

Dairy Health Management Continuing Education Program

Module 7 Assignment

The objectives of this assignment are:

- ❑ To apply the information gained in this module on peripartum metabolism to an investigation of transition cow health in your practice
- ❑ To reinforce the skills and knowledge of ration assessment

Task:

- Find a herd that you feel warrants investigation of transition management
- This may be a herd that you or your client identifies as having a problem with milk fever, retained placenta, ketosis, displaced abomasum, or another problem that plausibly has a nutritional component. The problem may be new or ongoing.

Areas to investigate:

- Records and production - quantify the problem from farm records
- Rations for relevant groups – feeds (using existing analyses), amounts fed, nutrient specifications from Spartan or other nutrition program
- Examine the environment and management of a transition cow – grouping strategies, stocking density, dry period length, feeding management, diet changes, milking times, etc
 - Consider calving patterns and how it might alter things from what you see today
- Measure actual dry matter intake from relevant group(s) on at least 1 day
- Other transition cow management e.g. vaccination, prophylactic treatments, monensin use, etc.
- Tests — either already available or samples submitted as part of your investigation (examples: keto monitoring, urine pH, etc)

Put together a report:

1. Summarize the areas you investigated:
 - A few sentences to cover: “signalment” (brief summary of the herd size and basic management elements), presenting complaint, and quantification of the problem from farm records
 - Briefly outline rations and discuss the few key aspects of the diets, their delivery and consumption that you judge to be central to your problem solving. Include diet summaries as appendices.
 - Brief description of transition cow management/environment
2. Summarize hypotheses and evidence into a few key points as you would present them to the producer
3. Conclude with recommended actions to solve or improve the herd problems that you diagnosed. These should be specific, concise, and concrete, and include both immediate and longer-term recommendations.
 - Format changes for monitoring or prescribed prevention strategies as an SOP – who, what, when, by whom, how, etc
 - For a suggested environment or management change such as changing dry period length or groups, include the specifics of how it is going to be done on this farm.
 - Describe how you will monitor the success of your suggestions.

The deadline for submission is October 1, 2018. Upon completion of the assignment, you will be paired with another practitioner in the course to exchange assignments and provide each other with feedback or questions about their investigation.

You are encouraged to discuss the assignment with your program or practice colleagues. If you have questions or difficulties, please contact Cynthia Miltenburg.