

Each April, we take a closer look at some new technologies that are shaping the way we do business. This month, we're talking heat detection, and we all know that it's at the top of the list when it comes to profitability. Guest columnists Josh Hushon & Doug Speicher takes a closer look at one heat detection aide.

SAFE AND ACCURATE PREGNANCY DETECTION

With an active embryo transfer program generating valuable pregnancies, My Lady's Manor uses a new test to pregnancy check recipients.

By Josh Hushon & Doug Speicher

Tucked in the rolling hills of North Central Maryland is My Lady's Manor Farm, a dairy known to Holstein breeders around the world. This unique farm name dates back to 1713 when Lord Baltimore deeded approximately 10,000 acres of land to his fourth wife and christened the estate "My Lady's Manor." Robert and Mary Smith, along with their two sons, Justin and Jarod, and four full time employees, are the fourth generation of the Smith family to operate the modern day farm.

The 250-cow dairy has a rolling herd average of 22,500 pounds of milk, 847 of fat, and 694 of protein on twice-a-day milking. The herd includes 20 Excellent cows and has contributed greatly to the AI industry with such bulls as Winchester, Warrior, Rigorous and Wildman, along with several other promising sires in waiting at several different AI studs.

For a number of years the Smiths have worked with Doug Speicher to provide support on their dairy with reproductive and Hispanic employee support training. After joining Precision Diagnostics two years ago, Doug encouraged them to consider trying BioPRYN as a tool for pregnancy diagnosis.



BioPRYN is a non-invasive, cost effective blood test for pregnancy which can identify non-pregnant heifers and cows starting around 30 days post-breeding with 99 percent accuracy. It measures the presence of Pregnancy-Specific Protein B (PSPB) in the animal's blood circulation. PSPB is a protein that is produced by the placenta of the growing fetus. The blood needed for the sample can be easily pulled from under the tail and then packaged and shipped to the lab where results are determined in 27 hours.

Early diagnosis

The Smiths have been using the blood test

since April 2008 and feel that it fits within their herd's overall reproductive management. All heifers are checked weekly starting around 30 days post-breeding. Heifers called open are given a shot of prostaglandin, watched for heat, and then bred or receive an embryo the following week.

Pregnancy diagnosis is conducted every 10 to 14 days on the milking herd with the blood test used for early detection starting at about 33 or 34 days after breeding. The cows that are pregnant are then rechecked by palpation somewhere between 60 and 90 days bred.

Cows that are open at this diagnosis receive a

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Safe and accurate pregnancy check

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shot of GnRH the following week, followed by prostaglandin, watched for heat and rebred. Pregnancy rate on the herd is currently at 21 percent which includes the flush cows.

According to Mary Smith (better known as Sam), "The BioPRYN test is another good management tool. It does not replace the veterinarian performing a monthly herd check for us. However, it allows us to draw blood and test animals when it is convenient for us during milking time and when feeding the heifers."

Added safety for embryos

My Lady's Manor Farm has an active embryo transfer (ET) business with many of their best cows being flushed and embryos being placed into the lower half of the herd and virgin heifers. Approximately 100 calves born each year are the result of ET work.

"We have an extensive flush program on about 12 of our cows on a regular basis," Robert Smith explained. "By drawing blood for pregnancy detection on the recipient cows at 30 to 35 days after we put the embryos in, it avoids palpating the animals at that critical stage. Then, when the pregnant recipients get to 60 days bred, we have the vet do a recheck."



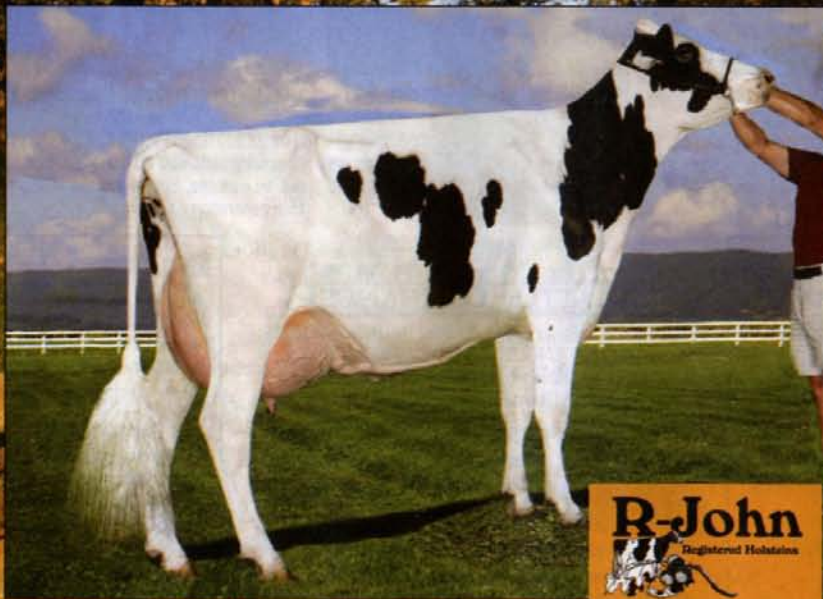
My Lady's Manor Farm continues to work with Precision Diagnostics in New Holland, Pa., which is one of over 20 labs nationwide that have affiliated with BioTracking, the developer of the blood test.

BioPRYN has been a good addition to the reproductive program at My Lady's Manor

Farm and Robert Smith has been actively recommending it to other dairies. "We've had good luck with the BioPRYN test," Robert said. "We feel it is a very accurate, non-invasive test that we can do on our schedule which is a great addition to our monthly herd check." □

The View is Great

INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE BARN!



LA-FOSTER ASTRO ALLURE-ET

(EX-90)

2-04 2x 211 15,770 3.3 528 3.2 504 (Inc.)

AA & Jr. AA Winter Yearling 2006

Dam: Dougal Lea Patience Amour (2E-92)

6-09 2x 305 27,110 4.3 1175 3.1 829

2nd dam: Dougal Lea Kay Patience (VG-88, 2*)

Life 160,019 4.3 6859 3.3 5340

3rd dam: EX-90; 4th dam: VG-88; 5th dam: VG-85,

1*; 6th dam: VG-87; 7th dam: VG

From a long line of performance-bred dams, Allure provides us with consistent production and award-winning type. Embryos are available by Stormatic and Goldwyn calves due in December! Your calls are welcome.

We enjoy the view all around R-John...but don't take our word for it. Come and visit us while you're in California for the National Holstein Convention. We're in the beautiful wine region of Sonoma County! Watch for details on our new website coming soon at Holstein World!



Cunningham Family

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