

An Introduction to
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Department of Agriculture, Trade
and Consumer Protection

As the veterinary member of the Rural Electric Power Services (REPS) Program, I can offer assistance to you in a wide variety of non-electrical ways. It is apparent after working with many concerned farmers for many years that the program can be of most benefit to you by looking thoroughly at both the electrical and non-electrical aspects of your concern. While the primary focus of our assistance to you is electrical in nature, I commonly provide a variety of veterinarian checks and support services. Among the things that this may include are a milk system analysis, ration and feed evaluations, blood testing, postmortem examinations, or milk culturing depending on the particular animal health concerns on your farm. If you feel that veterinary assistance can be of benefit to you or if you would like to talk with me please call me directly at 920-901-0596 or contact me by E-mail at john.roberts@datcp.state.wi.us

I will be better able to assist you, if I can obtain some additional information prior to visiting your farm. I may contact your veterinarian, nutritionist, or milk system service person to notify them of our effort to assist you and to obtain any relevant information they might have to offer. I may also like to obtain some preliminary information from you and offer some initial diagnostic support to you. If you are using DHIA testing, I will electronically retrieve your DHIA records. The Herd Code (found in the upper left hand corner of the herd summary sheet) and the Password (10 capital letters found on the very bottom left of the herd summary sheet) that you provide will be used to do this. If you do not test with DHIA, it would be helpful if you could make available during the farm visit any relevant printouts from your farm computer system. Any relevant animal health records or test results that you can provide may also be useful. Such records may include recent milk system analysis results, milk culture results, postmortem examinations, blood test results, rumen acidosis test results, and hoof trimming notes. I would also like to review a printed summary from your milk plant of the last two year's monthly bulk weights, somatic cell counts, %butterfat, %protein, and bacteria counts.

If you are having concerns over somatic cell counts and do not have a recent bulk milk tank culture test result, then you may be asked to collect one using the sampling items that the REPS staff will send to you. The sample collected should be done according to the enclosed instructions. The program will pay for the lab cost of this test, if submitted with the enclosed form to the state diagnostic lab as listed in the instruction sheet.

If one of your major concerns is over animal losses, it can be very valuable to have some thorough diagnostic work done on a dying animal. An animal typical of the type of problems you are seeing, that is dying, has just died, or is going to be rendered or culled, should be tested. The program will pay for any relevant laboratory tests done on these animals. This can be handled in one of the following ways:

- 1) If at all possible, the best solution is to have an animal delivered, alive or just dead (within 12 to 24 hours), to either of the state diagnostic labs. These labs have excellent facilities and a

high level of experience and expertise. It is always best to call the lab and me first before taking an animal in.

- 2) As long as I am contacted beforehand, the program will also pay for the relevant lab work submitted as a result of a postmortem examination performed by your veterinarian. We can not pay the veterinary fees but can pay for pre-arranged lab tests.

Any information that you provide to me will be appreciated and will help with my effort to assist you. I will make every effort to get out to your farm as soon as is possible. I usually visit a farm independent of any electrical assistance provided by the program. If you need or want to talk, feel free to call me at anytime. The number listed below is a cellular phone number. This phone number will forward calls to me or to an answering machine if I am not available.

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