

Looking for a few good veterinarians

Dr. Zach Janssen knows that many parts of his day may be difficult. Difficult days are an accepted part of being a veterinarian. But a difficulty many veterinarians don't see coming until after they leave school and start practicing is the amount of paperwork associated with their chosen profession.

That is why Janssen has been so happy to find the WLIC program for reporting the Brucellosis tags used in the state of Wisconsin's Calfhood Vaccination program. Working out of Stateline Veterinary Services in Darien, WI, Dr. Janssen is one of three veterinarians in the state now using RFID tags in place of the orange metal Calfhood Vaccination tags.

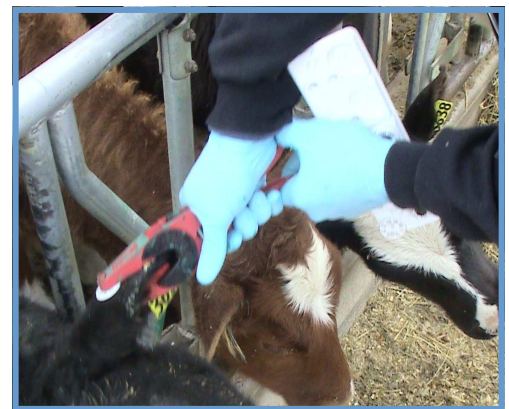
The process of tagging, tattooing, and vaccinating heifer calves at McClellan Farms, Inc., in Delavan, WI, has been simplified for Dr. Janssen as well as for owner Tom McClellan. Dr. Janssen has less paperwork, less time is taken out of McClellan's already busy day, and the calves have identification that can be used from calfhood vaccinations all the way up through the milking parlor.

Through this program, Dr. Janssen uses approved RFID tags, which are provided by WLIC, to tag the calves when they are vaccinated. These tags replace the orange metal Calfhood Vaccination tags that producers and veterinarians have been using for years. Once the tag is in place, the tag numbers and premises ID where they were used are recorded on a spreadsheet also provided by WLIC. When the sheet is filled in, it is faxed or emailed to WLIC, where it is put into the USDA database.

"Now the hardest part is filling out the paperwork that is required by the state – the USDA paperwork is easy," said Janssen.

According to Assistant State Veterinarian Dr. Paul McGraw, in 2009 veterinarians in Wisconsin vaccinated almost 528,000 calves in the Calfhood Vaccination program, using either the old-style metal tags and the RFID tags, on 12,500 farms all over the state.

The program is simple and free to implement, and the tags can have many uses. RFID tags can be used by many breed registries, by AI companies, and even by the DHIA for quicker recordkeeping. For a dairy producer, the RFID tag can be used with an automatic calf feeder, to keep track of a heifer being raised off the farm, then used when she comes back to be bred and starts milking. Of course, they can also be used by producers outside of dairy for their own herd management.



Dr. Zach Janssen vaccinating, tattooing, and tagging heifers at McClellan Farms Inc, in Delavan.