



A quarterly news magazine published by the Hoof Trimmers Association, Inc.

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HOOFHEALTH CONNECTION



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HTA Objective: To provide educational opportunities and mutual support for hoof trimmers and promote quality hoof trimming.

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President's Message

When I was asked to be on the board of directors for the Hoof Trimmers Association several years ago I agreed, but not because I had a lot of extra time on my hands - I didn't then, and don't now. I am busy with church, family, home, garden, yard, a leather goods business where I make belts, ladies handbags, backpacks, etc. (which I hope to subsidize my retirement when that day comes), and running a hoof trimming business. All of these things keep me running almost as hard as I can go. Needless to say, I don't have trouble going to sleep at night! I said yes to serving on the HTA board, because it's important to me, and I feel it's a valuable resource to anyone in our business.

I started my hoof trimming business in the spring of 2000. I had a young family at home; a wife, a 5-year-old son and 3-year-old daughter. I was the sole income earner, and had just quit a stable job managing a 400-cow dairy for absentee owners. What a leap of faith that was! Or should I say, blind ambition. I don't know which is more accurate!

I went to Dairyland Hoof Trimming School to learn the art of hoof trimming, and gain as much knowledge as I could before starting out in my new venture. I thought I knew what I was doing, but soon found out that I had a lot of questions about the business. A friend told me about a day-long workshop being put on by HTA in Pennsylvania the next winter, so I went. They had a booth there, and I went over and asked then board member, Peter Kadelka, about membership. His answer was short and direct, "If you make your living as a hoof trimmer, you should be a member". The truth was, I couldn't afford the gas to get home much less pay for a membership! I signed up anyway, and am grateful that I did. That day I picked up a ton of information, and gained a new outlook realizing that I was not alone and I didn't have to recreate the wheel all by myself. That evening, I headed home with an empty pocket and thirsting for more.

When I joined HTA in the winter of 2001, there were no other sources of information. There was no internet available to the public, no World of Hoof Trimming and no Hoof Hearted. You watched the mail box for the next HTA newsletter that was full of good information and dairy magazines which had very little hoof articles in them at that time. I did receive a visit from Bill Mink (southeast area rep from HTA) trying to get me to go to Minneapolis to the convention, but I knew I couldn't afford that yet, so I saved my dollars and was ready to go to Columbus 18 months later. I thought I had hit the jack pot at that convention. Not only were the speakers informative, but the conversations and comradery were priceless. I felt a bit intimidated and a whole lot out of place in the beginning, but I had found a group of guys who knew what I went through on a daily basis, and they were willing to share information that was hands on and helpful.



Mark Burwell

I never knew how important it was for me to get to know other trimmers until July 2019 when I wrecked my hoof trimming chute on the way home from a long day of trimming. My wife and I have always been frugal with our spending and had been aggressive on paying off debt. We had some savings and investments, but not enough to sit for months waiting on a new chute to be built. On that day, when our income came to a screeching halt, we looked at each other and thought, "we may be in trouble here". A feeling in your gut that said this could go really, really, bad. No income means a lot of things that's not pleasant to think about, and many questions arise: How long before we can replace the chute? Appleton Steel was back logged for four months before they could get a new one built for me. No income for four months could get really ugly. What about my clients? Are they going to wait on me for four months? That evening I put out a post on Hoof Hearted looking for a chute I could rent. I had responses from all over the United States and Canada of people who had chutes they were willing to let me use. My phone rang minutes after the post and it was Leigh DeGroot from Wisconsin. He had a brand new chute sitting in his building, and said I could come and get it and use it as long as I needed. He also said if I didn't come and get it that he would think I was mad at him. I wouldn't have known Leigh or any of the other 12 guys who contacted me if it hadn't been for the relationships I had developed and the people I had met through HTA. Things would have been very bleak for us. There's no way my



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income stream would have continued, my clients remained serviced, or my house payment would continue to be paid. The personal relationships I have established have been priceless to me in so many ways other than monetary.

We, as an organization, are falling short on building our future. Our membership is lacking young trimmers. The young guys are not seeing the importance of personal connections developed in HTA. They are not seeing what can be gained just by being in the same room as peers with decades of experience. We live in a world where we are getting used to immediate answers whether right or wrong from Facebook groups, websites, etc. We gravitate towards information that doesn't require getting on a plane and taking time away from our business, when in fact, time away from our business is exactly what we need – to get a much needed break, talk face-to-face with our peers, listen to speakers who have a wealth of knowledge, and learn from each other. Our membership is falling and face it, we as a group are getting older – we need the younger trimmers to continue to grow what we have worked so hard to build. Those that came before us gave so much to build HTA and we need to do everything possible to maintain and build for the future.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

To survive as an organization, we need to answer these questions:

1. How do we give value to our membership?
2. How do we open doors to the younger trimmers that is important to their future and ours?
3. How do we convey that the trimmer who may seem like competition is an asset instead of an enemy, that they can be a peer sometimes.
4. How do we reach the trimmers that are not members and make them want to be a part of HTA?
5. How do we get our membership involved in the organization instead of depending on the same few to carry most of the load?

President John F. Kennedy said: *“Ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country.”* 1961

As your HTA President, I am putting this out there: Ask not what the Hoof Trimmers Association can do for you; ask what you can do for your Hoof Trimmers Association.

Copper in your Spa

Chip Hendrickson, AgroChem, USA

With a hoof care career that has spanned over 40 years, you can say that I have seen a thing or two and have a few thoughts when it comes to hoof health products. This is especially true in the last 20 years as foot hygiene has become a critical success factor for many dairy operations. Within the footbath realm, copper sulfate has been a popular commodity product that has set the standard by which other products are measured. It continues to be the pillar of many footbath programs and is now available in a variety of products and forms.

Dry Copper Sulfate

Commercially available copper sulfate is typically sold in 50lb bags as copper sulfate pentahydrate which consists of approximately 25.5% copper and 38.5% sulfate. As a widely available commodity, prices tend to be consistent across multiple retailers.

Its antimicrobial properties have been known for centuries. With respect to hoof hygiene, copper sulfate excels at dealing with hoof rot and is useful in the prevention of digital dermatitis when used at higher concentrations. It is also capable of improving hoof hardness which is critical in modern dairies.

When used in a footbath copper sulfate powder must be mixed with water, otherwise, it can remain as large undissolved clumps at the bottom of the footbath where it won't help hooves. Copper sulfate is also prone to rapid deactivation when copper ions combine with ions from manure, urine, and other organics in the water. Lastly, the price of copper sulfate is currently at an all-time high due to the rebounding economy and other economic forces.

Liquid Copper Sulfate

Branded hoof care products that contain copper sulfate in liquid form have been developed to address some of the issues inherent to copper sulfate powder. For instance, they can be used in automated footbath

systems, they easily mix in water, and they can be formulated with additives to make copper sulfate more efficient.

Some of these additives are the addition of an acidifier, surfactant, or additional metals/minerals, all of which have a unique purpose. A surfactant to help remove dirt and organic soil loads from the hoof so copper can better affect the surface of the hoof. Some companies will mix an acidifier into their liquid copper solution that binds to hydroxide ions found in manure and urine, which prevents them from neutralizing copper ions. Thus, making more copper available for controlling bacteria associated with infectious hoof diseases and hardening the hooves. That may sound expensive, but really, it is only a few extra cents per gallon of solution.

The other component companies may add to the solution and still call it liquid copper are some minerals or metals such as zinc, which is an economical metal that shows antimicrobial properties but is a very physically heavy additive. If you add too much, the solution becomes a blended product and should not be called liquid copper. Also, with too much, your shipping costs will go up as stated, it is physically heavy metal which will increase the weight of the solution.

What Am I Paying For?

The concentration of copper sulfate is the greatest driver of the product cost. Concentrations of 5% to as high as 20% by weight can be found on the market. A product with 5% copper should usually cost less than a product with more copper.

Knowing the density of the product you can determine the lbs. of copper per gal of product. For instance, if the density of the product is 10lbs per gal and the label says

it contains 20% copper sulfate, then you will have 2lbs of copper sulfate per gal of product. You can always ask the manufacturer for the product density and % copper sulfate if not listed on the label.

The next factor in determining copper concentration is the usage rate which is usually expressed as a percentage of the total volume (%v/V) or gal of product per gal of water (g/G). The concentration of copper sulfate in the footbath is a function of the amount of copper sulfate in the product and the usage rate. For instance, if a product contains 2lbs of copper sulfate and has a usage rate of 10% v/V or (5 gal / 50 gal) then you would have a total of 10lbs of copper sulfate in a standard 50-gallon footbath.

Understanding concentration in the footbath can help you to evaluate various hoof care products because the amount of copper sulfate directly relates to the product's potential to be effective. Knowing the amount of copper sulfate can also be helpful when evaluating the relative cost. By determining the cost/lb of copper sulfate in the footbath you will have a tool for comparison of different product offerings.

How Much Copper Do I Need?

So how much copper do you need in the bath? The answer depends on several factors including time of year, hoof hygiene, and the problem you are trying to counter. If you have dirty hooves or a heavy soil load in your bath, you may need to run a bath with 10-15 lbs of copper as soil loading can neutralize the copper ions. If you have very clean hooves and the soil load is manageable, you may be able to have success with 5-10 lbs.

Final Thought

Once you look at what is needed, you need to determine the proper product to use. As previously mentioned, there is a wide variety of products available in dry or liquid form. All bags of dry copper sulfate should be close to each other in price point. However, when comparing liquid products, I highly recommend taking the time to figure out how much you are paying per pound of copper. I recommend this as I have seen products as low as \$3.50/lb of copper and some charging over \$75/lb of copper in their solution.

Don't be hesitant to ask your supplier questions about the cost and what is in their solution. You should know what is in a product you are purchasing or recommending a dairy to purchase. It is not just money that is being invested into the product but your reputation for knowing how to achieve proper hoof health.

Making the best decisions for the dairy requires an understanding of the products that are used so that you can get the results needed without overpaying. If using copper sulfate is part of your hoof health program, focus on the amount of copper sulfate in the footbath and you'll have a clearer picture of what to expect from your footbath.



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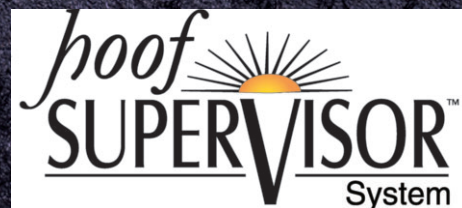
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Lameness: How the NOVUS C.O.W.S.™ Program Can Help Influence Change

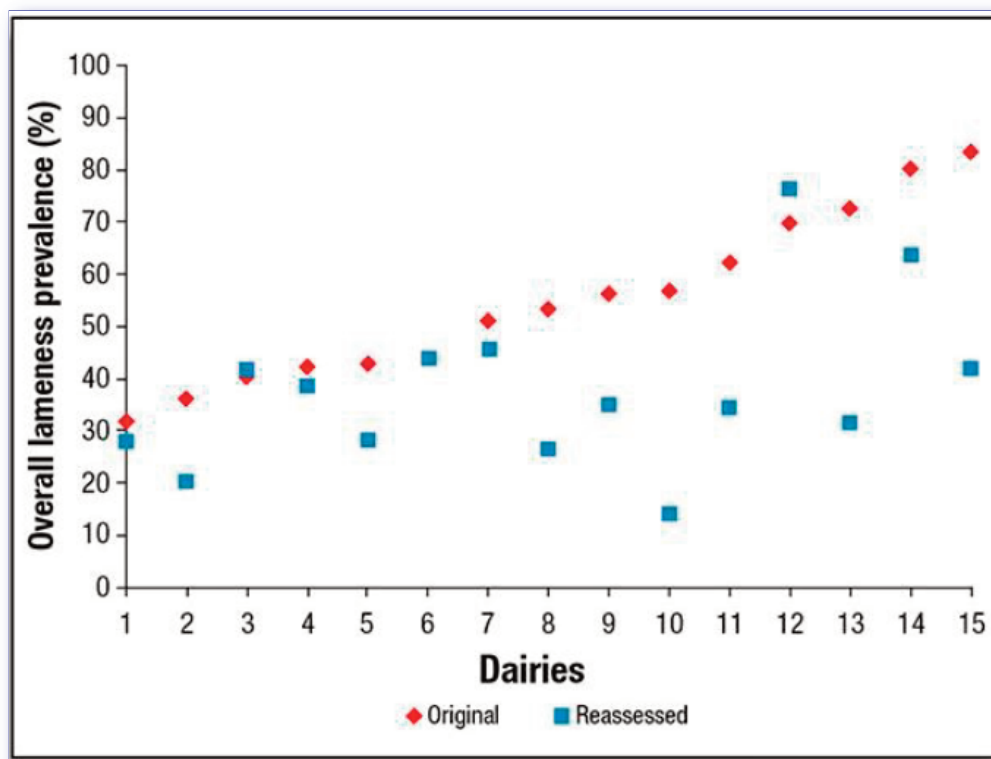
Justine Kelsey, JD, Novus C.O.W.S.™ Program Specialist

It is well known that no two dairies are the same. Management varies widely based on facility, as well as the teams who execute the dairy's profitability plan.

Because of this variation, producers can often accomplish the same positive results by approaching an issue with alternative solutions. Implementing tools and services on the farm can help identify key issues and be a catalyst for change. As hoof trimmers and on-farm consultants, together we can be a resource to spark that change.

The Novus C.O.W.S.™ Program is a comprehensive on-farm assessment and benchmarking program that uses data to capture how a dairy cow's environment impacts her. The data collected involves cow-based measures, including prevalence of lameness, hock and knee injuries as well as how those cow-based measures vary from similar farms with comparable set ups. The Program also identifies the cow's time budget. Through this, a C.O.W.S.™ Program technician can influence factors within management and the facility to promote an ideal time budget in order to improve production and efficiency. Observations are taken of the cow's living space, feeding and drinking space, flooring, footbaths, routines, health protocols, feeding times and records backup and analysis. Innately, it is a full picture of farm circumstances through observations. Anything that could impact well-being and performance is reviewed and discussed at an all-inclusive farm meeting, bringing together all the key players to discuss the findings.

To evaluate the success of the assessment, re-assessments are often utilized to gauge changes made. Fifteen of the herds in the northeastern U.S. that participated in an initial assessment also participated in a reassessment with the C.O.W.S.™ Program. There was exactly one year in between the initial assessment and reassessment. During the assessment and reassessment, the same high-producing, mature cow pen was evaluated on each dairy. In the time between the two assessments, various facility and management changes were implemented on the farms. The changes made ranged between individual dairies and included recommendations such as increasing the amount of bedding, increasing stall maintenance, implementing hoof









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trimming schedules, adjusting footbath protocols, changing the type of bedding or altering the stall base in either the assessment pen or other pens on the dairy.

Lameness was recorded during the assessment and reassessment phases. All cows in the assessment pen were scored for lameness using a 5-point Flower and Weary scale adapted from research done at the University of British Columbia. Cows scored as “equal to or greater than 3” were considered lame and animals at a 4 or 5 were considered critical. The results to reduce lameness were also positive, showing that after an initial assessment, there was a drop in lameness throughout all the dairies except for two (Dairies 3 and 12, seen in the figure below). There was a mean decline in lameness prevalence of 17 percentage points.

Just like the individuality of the dairies and their improvements, the resulting change in lameness ranged from a drop of 43 to an increase of 6 percentage points. As a result of the program, producers have learned, adapted and improved their operations. Remembering that no two systems are alike, there are large variations in the improvements made by these producers to increase cow comfort.

In nearly all of these instances, producers could use the cow-based measures from their individual dairies, provided by the Program, to make necessary changes and reduce lameness. The Program promotes communication among producer teams such that nutritionists, veterinarians, hoof trimmers and other profitability consultants can readily gain a pulse on the health and well-being of the animals. They can work together to provide insight on how to execute plans to meet the dairy's lameness and cow comfort goals. Information and first-hand accounts of hoof health provided by trimmers give additional insight to the visual observations that the C.O.W.S.™ Program technicians see. For example, some of the deviations in locomotion observed are not hoof integrity related. Rather, they are an indication of the sizing and comfort within stalls which is directly related to the financial impacts of lying time.

A collaborative team approach, coordinated by the Novus C.O.W.S.™ Program, to analyze lameness on dairies results in overall lower levels of lameness while optimizing costs and overall profitability.



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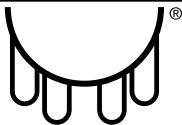
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HOOFF HEALTH CONFERENCE

Efficiency - I'm Done with Marathons in 10 Seconds

Steve Wunderlich

Starting out trimming cows I went at it will all I had... I would push and shove, chase cows, tug on ropes... We have all been there at some point but there comes a time when we need to learn how to do the same job but more efficient.

When people watch me work now they say "WOW! You are really fast!" I stop them right there... I correct them. I tell them "I am efficient". Then I explain how "fast" is a word that is used with, carelessness and unsafe. I work smart and not hard. In this little article, I will explain how we stopped running marathons.

So, aside from all of the back-breaking things we have done to get a cow into a trimming chute. At the chute, is where a lot of unnoticed time is used up. I will outline this for you...

- Walking from levers to the start of trim – 4 feet
- Walking to grinder and or supply box – 3 feet
- Walking to get a cow ID – 2 feet

If you have already found a way to minimize these steps... you are off to a good start!

For the sake of the article, let's say you do these things... that is a total of 9 feet (max) of (unnecessary) walking per cow. So, let's use the max number to make a point... 9 feet x 300 cows a week at 50 weeks a year... that is 135,000 feet. Now divide that number by 5280 (1 mile), and you get 25.56 miles... (almost a marathon).

To get my point across... becoming for efficient has nothing to do with the speed in which a cow is trimmed. It is simply having what you need, where you need it, when you need it.

Some things I will let you ponder about to see if it is the most efficient set up for you are,

- Grinder/tool placement
- Clip board / computer placement and usage
- Supply (Block and bandage) placement

Remote usage
Human help usage

Not only am I concerned about saving steps, but at the same time, saving TIME!

Let's say you have a gate that opens to you chute for every cow, and that gate takes 5 seconds to unlatch it and open it, and 5 seconds to close it. That means it takes 10 seconds total per cow for that gate. 10 seconds x 300 cows a week is 3000 seconds, divide that by 60 and you have 50 minutes a week. That's almost an hour a week spent with that gate. Times the 50 minutes by 50 weeks that you trim in a year and that is 2500 minutes. Divided that number by 60 and you have 41.67 hours!... That is almost 2 FULL DAYS you would have spent opening and shutting a gate. Not to mention the steps that it would have taken to do that manually.

After reading that, some might say, "WOW, that crazy!", and some might say "Well, we never do something that silly." Either way, think about what you're doing before, after, and in-between cows that you can shave 10 seconds off of, and you have the same out come!

For a normal maintenance trim (by myself trimming) I have my time from cow in to next cow in down to 1.5 minutes on average. This is not because I'm "Fast" at trimming. It is simply because I have learned where to eliminate steps and seconds. Efficient!

Just for fun, let's say it takes you 4 minutes on average to trim the average cow... if you can bring that number down to 2 minutes on average... That would mean you would cut all the time you are trimming over the period of a year in half!

That leaves more time for trimming more cows!

Have a Wonderful Day!

Hoof Health Starts with Heifers

Tina Kohlman

originally published in Wisconsin State Farmer 11/15/2021

Hoof health is essential for the overall health of the heifer, as these are the “wheels” she motors around on for going to the parlor or walking to the feed bunk. Just like her mature milking cow counterpart, heifers are not immune to digital dermatitis, also known as hairy heel warts.

University of Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine research supports findings of negative impacts of digital dermatitis on health, milk production and reproductive performance during the first lactation of a heifer diagnosed with DD pre-calving. The cost of DD can range between \$3 and \$239, based on individual first-lactation milk yield per heifer.

How do cattle get digital dermatitis?

The environment predisposes heifers to the pathogen *Treponema* sp. Many times, pre-calving heifers are not in optimal housing, and may be found in calving pens neighboring sick and dry cows. Facilities may be older, repurposed housing for heifers with cleanliness and ventilation challenges. Heifer barns may not be cleaned as often, or they may be overstocked, providing an abundance of manure, moisture and exposure of pathogens to the feet.

Digital dermatitis control in pre-calving heifers is the best chance for prevention and control of hairy warts in lactating cows. Keeping the feet as clean and dry as possible minimizes the amount of organic matter and possible pathogen load on the feet. Alleyways may need to be scraped more often or stocking density reduced to lessen the amount of manure in the alleys. Additional bedding, lower stocking density and properly sized stalls will encourage heifers to lie in stalls for long periods of time.

Detection

Penn State’s Jud Heinrichs suggests evaluating the prevalence of hairy heel warts in heifers at the time of or shortly after calving. If more than 5% (ideally less than 1%) of heifers have DD lesions at calving, evaluate your heifer program for DD onset and prevention in heifers.

UW School of Veterinary Medicine’s Dr. Dorte Dopfer says when going on the hunt for hairy heel warts, conduct pen walks looking for active DD lesions on the rear feet. Start

with the oldest heifer group and work toward the youngest to find the source of infection. Identify the pen of heifers with the maximum prevalence of hairy heel warts — those animals acutely lame with large ulcerative lesions.

There may be heifers in the older groups who have chronic DD, with occasional flare-ups of active lesions, but the key is to look for the pen or age group where the highest prevalence of active lesions is occurring. Once the pen has been identified, calculate the age of heifers 60 to 90 days earlier and look at this age group. This is the pen where hairy heel warts prevention and control measures such as foot baths, topical treatment and cleanliness must start.

Treatment and control

Acute lesions are treated topically with oxytetracycline. The lesion should be cleaned and dried, removing all organic matter. Many facilities are not equipped to handle the individual applications for heifers; therefore, work with your veterinarian and team to determine the best course of application.

Digital dermatitis is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to eliminate, so the focus should be on managing and controlling it. Foot baths do not cure hairy warts. Copper sulfate foot baths are used to help maintain chronic hairy heel wart lesions in an inactive (M4) state, thus preventing the spread of DD to noninfected animals.

However, foot baths are not always the easiest to implement or maintain in a heifer facility. Foot baths can be an excellent way to prevent hairy warts, but if not maintained properly, they can do more harm than good to foot skin health, or even be a source of infection if they are not removed after use and instead are left to collect manure and urine between treatments.

Hoof health starts with the heifer and begins with an ongoing system to prevent, manage and control the impact of hairy heel warts in the milking herd.

Tina Kohlman is the Extension dair and livestock agent in Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin.

Cows in Rutland County Test Positive for Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease^(edited)

Newport Dispatch, www.newportdispatch.com

***Introduction:** As if there were not enough for a trimmer to be on the lookout for. As if we had not just come through twenty-two months of COVID-chaos complete with masks, and quarantines, and lockdowns and tests (those HURT!). Now, the New England region of the US has found a new reason to be wary of their neighbors: EHD. Yep, pull out those old biohazard protocols, dust them off (HA!) and get ready, because here comes another disaster for trimmers to be on the lookout for.*

PITTSFORD — The Vermont Agency of Agriculture says they received confirmation from the National Veterinary Services Laboratory last week that a cow in Pittsford is infected with epizootic hemorrhagic disease (EHD).

The Vermont State Veterinarian collected samples from the cow as part of a Foreign Animal Disease investigation that was initiated upon notification by the accredited herd veterinarian of concerning clinical signs in the sick cow.

This case constitutes the first confirmed positive EHD infection in a cow in Vermont.

Earlier this week, the Agency received a report from an accredited veterinarian that a second cow in a separate herd in Pittsford has also tested positive for EHD.

There is no evidence that the EHD virus infects humans, and domestic livestock infections do not constitute a food safety risk.

Clinical signs associated with EHD infection in cattle may be undetectable.

Infected cattle may have a mortality rate of less than 10%. There is no specific treatment for EHD, other than supportive care.

While most cattle infected with EHD don't show signs of illness, those that do commonly experience inflammation and ulcerations in the mouth, on the nose, udder, and near the hooves.

They often are lame, salivate excessively, and have difficulty swallowing and eating.

Some may experience weight loss and fever. Because the clinical signs of EHD look similar to those that can be seen with foot and mouth disease, Vermont veterinarians are obligated to report suspicious findings to the Vermont Agency of Agriculture so that testing can be completed to rule out this and other foreign/high consequence livestock diseases.

“These findings represent a first for Vermont and highlight how critical it is for Vermont’s livestock owners and veterinarians to remain diligent and quickly report unusual or suspicious clinical signs in their animals and patients,” said Dr. Kristin Haas, Vermont State Veterinarian. “The owner and veterinarian took very appropriate action in this case. By doing so, the Agency was able to respond swiftly to ensure that a foreign animal disease does not exist in Vermont.”

EHD virus is most commonly transmitted among susceptible animal populations like cattle and deer, by biting midges in the genus *Culicoides*, sometimes known as “no-see-ums”.

They generally fly distances of less than one mile but can be blown much farther by wind, thereby increasing the potential for disease transmission over a larger geographic territory.

***Editor’s Note:** EHD has been confirmed Australia, New Zealand, Asia, throughout Europe and in nearly all 50 US states. There are seven strains of the virus, originally migrating to the US from Asia and Australia among others. While EHD primarily impacts deer, it is a major concern for all ruminants. To date, EHD has been rather uncommon in cattle, but as the cases recently discovered in VT, it does happen and the numbers appear to be on the rise. One symptom of EHD in cattle is lameness and may present with lesions just above the hoof.*

A Farmer's Night Before Christmas

To Hart, <https://johartaauthor.com/>

*It was the night before Christmas and out on the farm
Not a creature was stirring in stable or barn
The hats were all hung after a long day of sowing
And just like the song the cattle were lowing*

*The chickens were nestled in roost boxes of straw
The dog was snoozing by farmer's front door
Both farmer and wife sat out in the yard
Relaxing with cans after working so hard*

*When out in the paddock there was stomping of hooves
Sounds like the cattle are on the move
With one final swig farmer rose from his chair
Wondering what gave his heifers a scare*

*The pink and gold sky gave just enough light
For the farmer to see a very strange sight
An eight-cattle drove pulling a ute
With a roaring V8 and a tray full of loot*

*The driver's tanned arm propped up on the door
It had to be Santa the farmer was sure
Hicking up dust his Friesian steers came
And he whistled and shouted and called them by name*

*On Sausage on T Bone on Rissole on Stew
On Schnitzel on Beefy on Pump Roast on Moo
To the top of the hayshed to the top of the dairy
Get moving you bullies stop acting like fairies*

*Then with a bang they crashed on the roof
The tin rumbled like thunder under each solid hoof
In through the screen door the farmer did race
As Santa squeezed out of the old fireplace*

*He was dressed in a singlet and blue stubby shorts
His blindstones were covered in dirt of all sorts
His skin was all wrinkled and brown as the earth
He had a belly of considerable girth*

*The beard on his chin was white as a lamb
And the smile on his face as wide as a dam
He gave farmer a wink and a thumb in the air
Then offloaded the pressies and got out of there*

*He jumped back in his ute and spurred on his team
The engine grunted and purred like a dream
He was heard to yell out as he drove out the gate
Have a ripper Chrissie and bonza new year, mate."*



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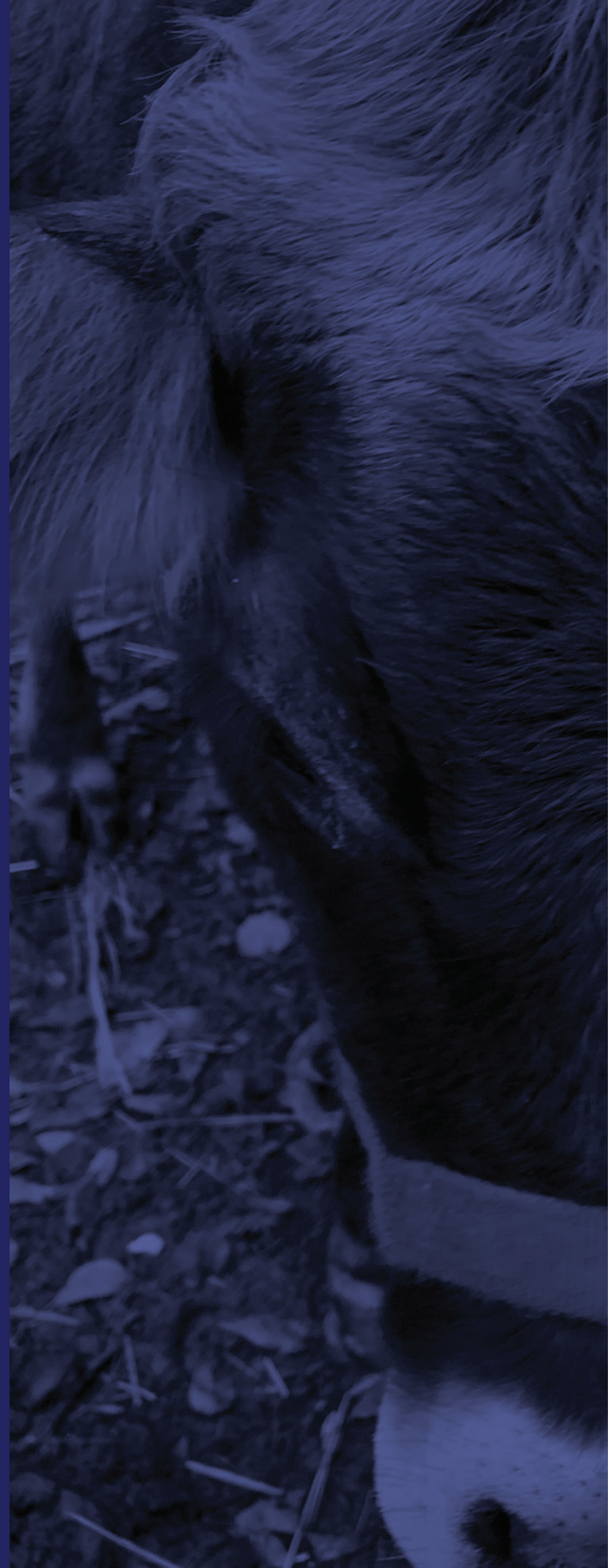
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From Hoof Trimming to Hoof Baths

Dale Baker

I started trimming cows in central California in 1976. I was taught how to trim the old school way (knives and nippers.) I was much younger and stronger then and I continued to trim this way for most of my career. In 2006, I went to the Tulare Farm Show, and I attended a seminar that was put on by Zinpro. A gentleman by the name of Richard Weingart spoke about when he started trimming cows and that he thought he had it all figured out. He then said that he had joined the Hoof Trimming Association and started to learn a great deal more. I felt I had it all figured out as well. But I decided to join the Trimming Association and see what it was all about. After I joined the association, I realized that I did have a lot to learn as well. I was able to meet a lot of great people and make some very good friends over the years. I trimmed and sold hoof care part time for about 7 years after I joined the HTA. I was getting older, and my carpal tunnel was getting the better of me, so I started looking for another way to use my expertise. For me, it was a natural transition to go from trimming cows to selling hoof bath products. I had been in the industry for some time, and I knew a lot of dairyman and dealers.

In 2019, I was offered a job with Specialty Sales, LLC a large hoof health company based in Fresno, CA. The job entailed selling hoof care products and working with their hoof bath systems.

Aside from hoof bath sales, Specialty Sales, LLC has also asked me to work with trimmers and customers as a hoof care consultant and educator. I get to travel all over the United States and meet and work with other trimmers to better hoof health on the farms. I have also been leading the charge on getting their hoof care software called All4Hooves out and into the hands of trimmers and dairymen. For me, it has been a very fulfilling job. At some point we all get too old or to beat up to trim every day. I enjoyed trimming and meeting people. My career at Specialty Sales, LLC has enabled me to keep myself involved in what I love doing the most.

In closing, your career in hoof care doesn't have to end when you hang up your tools. You can continue to provide knowledge and expertise beyond the trim chute.



I met Blake at the 2014 HTA Convention in Brookfield, WI. I'm not sure what it was about him, but Blake and I became close friends very quickly. Even though the convention is only 3 days long, I felt like we had been friends for years. After meeting we would call each other weekly as we traveled to or from farms. Most of the time when we talked, I was already home, but he would still have a couple of hours driving to get home to his wife Joleen and their baby girl Ruby Jo. He would drive more miles one way to a farm than I would drive all week, so he had lots of time to chat. We would discuss our day and vent our problems. Blake was quite humorous and made me laugh often. It did take me several months to understand his southern accent. Most of the time I only understood about half of what he said, but it was enough. Over time I could understand more. Before I met Blake he had been diagnosed with testicular cancer, he had undergone surgery and chemotherapy. He was in remission when I met him. Even though we talked often, we only saw each other for the second time at the Atlanta HTA Convention. It was a great reunion for the two of us and to this day it may be my most memorable convention.

As luck would have it, in the summer of 2016 Blake needed to have some work done on his Appleton Steel chute. He let me know that he and his family would be coming to Wisconsin. Without hesitation, I insisted that they come stay with us while the work was being done on his chute. During that trip Blake came along with me to my farms to trim cows. He found trimming very different in Wisconsin compared to the southeast where he trimmed. We had a great few days together which included strawberry picking with Ruby Jo, my sons baseball game and a dinner out at a local supper club where he enjoyed a prime rib and a few Spotted Cows (one of his favorite beers). We were sad to see them leave, but the work on his chute was done and they needed to get back home. We sent them on their way with a case or two of Spotted Cow.

Unfortunately, in April of 2017, Blake was not feeling well and found out that the cancer had returned. Blake being the strong and positive guy that he was, said it was a minor setback and he'd be back doing what he loved,



hoof trimming, as soon as possible. We kept in touch while he was going through all of his treatments, and I could not believe how strong willed this man was to get better and get back to work trimming cows.

Blake did get back to work for a short while. In December of 2019 I received a phone call from Blake's wife, Joleen, that he was being flown to the hospital and they weren't sure if he would make it. He once again pulled through, but the cancer had spread to his brain. He had surgery to remove the brain tumor, but sadly would never trim hooves again. He gave it his all to beat the cancer, but in the end it was more than anyone could endure.

I am so thankful to have known Blake and lucky to have called him a friend. If it wasn't for the HTA I would have never had the opportunity to have such a good friend 1000 miles away. I am really going to miss our conversations as well as my friend and yours, Blake Hendrix.

The Blake Hendrix Legacy Fund to support Daughter GoFundMe campaign was started to help Blake's young daughter.

Blake Hendrix

May 9, 1982 - October 10, 2021

The Ins and Outs of Bookkeeping: All the Best Practices to Get the Best Financials Outcome from Your Organization

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If you had to make a list of some of the most critical elements of running a business that most new entrepreneurs don't think enough about until it's far too late, bookkeeping would undoubtedly be right at the top.

On a surface level, bookkeeping is simply the process of keeping accurate, thorough records of the financial affairs of any business. But once you begin to dive deeper, you see that it's about so much more than that. It's what allows you to maintain a proper cash flow — something that has long been a major pain point for any organization.

It's what allows you to make more accurate and informed decisions regarding growth. More than anything, it's what allows you to start making a plan for the future, which in and of itself is the most important benefit of all.

Handling bookkeeping on your own can quickly become a full-time job, which is a bit of an issue since you already have one of those on your plate. But by keeping a few key things in mind, you can enjoy all the benefits of this process with as few of the potential downsides as possible.

The Art of Business Bookkeeping: Breaking Things Down

When it comes to small business bookkeeping, it's critical to understand what you should be doing and, most importantly, when. The financial health of your organization has both short- and long-term ramifications, and the only way to control your own trajectory is to make a list of what you should be doing and why.

On a weekly basis, for example, you'll want to pay close attention to things like your cash flow statement and variable expenses. Cash flow is exactly what it sounds like — the money coming into and out of your business. If you're not paying attention to this, you might not realize that you don't have nearly as much money coming in as you think. This is especially true if you're waiting on client invoices to get paid but have no real idea of when they were sent or when they're due.

You cannot assume that just because your revenue says one thing, you have an equal cash reserve sitting there waiting to be taken advantage of. Especially in the situation with client invoices outlined previously, that isn't always the case. If there is a sudden business opportunity that you're trying to take advantage of or if you need to pay for an urgent expense like a new piece of equipment or machinery, this is not the time to find out that your accounts don't have as much in them as you assumed they did.

Therefore, you need to have a constant idea of how much cash you have on hand, along with the amount of money required to manage critical aspects of your business.

Variable expenses are a related concept, which themselves are defined as those expenses that don't have a fixed monthly or annual rate. If you took out a loan to start your business, it's likely that you have a set, predictable monthly payment. Unless you miss a payment and get hit with some type of penalty, that number isn't going to change.

Marketing, however, is something that changes all the time — particularly if you're experimenting with all the different types of campaigns that you could run. If you've invested in digital advertising on sites like Google, you're probably not going to hit upon the perfect campaign right away. You'll need to run tests to see what works and what doesn't, which will ultimately impact the amount of money you'll pay. If you move into the world of print advertising and run newspaper ads or design fliers, this too will come with an entirely different set of costs.

As a result of this, you need to make sure you understand what your variable expenses are at any given time. Only then will you be able to make the smartest and most informed decisions at the moment.

Additional Considerations About Bookkeeping

Likewise, there are a variety of important bookkeeping-related tasks that you'll want to perform on at least a monthly basis, too.

One of these involves getting a business snapshot — something that gives you a clear, concise idea of where you currently stand and the impacts of the decisions you've made over the past 30 days. A business snapshot will not only give you insight into things like your cash flow, but you'll also get to see sales, expenses, income, and more.

The key thing to understand is that these snapshots actually become more valuable as time goes on. You can compare the last several monthly snapshots to uncover trends and patterns that you may have otherwise missed. This, too, gives you insight into what you can do to improve your operations.

On a monthly basis, you should also make an effort to stay up-to-date on what all your expenses actually are. Yes, there are certain “costs of doing business” that you'll never be able to totally eliminate. But if you take the time at least regularly to look at where your money is going, you put yourself in a better position to find room for improvement.

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Case in point: Maybe that investment you made a few months ago isn't paying off nearly as well as you'd hoped. Unless you look at and understand exactly what you're spending, you're not necessarily going to realize that. Armed with this information, you can eliminate these types of expenses and free up valuable cash so that you can funnel it back into other areas of the business where it can do the most good.

Finally, when it comes to a topic as important as bookkeeping, it's important to acknowledge your own limitations. Especially as far as things like taxes are concerned, the stakes of "getting this one wrong" are simply far too high to go at it yourself.

You're a business owner, and while it's absolutely fair to say that your "can-do spirit" has already gotten you quite far, if you're not comfortable handling bookkeeping yourself, you shouldn't feel obligated to do so. Enlisting the help of a trained, experienced professional can immediately help you paint a clear picture of where your business currently stands from a financial perspective and where it might be headed, too. They'll use bookkeeping software that, when combined with their own insight, can help make it far easier to accomplish all the tasks outlined above and more.

A financial professional can step in and make sure that you have a solid foundation from which to build from, all while freeing up as much of your time as possible to focus on those tasks that actually require your full attention.

If you'd like to find out more information about all the best practices that you can use to get the most out of your business, or if you just have any additional questions you'd like to go over with someone in a bit more detail, please don't delay — contact our office today.



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