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Something to be Said!

There just might be something to the 90 days after a fog, you can expect rain! My husband is a true believer in this. It's a good thing he doesn't believe in all the old sayings, "if you don't eat a devil's egg on Easter, then the gnats will bother you all year". I'm pretty sure deviled eggs weren't on the table! That could have just been something my dad told me, to have me try a deviled egg. He once told my sister that the cow trail in the pasture was part of the Chisolm trail. Her history teacher set her straight! At any rate, with all the rain, foot rot could be around the corner.

Foot rot is a sub-acute or acute necrotic (decaying) infectious disease of cattle, causing swelling and lameness in at least one foot. This disease can cause severe lameness and decreased weight gain or milk production. Lame bulls will be reluctant to breed, and severely affected animals may need to be culled from the herd. The disease can become chronic, and if treatment is delayed the recovery prognosis is poor. This results in deeper structures of the foot becoming affected. Weight gain is significantly reduced when grazing cattle contract the disease.

Normal healthy skin will not allow the bacteria involved in foot rot to enter the deeper tissues. Mechanical injury or softening and thinning of the interdigital (between the toes) skin by puncture wounds or continuous exposure to wet conditions are necessary to provide entrance points for infectious agents.

Grazing stubble on recently mowed pasture may irritate the interdigital skin as well as standing in environments heavily contaminated with feces and urine. Injury is often caused by walking on abrasive or rough surfaces, stony ground, sharp gravel, hardened mud or standing in a wet and muddy environment for prolonged periods of time. High temperatures and humidity will also cause the skin to chap and crack, leaving it susceptible to bacterial invasion. *Fusobacterium necrophorum* is the bacterium most often isolated from infected feet. This organism is present on healthy skin, but it needs injury or wet skin to enter the deeper tissue.

Foot rot occurs in all ages of cattle, with increased incidences during wet, humid conditions. When case incidence increases in hot and dry conditions, attention must be directed to loafing areas, which are often crowded and extremely wet from urine and feces deposited in small shaded areas. The first signs of foot rot include:

Extreme pain leading to sudden onset of lameness, which increases in severity as the disease progresses. Acute swelling and redness of interdigital tissues and adjacent coronary band. Lesions in the interdigital space are often necrotic along its edges and have a characteristic foul odor. Evenly distributed swelling around both digits and the hairline of the hoof, leading to separation of the claws, fever and loss of appetite.

Treatment of foot rot is usually successful, especially when instituted early in the disease course. Treatment should always begin with cleaning and examining the foot to establish that lameness is actually due to foot rot. A topical treatment of choice should be applied at that time. Some very mild cases will respond to topical therapy only. Most cases require the use of systemic antimicrobial therapy. Your veterinarian may advise on recommended antibiotics and dosages.

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Pest Control on Fruit Trees

For fruit growers, the joy of harvesting a crop that is made in to pies, cobblers, and any number of other delicious fruit based foods typically doesn't come without some effort! The disease and insect pressures our fruit crops face can be a real challenge and in some cases could call for pest control applications. The following are a few hints from KSU Horticulture Specialist Dr. Ward Upham about how to manage your 2017 Pest Control program:

Sadly, weather often dictates whether we have fruit or not. Such is the case for some peach and apricot growers this year due to the mid-December cold snap and/or late frosts that have hit some parts of the area. Because fruit buds on peaches and nectarines are most often killed if the temperature reaches negative ten degrees, some places will have nice healthy trees – but no fruit! Without fruit, there's obviously no need to spray, but if there is fruit, use a product that contains captan or myclobutanil every 10 days from now until about two weeks prior to harvest. Specific issues like borers or peach leaf curl may require additional attention as well!

In most cases, we get good fruit on cherries without spraying. Wet springs like this one, however, can lead to problems with brown rot. For protection, apply myclobutanil or Captan. If cherry fruit fly has been an issue, a Malathion containing products or Sevin may be in order.

The crop that typically has the greatest need for spraying is actually apples! Recent rains have results in bright orange growths on cedar trees. This cedar apple rust fungus can cause real problems unless trees are resistant. Codling moth is a perpetual problem. Upham recommends application of a myclobutanil (fungicide) product every 10 days from when leaves appear until petal drop. At petal drop, but add Bonide Fruit Tree and Plant Guard to fungicide. NOTE: you are limited to four applications of the Bonide product per year. After June 1 drop the fungicide.

A spreader-sticker should be used with fruit tree sprays to improve the distribution and retention of fungicides and insecticides on fruit/leaves. Even so, rain can reduce the length of time the materials are effective. Less than an inch of rain since the last spray will not significantly affect residues. One to two inches will reduce the residue by one half, necessitating a reduction in the number of days until the next spray by one half. More than two inches of rain since the last spray will remove most of the spray residue. Re-spray as soon as possible.

Further information on controlling insects and diseases on fruit trees can be found in K-State Research and Extension publication *Fruit Pest Control for Home Gardens*. It can be found online at: <http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/bookstore/pubs/c592.pdf> and is available through your District Extension Office.

Additional products may be available that are not listed in the above article. No endorsement or criticism of chemicals is implied. Always read and follow label directions!

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