

Dick Knilans: Tape 3, side 5: DK, JJ **Nothing needed here except the dehorning, and I've transferred that to Vet trip, end. (July 95)**

Something about displaced cows.

The earliest way to determine this was to listen on that side and if the (?) slipped down under the rumen(?) and came up there, the top of it would be filled with gas. You could listen and hear a sound like somebody dropped a pebble in a rainbarrel, ping! You could thump on the side and hear ping, ping, ping! noise. They brought this to a vendor's meeting in St. Charles, IL. Michigan had done a lot of work, trying to diagnose the condition. It had just happened within the last fifteen years, due to the change in feeding. They'd experimented. They made some tapes and sent them down to the meeting. Some guy set the thing up and wiped the whole thing out. They were really upset in Michigan. They worked so hard to get all these sounds. I didn't get too involved--you can get too involved in all these different things. You're too busy with everyday stuff. You've got decide what you want to do. I'm more interested in the horse stuff. I'm pretty busy right now.

(a story on afterbirth)

A farmer's wife was about to give birth. He called the doctor and told him that his wife was in labor. What should he do? The doctor said I can't come out and you can't get in because of the snow. It's just like the calves, she'll have the baby, you'll tie off the unbillicus, and if you have any problems, call me. Things went along fine. A couple of days later the doctor called and asked how everything came along. Fine, seven pound baby boy, healthy. But I had a helluva time getting my wife to eat that placenta. ... If the cow eats the placenta, it's harder to trace and the wolves won't find it. If the wolves find it, then they know there's a calf around someplace and they'd go looking for it. If the cow cleaned up after herself, she and the calf would be safer. But it can cause all kinds of complications, too. It can get caught in the combination stomachs and plug things up. So it isn't really a good thing to have them eat it. So, even though it has good things in it, it can cause problems in the digestive tract. They aren't used to anything that big and extensive. It's not the type of food they eat now. Now you should take it away rather than let her eat it.

JJ reads some stuff she has, I think it's Unbutton.

DK talks about tattooing on cow's ear the year its blood was taken and registered and the vaccine for (?) which is undulant(?) fever is given.

That's the only thing they vaccinated cows for in those days. Now done for a lot more.

(Something about RAD taking some action on that problem before the vaccine was allowed)

DK mentions that there used to be something about TB. A brass plaque on the wall that said that the Dougan Guernsey farm was accredited for TB vaccine. See that your dad preserves that.

JJ says she's talked about dogs yapping at DK's heels as he made his rounds....Reads more about spacing the cows' having calves so that they keep producing milk over the years, even though the cow dries up for a little while before birth of calf.

DK talking about how these days there's a calf around for every cow. Something happens every six years. Says that RAD took good care of his cows and they didn't have many problems.

JJ reads on about the end of a cow's life, will be driven to the slaughter house and made into hamburger. Aren't bred for beef.

DK talks about cuts of beef, how they aren't the same now. Different animals used for different purposes.

JJ talks about McDonald's using dairy cows.

DK mentions cattle in Texas. And says style of eating has changed....Says he eats only the heavy real wheat bread. Oat bran for breakfast, a lot of lettuce. His dad loved real butter. His daughter and her husband are real particular, too. Soda is junk and juice is better and cheaper. Making cornbread.///

Because of some of the open housing used now where the cows are out alot and get cold, after they're milked and their teats washed and they go outside in the cold again, their teats can freeze. Especially the younger cows who have smaller teats that produce a lot of milk, especially when they're fresh because the udder is tight and the circulation isn't too good. The ends freeze and the teats freeze, and that can end the cow's productive life. They turn black. When we used to have stall barns and they were all inside and only went out to drink water, this wasn't a problem. But the farms are different now, with open housing. As we were on a farm this morning this guy showed us this freeze guard he was putting on, like a cream, that seems to keep them from freezing. If you can keep them dry, you're less liable to freeze them. Or if you can let them stay inside longer,

until they're dry. ... Dehorning chute. If a cow's forebears have horns, she'll have them. There's a breed of Holsteins they call hornless. But they could never get good milk production with the hornless genes. They must be connected, the genes for horns and the genes for milk production. If you breed Angus and Holstein, the first cross is hornless. The Angus are poled, or hornless animals. Most of your Holstein calves are born with horns. Early, you can take a jackknife and cut that horn button off, two or three weeks old. Can remove it with caustic. But it was hard to get someone to keep on it. Your dad had a help problem. Most of the time the animals were put in the squeeze chute and the horns were removed with clippers or with a saw instantaneously. They didn't feel it. We'd pull the arteries out so there'd be no bleeding and put on a caustic powder and then release them from the chute.

I think I saw them sawing them off and thinking it was an ugly process.

That is a little cruel. Every pass of the blade hurts. But the clip is like clipping your fingernails. It hurts, but the hurt isn't very long. I clipped from the 40s until I quit. If they didn't pull the arteries, they'd bleed. That artery just led to the horn, so they didn't need it. It was called artois pulumis (or something like that!). It seems inhumane, but the people who know realize that if you do it the other way, which was to take them to the barn, pole them off from the others, inject them while they fight it (they jump and fall down, etc.), then when the injection takes effect, you can saw off the horns and there'll be no pain. But you inflict more pain that way. It does more harm than crowding them a moment and clipping it off real fast, then releasing them. There are better ways, but they have to be done all along, and sometimes the farmers are neglectful to do it properly. ///