

No Lameness Excuses: Workshop Series to Address Cow Hoof Health

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EAST LANSING, Mich. -- Dairy producers know that cows with sore feet fall short of maximizing their potential for milk production and reproductive efficiency. Regardless of the cause -- thin soles, heel warts, hoof rot, ulcers, long toes or lameness -- foot problems contribute to already declining profit margins and are often cited as a primary reason for culling animals from the herd.

A series of "Healthy Hooves: No Lameness Excuses!" workshops organized by the Michigan State University (MSU) Extension Dairy Team for later this year will address many of the common questions that producers have about hoof health.

Karl Burgi, of Dairyland Hoof Care Institute in Baraboo, Wis., will cover a variety of topics during the interactive session, including hoof anatomy, causes of lameness, strategies for preventing lameness and guidelines for implementing a successful hoof health program. He will also offer pointers on selecting a hoof trimmer and maximizing the maintenance hoof trim. In addition to operating the Dairyland Hoof Care Institute, Burgi is a full-time hoof trimmer, designs upright hoof trimming chutes, and travels throughout the United States, Europe, Australia, South America and Asia conducting hoof health and lameness clinics.

Workshops will be held Dec. 15-18 at various locations across the state. Each workshop will run from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., with registration starting at 9:30 a.m.

The dates, locations and contact persons for the workshops are:

- Dec. 15 at the Franklin Inn Restaurant, Bad Axe; contact Craig Thomas, 810-648-2515.
- Dec. 16 at Quality Inn Forward's Conference Center, West Branch; contact Phil Durst, 989-826-1160.
- Dec. 17 at Smith Hall, Clinton County Fairgrounds, St. Johns; contact Faith Cullens, 989-224-5249.
- Dec. 18 at the Polkton Township Hall, Coopersville; contact Bill Robb, 616-846-8250.

A \$10 per person registration fee includes lunch and all meeting materials. Though people can register at the workshops, preregistration is requested to ensure an accurate lunch count.

Dairy producers, heifer-raising operators, farm employees, veterinarians, nutritionists and farm consultants are encouraged to attend.

In addition to the hoof trimming clinic, a supplemental program will cover assessing on-farm cow comfort, and Janice Swanson, MSU director of animal welfare, will discuss why dairy producers need to be informed about farm animal care GAAMPs (generally accepted agricultural management practices).

To register or receive more information about the workshops, please call the MSU Extension dairy educator in the county corresponding with the meeting location.

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