

River View Veterinary Service Newsletter

July 2018

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 7

215 N Main Street
PO Box 250
Port Byron, IL 61275
Office: 309.848.9093
Fax: 309.848.9094
www.riverviewvets.com



News and Upcoming Events:

- Check out the CowCalf 5 app for your smartphone for easy, cow-side records that we can help you manage!

*Welcome to the River View Veterinary Service Newsletter,
designed to provide cattle producers with
timely information and education on a variety of topics.
Sarah Foust, DVM and Terry Foust, DVM*

Managing Heat Stress

(Adapted from NDSU Publications, July 2012)

The heat of summer is here! Here's some tips to manage heat stress in your cattle:

Step one: Identify animals that are most susceptible to heat stress.

Feedlot animals that are closest to the market endpoint, very young, very old, and dark-hided animals are the most at risk. Know where the animals most susceptible to heat stress are before the danger of heat stress is present. Be prepared to have these animals as a priority in your prevention/intervention plan.

Step two: Develop an action plan for heat stress. The action plan is the essential actions you will take to protect the animals most susceptible to heat stress. The action plan should include the following:

- Animals in heat stress need to drink water.
- Move the animals' feeding time to late afternoon or evening.
- Air movement is an additional factor that promotes animal cooling.
- Cool the ground and the cattle gradually.
- Provide shade if possible.
- Adding bedding (such as straw) to the ground can reduce the temperature of the ground on which cattle are lying.
- Control flies as much as possible.
- And maybe the most important, do not work cattle during temperature extremes.
- Pay attention to long- and short-term weather forecasts and have a copy of the temperature humidity index chart readily available.

Step three: Know when to intervene. Heat stress is driven by a combination of factors. Temperature and humidity are two of the most frequently cited issues. If the evening temperatures do not cool low enough, cattle cannot fully recover physiologically before the next onset of heat. Cattle are at danger of death from heat exposure when the following occur:

- The heat index is 75 or greater for a 72 hour period
- The heat index during a 48 hour period is no lower than 79 during the day and no lower than 75 during the night
- The daytime heat index reaches 84 or higher for two consecutive days

Heat in summertime is not avoidable. However, you can take preventive measures when designing facilities and before temperatures reach dangerous levels to minimize impacts of heat stress on cattle.