

Prevention & Progress

Managing Health, Improving Performance



Are Scours Vaccine Labels Robbing Your Time?

There's no commodity more precious than time. Every cattleman knows that finishing for the day doesn't mean that the work is done. It just means you ran out of time until the sun rises tomorrow.

Cattle health management can soak up a lot of time and man hours on any operation.

This is especially true when cattle have to be worked solely for the purpose of vaccinations, due to restrictive labels with tight administration timelines. The time burden increases exponentially when calves get sick and require constant monitoring.

These were some of the challenges facing Doug Mollenkopf, reproduction manager at Eby Ranch, a top purebred Angus seedstock operation in Emporia, Kansas. And the biggest source of those challenges was scours.

With an abundance of quality pastureland, an experienced management team and first-rate facilities, Eby Ranch seems an unlikely place for a scours problem. But the explanation probably lies in the history of the land.

"Before this property was purchased by Eby Ranch, it was used for backgrounding cattle that came from all over the country," said Mollenkopf. "And it's highly unlikely those calves were vaccinated. So if there's a bacteria or virus out there that causes scours, it's probably in our soil."



Eby Ranch, Emporia, Kansas

Mollenkopf said that in 2009, close to 40 percent of their spring-born calves had scours. He doesn't recall that time with fond memories.

"It's a nonstop, never-ending process," he said. "Taking care of a bunch of scouring calves is very labor intensive and time-consuming. And it takes away our ability to spend time working other production groups that need attention."

Change in Vaccine Provides Time-Saving Solution

Eby Ranch maintains very high standards and Mollenkopf simply wasn't willing to accept an ongoing scours problem on the farm. In the fall of 2009 he began vaccinating cows with Scour Bos[®] because it met two very important criteria.

The first was an administration timetable that gave his team more flexibility and freedom to schedule vaccinations when most convenient for them.

"The vaccine we used previously had rigid time constraints for when you could give the shots," said Mollenkopf. "It just wasn't very realistic for us. Every week or ten days we'd have to go sort another small group of cows based on their calving dates."

"With Scour Bos, we can vaccinate larger groups of cattle," he continued.

"It makes all the difference in the world from a labor standpoint. Now we're able to round up larger groups and vaccinate when we're running them through the chute for preg-checking or other things. It's incredibly beneficial for us."

The second criteria for Mollenkopf was broad-spectrum protection. "Scour Bos gives us good protection against all the major pathogens that cause scours," he said. "And the results speak for themselves. We only had a few cases of scours this spring, and I don't think we lost a single calf to scours."

Mollenkopf said the spring of 2010 was much more productive than last year. Mostly because he spent less time managing his schedule around a vaccine label and tending to scouring calves.

"I need all the time I can get," said Mollenkopf. "And now that we've eliminated the scours problem, I have more time to focus on maximizing our genetics and reproduction programs."



Doug Mollenkopf
Reproduction Manager, Eby Ranch

Impact of Scours on Profitability

Scours continues to be a leading cause of calf mortality, killing thousands of calves every year. Calves that survive scours typically have reduced growth rates and gain, and are more likely to perform poorly throughout their lives. The combined effects of scours—death loss, treatment costs and poor performance—can add up to thousands of dollars in economic losses each year. That's why preventing scours is such an important herd health strategy to help calves reach their maximum value and contribute more to the profitability of the operation.



Preg-Check and Protect with Scour Bos

Scour Bos® 9 lets you prevent scours at the same time you're running cows through the chute for preg-check. That means you can initiate scours protection when it's easier on you and your cows. Plus, it allows more time for the cows to build protective antibodies.

Cows build antibodies in their blood before passing them down through colostrum, and antibodies move from blood to colostrum four to six weeks before calving. Vaccinating as early as possible will optimize antibodies in the dam's colostrum while eliminating the need to handle cows too close to calving.

Scour Bos Administration—Vaccinate at Preg-Check

	16 weeks	10 weeks	8 weeks	4 weeks	Calving
Year 1	Scour Bos 9 (16 – 8 wks prior to calving)		<i>Colostrum antibody production starts</i> (6 – 4 wks prior to calving)	Scour Bos 4 (4 wks prior to calving)	Calving
Year 2		Scour Bos 9 (10 – 8 wks prior to calving)	<i>Colostrum antibody production starts</i> (6 – 4 wks prior to calving)		Calving

Broad-Spectrum Protection

Scour Bos 9 gives you protection from all the major pathogens that cause scours. It's the only vaccine that delivers three-way rotavirus + 9 antigen protection.



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