Observations of a Traveling Veterinarian… Practices That Pay, Some That May and Others No Way

Montana Nutrition Conference 2011
Bruce W. Hoffman, DVM
Why do I travel and not have a vet practice?
Philosophy of Products/Services

“Management Over Medicine”
Set Your Priorities

 Faith
 Family
 Farm
Can you get lost in the crowd?

This is a photograph of 2009 Obama Inauguration.

The picture was taken with a robotic 1474 megapixel camera (295 times the standard 5 megapixel camera).

Click on:
http://gigapan.org/viewGigapanFullscreen.php?auth=033ef14483ee899496648c2b4b06233c
<http://gigapan.org/viewGigapanFullscreen.php?auth=033ef14483ee899496648c2b4b06233c>
Changes/Thoughts to set the tone

• Most college freshman have never used a phone with a cord
• How many had a computer in 1990?
• Cell phone use…only since the 90s
• GPS and farming
• That your holey jeans would be worth more than when you bought them!!!
Is our industry changing?
Basics are the same

• Breed a cow
• Have a calf
• Raise a calf
• Sell a calf
BUT.....

Why am I listening to this guy?

What bull? EPDs?

Do I buy land?

What should I vaccinate for?

Where should I sell my calves?

What is risk management?

How can I afford to buy feed?

Will Dad ever let me try some of that stuff I learned in school?
Recent Cattle Meeting
We Have a PURPOSE

Key Data

In 50 years, the world population will require

100% more food, and

70% of this food must come from efficiency-improving technology

We each feed 155 people

Goal: Productivity and Sustainability
• U.N. report criticizes industrial farming
  – 4/8/11 The United Nations’ has released a report urging the world to turn away from modern, industrial farming practices and adopt small-scale, simpler methods. Oliver De Schutter, the U.N.’s special rapporteur on food and author of the report, says, “To feed 9 billion people in 2050, we urgently need to adopt the most efficient farming techniques available…where hungry people live”.
That Pay

• Good relationship with a nutritionist
• Record keeping AND analysis
• Genetics
  – Quality bulls
  – AI
  – Crossbreeding
  – Genetic markers?
That Pay

• Improved Management Practices
  – Nutrition- Feeding/Grazing
    • Amount
    • Quality
    • Timing
  – Calving
    • Time of year
    • Environment
  – Weaning
That Pay

• A Focused Marketing Plan
  – Best option?
    • Direct
    • Video/Internet
    • Salesbarn
  – Verification Programs
    • Age and Source
    • NHTC
  – Health Programs
    • Vaccination
That Pay

• Maintaining a healthy Herd
  – Veterinary relationship
  – What are you exposing the herd to?
    • New cattle purchases
  – Proper Vaccination program
    • Health
    • Marketing

• Implanting
That May

• BVD PI testing
  – Poor reproduction
  – Sick calves
• Natural
  – Local or partnership
• Carbon sequestering
  – Future advantage of ranching?
No way

• Poor handling of cattle
  – Proper handling – Facilities and Training Temple Grandin

• Animal abuse
  – HSUS attack on livestock production
    • stated goal...to make livestock production so expensive that it will make it cost prohibitive for people to continue eating, drinking or wearing their products.
No way

• **Not** communicating about what we do to the consumer
  – Farmers and ranchers must do something they have never done – “**tell urbanites why they farm differently from their grandfathers to feed the hungry**…”
  • Food safety is getting better
  • Modern agriculture is reducing GHG
  • Technology advances
  – www.truthinag.com
No way

• Fighting Amongst Ourselves
  – We can agree to disagree
• Negative attitude
• Practices that sound too good to be true…they probably are…do your homework
Summary

Don’t Be Afraid of Change…It is happening

– “Farmers in a Changing World”
– If you don’t know… ask someone who does or can head you in the right direction
Questions?

406-282-7414
bwh@animalprofiling.com