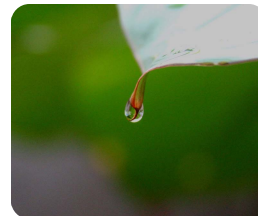


Essential Oils

Than & Now Newsletter

- By Joanna Barrett, RN, CNHP



April 2006

OILS ON THE FARMSTEAD (CONTINUED)

Shari Ripley
1143 Cutler School House Rd
Cortland, NY 13045
315-496-3220
member # 795737

For this article I would like to compare the costs of antibiotics to essential oils. The initial feeling of many people is that essential oils are too expensive to use. The size of the oil bottle is compared to the size of the antibiotic bottle and incorrect cost comparisons are made. Because it takes a lot less oil than antibiotic to treat an animal it becomes much more cost effective to use essential oils.

I would like to take you through our farm's treatment protocol changes to demonstrate our savings. One year ago our protocol was to treat all cows, with two vaccines to prevent scours, prior to calving. The cost of these vaccines was \$7.45 per cow. Because we were running a 50% heifer rate it made the cost of vaccines \$14.90 per heifer calf. Immediately after birth all heifer calves were given two preventative treatments which cost \$9.55 per heifer. This meant we had spent \$24.45 in preventative treatments for every live heifer on our farm and they did not work half the time. We would start sick animals on an antibiotic and electrolyte treatment for 5-7 days which would cost about \$30. If the calves were still sick at the end of that treatment another antibiotic treatment was used which would cost another \$30. In the end we would have a calf who was weak and full of antibiotics which cost \$54.45 - \$84.45. It is very easy to see why we were looking for an alternative.

Our current protocol is much more cost and time efficient. We no longer give vaccines to the cows prior to calving or preventative antibiotic treatments to the heifer calves right after birth. We currently give three drops of Thieves in their milk or in a capsule once a day for 7-10 days as a preventative and immune booster. This treatment costs \$3.80 for ten days. If the calves present with illnesses during or after the Thieves treatment we treat them with Thyme or Oregano. The dosages vary but the average cost of a ten day treatment is \$5.50. We rarely need to treat them again. At the end of a ten day essential oil treatment we have a much stronger calf and the total cost of treatment is \$9.30.

As you can see our cost for treatments has decreased by about 83% and we have fewer sick calves. I do not have room to compare the cost of treatments for cows but the savings percentage is about the same before the cost of dumping milk, when using antibiotics, is figured.

I hope you have learned a lot from these articles and are inspired to try using essential oils with your animals. If you would like help setting up an essential oil treatment for your farm or would like to learn how to sign up to get essential oils at wholesale prices please feel free to contact me.

Joanna