

Brown Dairy Equipment Co.

Bad Axe Office: 2153 N. Van Dyke, Bad Axe, MI 48413

McBain Office: 6500 Gerwoude, McBain, MI 49657

Portland Office: 7811 S. State Rd., Portland, MI 48875

800-373-2153

www.browndairyequip.com

January 2019

THE NEWSLETTER FOR DAIRY FARM ESTABLISHMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Milking Time Study Benefits Page 2

Rubber Mat Flooring Page 3

Advantages of our
Scheduled Maintenance
Program Pages 3 & 4

Join Brown Dairy Equipment at the
17th Annual

Great Lakes Regional Dairy Conference

Plan to join us **February 7-9, 2019** for the Great Lakes Regional Dairy Conference to be held at the **Bavarian Inn and Conference Center in Frankenmuth, Michigan.**

STOP BY OUR BOOTH

for **new product information,**
meet our sales team,
and **let us answer any questions**
you may have regarding our products.

You can register for the Great Lakes conference online at www.glrdc.org/registration or call 517-884-7089. Online registration closes Feb. 3, 2019. Visit www.glrdc.org to get the complete conference schedule.

FROM THE,,



President's Desk

Welcome to 2019!

We would like to thank our customers for your continued support with route deliveries of your chemical and farm needs, scheduled maintenance, and emergency service. We depend on our loyal customers who have worked with Brown Dairy Equipment over the last 57 years. We look forward to opportunities to help you and your dairy business grow and thrive in the coming year. Thank you for your confidence in our team's abilities to keep your dairy running smoothly. *We appreciate your business!*

We are highlighting our newest service of Brown Dairy Equipment of completing a **milking time study on your dairy farm** and showing you the results of the study. We went back to two dairy farms that have benefited from utilizing a milk time study produced by Brown Dairy Equipment, the story is on page 2. Have you ever considered the benefits of rubber mat flooring for your cow comfort? Tim Moore, our sales rep for equipment sales, explains the benefits on page 3. Page 3 also introduces you to the benefits of a scheduled maintenance program with Brown Dairy Equipment.

Visit us at the
Great Lakes Regional Dairy Conference
February 7 – 9, 2019



— Dennis Brown



February 7-9, 2019 • Bavarian Inn & Conference Center • Frankenmuth, Michigan

Milking Time Studies — *Know The Value!*

By Mike Whelan

It is no secret to anybody in the dairy industry that remaining profitable the past few years has become increasingly difficult. Dairy producers are getting less per pound of milk, testing has become more stringent which makes getting premiums more of a challenge, the cost to harvest the milk has not decreased and they still face the eternal challenge of keeping equipment operational, training employees and animal health. We could not stand by and see good people struggling and not try to help in some way, shape or form.

Brown Dairy Equipment's Vision Statement is *"Achieving excellence and setting new standards in our field through professionalism, integrity and enthusiasm for the present and the future; in all aspects of business that involves customers, Robert Brown Dairy Equipment, and its employees."* While we empathize with our customers and other dairy producers in Michigan we were determined not to let the state of the market blind us and hold true to our Vision Statement. We understood the challenges and what our customers had no control over i.e. lower milk prices, but we were not going to let that deter us from finding some sort of solution for our customers' problems. Research led us to a tool that we thought could greatly help dairy producers gain better control of their parlor's milking routine, increase production and aid in the reduction of udder health problems. This tool could increase the profitability of dairy producers; its name, VaDia.

The VaDia was developed by BioControl in cooperation with the International Dairy Federation to log the vacuum levels during milking at the four points in the milking cluster. Being battery operated and lightweight allows the VaDia to attach to the teat cups during milking in order to gather real time milking data. The information gathered allows dairy producers to see:

- Cow preparation/Bi-Modal milking
- Functionality of Take-off's
- Overmilking
- Liner fit
- Vacuum level and fluctuations
- Teat end vacuum during peak milk flow
- Pulsator phase analysis

By analyzing the information obtained, a dairy producer can get a clear picture of how their parlor is performing and what improvements could be made. As a team we could clearly see the value an investment in the VaDia could bring, but we needed to find the right person to use it. Enter Matt Nederhoed.

Matt Nederhoed joined the Brown Dairy Team after spending 15 years on a dairy farm. He started as a farmhand and worked his way up to a herdsman and then parlor manager. As parlor manager Matt implemented practices that led cows to yield an average of 100 lbs. of milk a day, dropped SCC numbers from 250k to 120k in under a year and down to 80k the next year. Perhaps the biggest validation of what Matt was able to do on the dairy came when we discovered that the practices he put in place became standard operating procedures and are still being followed to this day. The firsthand knowledge Matt gained, coupled with proven results on a dairy farm made him the ideal candidate for the role we envisioned of *'Milk Quality Specialist'*.

We put Matt through extensive training on the many functions of the VaDia and how to analyze the information gathered. With his passion for animal health, producing quality milk and parlor efficiency, he immediately saw the value he could bring to dairy producers. He quickly became an expert using the VaDia. Our Milk Quality Specialist was armed and ready — now we just needed to get him on some dairies. Enter Keeler Dairy and Brearley Farms, Inc.

Matt had developed a good relationship with Kevin Keeler of Keeler Dairy so when Kevin saw the enthusiasm Matt had for Milking Time Studies he was intrigued. He decided to let Matt come to the dairy to see what this new tool could really do. With the VaDia Matt was able to show Kevin that he had numerous Bi-Modal milkings, which for those unfamiliar with that term, is poor let down. This information led Matt and Kevin to closely watch the entire milking routine to see if any improvements could be made. Almost instantly they noticed a change that needed to occur, the timing of the prep routine.

Their current prep routine was not giving the proper stimulation times and lag times to insure maximum oxytocin release. Essentially the cows were being asked to do more work by using her anatomy to help with the harvesting of the milk. Matt and Kevin worked together with the employees to re-time the cows' prep. *The result was fantastic!* The Bi-Modal milking was eliminated — not reduced, eliminated. This led to less on time; resulting in better Somatic Cell Counts and healthier cow udders that yielded an average of 4 lbs. more per cow a day. On top of that the amount of time spent in the parlor was significantly reduced. Kevin was so im-

pressed with the results he shared the news with his nutritionist who just happens to be the same nutritionist for Brearley Farms, Inc.

Nathan Brearley of Brearley Farms, Inc. was having difficulties getting cows through the parlor on time. When he was talking to his nutritionist about this issue he was informed about what Matt was able to do at Keelers with a Milking Time Study. Shortly after that Nathan reached out to schedule Matt to come out to his dairy. The findings were interesting and in one case extremely similar to Keeler Dairy.

Nathan, like Kevin, was having too many B-Modal milkings, however through the information gathered by the VaDia, Matt was able to notice the pulsators and vacuum system needed a bit of attention as well. We began by fine tuning all of the parlor equipment. Once the equipment was set for optimum performance Matt went back to help train the employees.

With Nathan's blessing Matt spent two days working with his employees on prep and parlor efficiency. The results were extremely exciting. Brearley Farms, Inc. is now milking 550 cows three times a day in a double six parlor; with washing the system three times a day! They are getting all of the cows through the parlor and the cows are healthier and happier which raised the average of milk harvested. As an added bonus the employees are much happier as they do not feel like they are constantly running behind now that the parlor is in rhythm.

These are just two of the cases where our Milk Quality Specialist has made tangible improvements at a Dairy that positively impacted the bottom-line. Rather than attempting to hold you the readers' attention through a list of other farms and the results, I ask you to think about the current state of your parlor. Are cows yielding the milk they should? Are your cows' udders healthy? Is your equipment set up for optimal performance? If you cannot confidently answer yes to those questions I urge you to give us a call today to set-up Milking Time Study. Even if you feel you are doing everything right and your equipment is performing how it should a Milking Time Study can confirm that notion with minimal cost. With all the problems that you the dairy producers face in trying to turn a profit, allow us to help provide a solution. Call us today at 800-373-2153 to schedule or get more information about the benefits of Milking Time Studies, you may be pleasantly surprised by the results.

Rubber Mat Flooring for Cow Comfort

After more than 30 years of research and development, Animat continues to seek ways to improve cow comfort and productivity by producing the highest quality rubber flooring available. Over the past 30 years, Animat has invested millions of dollars in developing and manufacturing cow mats that meet the specific requirements of today's dairymen and incorporate the latest technological advances.

Animat mats for dairy cows provide optimal comfort for your herd. We offer the best quality/price ratio on the market thanks to Animat's unique design, product research, development and manufacturing techniques.

Animat's cow mats provide unparalleled comfort for your dairy herd and are the only product that comes close to replicating the natural conditions of pastures.

Unlike concrete, Animat mats help the cow's hooves and legs absorb shock. Animat's exclusive non-slip surface offers increased traction and superior cow comfort, even when wet, which allows your cows to maintain a natural, sure-footed gait and significantly decreases stress from moving about.

Animat cow mats are non-porous and made from 100% recycled rubber, making them very stable as well as easy to clean and disinfect for a healthy environment. Unlike concrete, our mats don't absorb liquid. They adapt well to all existing cleaning methods like flushing, alley scrapers, rubber tire scraping and more.

For all of the above reasons and more, Animat cow mats and mattresses can be the most cost-effective investment you can make for your dairy.

Call Tim Moore at 517-881-1035 for questions and a quote on improving your cow's comfort today.

Scheduled Maintenance

It's even more important in a down market

By: Mike Whelan

In a perfect world, or at least in one where money is of little or no concern, most if not all of us would agree maintaining an investment is a sound practice that should be adhered to. Most of us know the value in changing the oil, rotating the tires, flushing the transmission fluid, checking brake pads for wear and/or performing any number of other different routine maintenances a vehicle may call for. Sure there are some people that if money is tight they may push the oil change a few hundred or a thousand miles; they may choose to rotate their tires themselves or wait until they hear the sound of "missiles screeching through the air" to know it's time to get new brake pads. These people know the value of maintenance and are aware that the money they think they're saving may in fact cost them more in the long-run; not checking the brake pads may lead to rotors and calipers needing replaced rather than just the pads. They understand the risk, but due to finances feel they have no other choice; turning a blind eye is cheaper when a problem isn't glaring them in the face.

Then you have some people that will not let finances be the driving factor in their decision making process. These folks will find a way to make sure maintenance is still done in a timely fashion. They know that while the funds may not be readily available to perform the maintenance coming up with that smaller amount of money to perform the maintenance will be easier than a much larger sum, if a piece of equipment breaks down due to lack of maintenance. Simply put, they understand the cost of changing the oil in a vehicle is far cheaper than replacing the engine. Many of these folks also understand the collateral cost equipment failure could cause, which makes having maintenance performed be, as one dairymen told me, tongue in cheek, a "necessary evil".

I am not here to tell you which approach is right for you. For every 3 cases I can think of where not performing maintenance has backfired on a customer, I can think of an instance where customers got away with rolling the dice. If you cut corners and continually get away with it, I'm not naive enough to believe your mind can be changed in a few paragraphs. I'm even realistic enough to know that a catastrophic failure due to lack of maintenance may not even change some of those peoples' minds. However, I will ask those of you who devalue or feel maintenance is not important to think deeper into the collateral cost skipping maintenance can cause. The true story below may change your perception. The account you are about to read is a true story. The customer allowed me to use his or her story, but asked the names be changed to conceal their identity.

ABC Dairy had scheduled maintenance

performed on their farm religiously for over 8 years. Now this didn't make them immune to breakdowns, as even the most well maintained pieces of equipment can still fail, but it reduced the number of breakdowns and helped maintain the cleanliness of the system. Johnny (the owner of the dairy) also liked that the technicians would schedule maintenance during his downtime, and if he had minor issues he could address those during maintenance, rather than on a service call. Johnny understood the importance of maintenance. He understood that if his milk pump quit during milking that was going to cost his business far more than what would show due on his service invoice. He knew that a down milk pump has a ripple effect that causes: loss of production, employees being paid to stand around, and added stress to the employees and animals as they try to get back on schedule.

Johnny also understood that quality mattered especially when prices are down. Having maintenance performed he helped keep his counts good by: Checking that the proper amount of chemicals is being added during cleaning, the proper water temperature is being reached, drains are working properly, rubber goods are not worn holding bacteria, the cooling system is functioning efficiently and a number of other measures to make sure he always received top dollar for his milk. Sadly, last year Johnny died.

His death surprised the family and hurt many people deeply on a personal level. Johnny knew his passing was near and with his attention to detail and discipline he had a succession plan in place that insured that the dairy would stay open. His sons would take over the operation and, short of Johnny's presence on the farm, business would continue as usual, or so he thought/hoped.

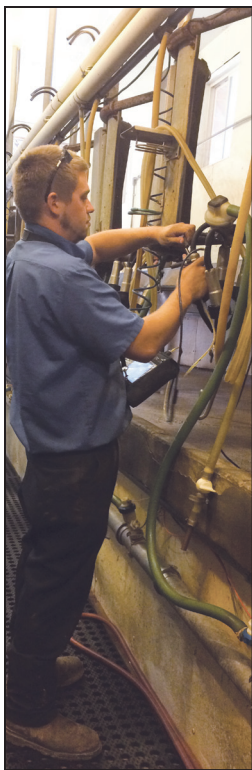
On the surface for the first couple of months essentially business did continue as usual. Quality milk was being produced, our scheduled maintenance team would go out the first of the month and perform the work that needed to be completed, but something had changed. Matt Schipinski (one of our lead maintenance techs) reported back to me after the second visit since Johnny's passing that his sons were asking a lot of questions. This was not odd as Johnny always wanted Matt to tell him what he found and would treasured the open communication. What had changed was the type of questions. Why are you changing that? Can we push this out a little longer? Do those gaskets really need to be replaced? How much longer are you going to be? Matt's heard questions like this all too often in recent years and suspected something was afoot.

Continued on back page

Brown Dairy Equipment Newsletter

Winter Edition 2019

2153 North Van Dyke
Bad Axe, MI 48413



Scheduled Maintenance *(continued from page 3)*

On the third month after Johnny's passing, Matt as he always had done, called ABC Dairy to let them know he would be coming there to perform the monthly maintenance; ask if they needed anything brought out to the dairy or had other issues they would like addressed while he was there. I caught just enough of the conversation to hear Matt say "I'm sorry to hear that, give us a call if something changes." One of the sons canceled scheduled maintenance blaming the "low-milk prices". This is a common reason we hear, so in my role as service manager I told Matt to respect their wishes for this month and in the meantime I would meet with the sons to discuss their decision.

In that meeting I realized early this was no longer the ABC Dairy Johnny proudly operated. The sons presented their sum of bills for the month and simply said "We want to make a profit, and as much of a profit as possible, so we are making some cuts and scheduled maintenance will be one of them." They pointed to their lack of service calls to the farm saying, "Why do we want you here to work on equipment that works? It just doesn't make sense". They were right, it didn't make sense, but not in their context. When I hear lack of service calls at a farm we do maintenance on, I am happy and proud of our team. One of the major goals of scheduled maintenance is to be ahead of potential catastrophes and, what I was hearing, is that because we have done that, they could no longer pay us to keep performing. I tried using this logic with them and was met with such resistance that by the time the meeting ended, we amicably agreed to disagree, and with maintenance on the back burner indefinitely.

To illustrate the importance of maintenance I would love to fabricate a story about a catastrophic afterhours emergency that shut the parlor down for hours and could have been prevented had maintenance been done. I would love to tell that story because it would be less painful than the truth. The truth is we went just over 2 months and never heard from the ABC Dairy, but when we did it was an emergency especially to the brothers. The lack of maintenance had finally bit them on the backside, they lost their premium due to high PI counts.

We gladly sent our team out to the farm and started inspecting the milking system. We found gaskets that needed replacing which are notorious for elevating PI counts. We also found that the water temperature was extremely low and a milk pump seal that looked as if it was incased in a ball of Munster cheese. After a full inspection and addressing all the issues we found, we shocked the system and went on our way.

It was not long after that we received a phone call from the sons at ABC Dairy. Their counts fell and they were getting their premium milk price back. They could not be more pleased and thanked us for what we were able to do. I thanked them for reaching out to us and before I could even get the question out they said "We'd like to get back on the maintenance schedule." When

asked how often and what would they would like performed, the answer was simple, "Just like Dad had it set up. We lost more money by losing our premiums than we ever spent on maintenance, it was a hard lesson to learn."

Don't be like ABC Dairy and learn the hard way. Sure milk prices are low, but that is why it's so crucial to get the best price possible as efficiently as possible. Scheduled Maintenance is not an insurance policy against a breakdown and can't be viewed in that light. Scheduled Maintenance is however a sound practice to help insure your system produces the highest quality milk and preventing damage to equipment that can be avoided. If you have been struggling with parlor performance, elevated counts or just want the peace of mind that comes with knowing your equipment is being maintained as it should, call us today at (800) 373-2153 and ask about joining our Scheduled Maintenance Program.