

Vaccinate and Get a head of the Storm

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We seem to expect and accept some level of illness from the people we associate with and from the living things that are entrusted to our care. During certain times of the year, there seems to be a marked increase in sickness. Now seems to be one of those times.

Blame it on the weather. The “cooping” phenomenon because of the weather causes everyone to remain in fairly close contact. In fact, one has the tendency to ask if anyone actually is feeling well.

One of our children noted that a friend had chicken pox. Sure enough, we now have chicken pox in the house. Our immune systems will be tested and maybe even bolstered as the chicken pox virus makes its way around the house. At least our next child was vaccinated for chicken pox, but the doctor said we should not be surprised if we have another case of the pox. So we are counting down the days for the emergence of a fresh batch of pox spots.

As people, we are very mobile. Fortunately, there are standard protocols concerning vaccinations. Most of us are vaccinated against the numerous diseases that continually make the rounds. Chicken pox is one of the many we were encouraged to be vaccinated against as a child.

All of us should have thought about updating our annual flu vaccination. If nothing else, this shot at least gives our bodies a chance to fight off the hordes of things that don't like us in this world.

If we ever question the need for public health and aggressive childhood and adult vaccination programs, a quick trip through any of the older, small town cemeteries should jar us back to our senses. The development of effective vaccines, improvement of antibiotics and other treatment regimens has helped prevent many illnesses.

In the bigger picture, improvements within our environments, such as improved water handling fa-

cilities, cooking facilities and waste handling systems, are critical to the health of our families and everyone around us. The same is true for all the animals we are entrusted to care for.

As calving season approaches, we should reflect on all those things that happen to us so we can appreciate the plight of a calf a little better. The weather has us cooped up and sharing more living space than we want to share, so we get sick. A storm moves in and the cows and calves are squeezed into the barn, so they get sick.

One child arrives at school with chicken pox, so our child comes home with chicken pox. One calf has scours and tomorrow the calf next to it has scours.

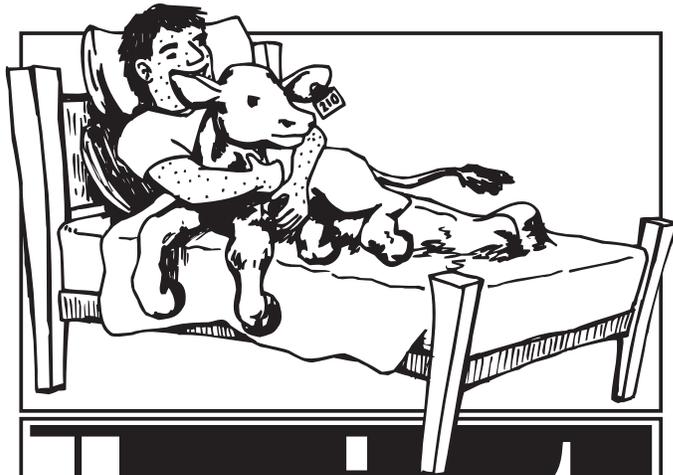
We forgot to get our flu shot this year and are paying the price for it. The old body sure is aching these days. We neglected to vaccinate the calves, so the pen performance seemed to be a little off this year. Some of the calves seemed a little doggier than they should have been on some of those tough days.

The toilets plugged and running over, but nobody cleaned the bathroom. Well, we just haven't got around to cleaning the calving barn lately and we ran out of straw for a week. Either way, the local tombstones sing out.

We actually have a lot in common with all those calves we are entrusted with. At least for now, the help at the Dickinson Research Extension Center is busy vaccinating the cows for scours and getting better prepared for the calving season. Vaccinate and get ahead of the storm.

May you find all your ear tags.

Your comments are always welcome at <http://www.BeefTalk.com>. For more information, contact the NDBCIA Office, 1041 State Ave., Dickinson, ND 58601 or go to <http://www.CHAPS2000.com> on the Internet.



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