The cast material sets up in 2-5 minutes. If a faster exit is desired the cast may be wrapped with one layer of 4 inch Vetwrap⁴ to keep it in place and the cow immediately turned out while the cast set up is completed. This is advantageous when more than one animal needs to be treated at the same time.

There are a few idiosyncrasies one needs to be aware of to successfully use this product. It can deteriorate if stored for prolonged periods in hot conditions. We refrigerate our stock to avoid problems. The resin tends to stick to bare hands. A special lubricating cream is provided and when applied to rubber gloves, the smoothing and forming process is greatly facilitated.

A properly applied fiberglass cast should be durable on wet manure laden concrete surfaces for 3 weeks or more. This procedure is very fast and produces a durable repair for a reasonable cost. This procedure can readily be taught to clients who prefer to treat their own foot problems. When the cast procedure is routinely incorporated into the lameness treatment protocol, cows return to production much faster as they can move around and eat normally. We have documented milk losses from mild lameness episodes of as much as 30 lbs per day. Prior to extensive use of the fiberglass casts, this loss could persist for 10-14 days. Now, with rapid intervention and casting, production loss is limited to 1 or 2 days. The income gained from avoided milk loss more than pays for the procedure.

References

1. Uecker, C.F. "Bovine Lameness" Proceedings AABP 11th Annual Convention, 1978 pg 103.
2. McCampbell, Hugh "Plaster of Paris Cast as a Block Under the Good Claw in Foot Treatment" Proceedings AABP 18th Annual Convention, 1985 pg 160.
3. "Shoof" Topmilk Developments LTD. Box 522 Cambridge, New Zealand.
4. Vetwrap 3M Company, Minneapolis, MN.

Spandex and The Dairy Scene: A Fashion Glimpse From the Northeast

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In New York State, coveralls have long been the attire of choice for bovine practitioners. However, after only a few years in practice I had become disenchanted with cloth coveralls. They were too hot and heavy in the summer. My wife tired of constantly sewing rips and tears. Worst of all, laundry was a constant chore because both the coveralls and the clothes under them were dirty on a daily basis. After months of searching for a better alternative to coveralls, I was introduced to KOOL DRI RAINWEAR while visiting some veterinarians in Wisconsin. They weigh only

12 ounces yet are durable enough to survive veterinary work. While they block the wind in the winter they remain cool and breathable in the summer. Best of all, they are waterproof so manure, urine, blood, and uterine fluids do not soak through. You can wash them off after every call and when you finish for the day the clothes underneath are still clean. KOOL DRI RAINWEAR is available from several hunting and fishing catalogs as well as direct from the company. For taller people like myself, extra length may be added by contacting KOOL DRI. Addresses and phone

numbers will follow.

Much as I like the KOOL DRI RAINWEAR, there is one drawback compared to regular coveralls — there are no pockets. To solve this problem I have come up with two sources of pockets. First off, I wear a fishing vest to supply small pockets to carry items I routinely use. Needles and syringes, a penlight, and a thermometer are a few examples. With 20 pockets available you can tailor a fishing vest to your particular needs. For large pocket space I now use DUROLITE and GARDENMASTER tool aprons. These are made of DuPont Cordura material which is lightweight, durable, and washable. I have several of these “holsters” that are designed for different types of calls. One is for herd health work, one for “sick cow” calls, and one for lameness work. These are carried inside my grips (which incidently are PLANO and CONTICO plastic tool boxes) and quickly strapped onto my waist as needed. Between them, the fishing vest and holsters provide very flexible “custom made” pocket space.

I have experimented with a couple of other items to improve my practice comfort. Neoprene fishing gloves keep hands warm and dry while providing good finger dexterity. Unfortunately, they are not as durable as I had hoped. I plan to try scuba gloves this winter. I now use an Expedition Series cap made by NORTHERN OUTFIT-

TERS. Besides being warm, it absorbs sweat from the skin and wicks it away from your body. The cap is fully washable and the ear flaps can be adjusted to match temperature conditions.

My most recent project has been wearing Spandex (Lycra) tights. If you have tired legs at the end of each day you should seriously consider buying a pair. They are very comfortable and seem to massage your legs with every step. However, in spite of their light weight, they are too warm to wear when the temperature is over 75 degrees.

KOOL DRI RAINWEAR, P.O. Box 120, Reinholds, PA 17569 (800) 523-8025.

Cabelas \$40, (800) 237-4444 catalog FBB-BCA, item FB-97412

Dunns \$40, (800) 223-8667, item 10-641 color #6.

Gander Mountain \$45, (800) 558-9410, item 699 L 5653

Willow Creek Fishing Vest \$30, Cabelas catalog AFF-BAG item AB-92610 (grey), AB-92612 (loden), AB-92613 (tan).

Northern Outfitters, Expedition Series Hat (801) 224-5342

Durolite & GardenMaster, Custom LeatherCraft, 811 West 58th St., Los Angeles, CA 90037-3631 (213) 752-2221, check local hardware store

Conducting Field Trials in Your Practice: The ABC's of Getting Involved

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In recent years, there has been a continuing evolution in the professional roles assumed by the practicing dairy veterinarian. Decreasing cow and dairy farm numbers, as well as the increasing needs and expectations of remaining dairymen, have necessitated a broader involvement of the veterinarian in all aspects of the dairy operation. This approach, popularly known as Dairy Production Medicine, has been wholly embraced as a practice “modus operandi” by a growing number of dairy veterinarians and, even more commonly, most dairy practices incorporate at least some aspects of this practice philosophy in their services. While the list of potential services offered in a Dairy Production Medicine practice can be quite lengthy (e.g., ration formulation, performance records analysis, financial records analysis, milking equipment evaluation/mastitis prevention program, heifer raising evaluation, personnel training and management, sick cow treatment, etc.), it is the purpose of this paper to describe (albeit briefly due to time constraints) yet another service that could be included in a comprehensive Dairy Production Medicine program . . . the conducting of field trials on client dairies.

With the expansion of the USDA and FDA regulatory

functions, there has been a significant increase in the need for biological and pharmaceutical companies to conduct experimental trials in a “real world” clinical setting. Although this type of trial is inherently more difficult to control and monitor, regulatory requirements and/or the need to assess a product in specific “on farm” conditions necessitates this type of experimentation.

Field trials are generally conducted for one or a combination of the following reasons:

- 1) Regulatory requirement for product approval (answering formal questions of efficacy or safety).
- 2) Experimental use of an approved product in a non-traditional manner.
- 3) Use of an approved product in a particular management environment (e.g., variable geographical setting, climatic condition, housing type, etc.) to determine efficacy/safety within that specific environment.

The conduct of field trials can benefit the dairy production practitioner in a number of different ways:

- 1) Gain experience with new technologies/manage-