

## Calving Management Schools

### The Situation

Agriculture is the largest economic driver in Kansas and cattle and calves represented 51% of Kansas agriculture cash receipts in 2016. Increased demand for food coupled with population encroachment onto agricultural land, underscores the importance of increased production efficiency by livestock operations. In addition, increased percent calf crop (calves weaned as a percentage of cows exposed for breeding) is critical to individual producer profitability. Each calf born live and reaching weaning in good health represents a step in achieving improved profitability for the producer and feeding the world.

### What We Did

Calving Management Schools provided training to cow/calf producers on the sequence of events during calving and when and how to provide assistance if the birth is not progressing normally. Information on improving calf health and survivability from a herd management perspective was emphasized at the school and in newsletters, radio programs and newspaper articles. Meetings were held in six locations across Kansas with a total attendance of 491.

### Outcomes

- On the day of the meeting, 87% reported an increase in their knowledge, awareness or ability to manage issues regarding calving assistance; 81% or 89% expected to change when or how, respectively, they provided assistance at calving. The most common change producers indicated they would make after attending the meeting had to do with cleanliness. This applied to equipment used and the environment.
- Six months after the meeting, 58% had changed when or how they provided assistance at calving; 60% indicated they frequently used information they had learned at the meeting.



A.J. Tarpoff, extension veterinarian, explains how to manipulate a calf *in utero* with an abnormal presentation during a calving management school in Norton, Kansas. Justin Waggoner, extension beef specialist, holds a remote camera over the open uterus so the audience can see what is happening inside the cow.

## Success Story

### Producer comments:

- *I try and attend all the workshops that you put on. I have shod horses for 38 years and only had cattle for 7 years, and I have found that one can always learn a new trick or useful info at workshops. I did not understand the difference between colostrum replacer and colostrum supplement. Now I do, which should help for more healthy live calves.*
- *It was one of the best extension events I have ever attended, and I found it to be extremely helpful. The venue was packed and I now understand why.*



Local veterinarian, Amy Bandel, details several pre- and post-calving tips to increase cow health and calf survivability rates. Dr. Bandel focused on preventative techniques like improving cow body condition scores, nutrition, and proper vaccination protocols. She discussed increasing calf survivability rates by providing calves a healthy start in a clean environment and through adequate and timely colostrum consumption.

## Contact

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