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## Barrow County

### Cattlemen's Association

90 Lanthier St, Suite B

Winder, GA 30680

### Beef In Barrow –February 2012

Our next meeting of the Barrow County Cattlemen's and Cattlewomen's Association will be Tuesday, February 21, 2012 at 7pm at the Golden Corral Restaurant in Winder. Please know price has increased by \$1 for each person attending.

Our sponsor this month will be Farm Bureau. Our speaker is Dr Jerry Frost of the Bethlehem Veterinary Hospital, and his topic will be parturition in beef cows.

**EXTENSION SERVICES:** If you need to consult an extension agent, call Cindy Davis, 770 307 3029, and she'll refer you to an agent depending on the nature of your request. The Jackson County agent is Sam Ingram, 706 367 6344.

**LOCAL EVENT:** GA CA Executive Director, Josh White will be on hand to encourage area cattlemen to join the GCA (and any of our local chapters) at the special breeding herd replacement sale at Northeast Georgia Sale barn on February 18. The help any of us can give will be appreciated.

### IT'S TIME TO CHECK THE COWS:

We find a lame cow; what should we do? Make some observations. Which limb is lame? As the cow walks, she'll throw her head up as a painful front limb's foot hits the ground; she throw her head down as the painful hind limb's foot hits the ground. In the affected limb, where's the problem located? It can be anywhere from the hip or shoulder to the foot, and critical observations are necessary to isolate a lesion. Never the less, in our area, the majority of lameness afflictions are in the foot, any tissue from the ankle down to the invisible bone or joint within the hoof wall and the sole. Do you see swelling? In early stages of these foot disorders, swelling may be subtle. Compare the affected foot with the opposite normal limb. The width between dewclaws may provide an early clue to swelling. Often swelling is more obvious and affects soft tissue between the toes and above the hoof/hairline, the coronary band. Classical foot rot, the most common of our problems, begins with injury between the toes, and as secondary infection develops, swelling will be symmetrical on both sides of an imagined midline from the ankle down the foot. Over time foot rot extends to deeper tissues within the hoof wall. As the disease progresses, swelling may become asymmetrical. As this animal walks, it may



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favor the more severely affected toe and try to turn its weight away from the affected toe. Other common injuries of the foot are trauma, erosions or penetration of hoof wall or sole, and secondary infections begin in the deeper tissues of the foot. The subsequent swelling in these problems may be invisible initially or quickly progress to the asymmetrical type we just described for longer standing foot rot.

Treatment of classical foot rot (interdigital necrobacillosis) and secondary infections from injury to the wall or sole (deep foot diseases) both may be responsive to antibiotic therapy. However chronic foot rot and the deeper foot diseases may also require surgical management. The best and final observation before beginning any treatment should include picking up the affected foot, cleaning it, and careful close examination. Surgical interventions may be very useful at the outset. Handling lameness in our herds is another reason to have a catch pen, head gate and an overhead beam or structure to assist lifting the limb with rope. The best advice is to be certain of your diagnosis before you start antibiotic therapy, and certain of your commitment to a cure. All-too-often, we start antibiotic treatment and discover later that the problem is something for which culling may have been the better initial choice of action (many upper limb injuries, fractures, or greatly advanced disease in the foot). Once antibiotics are started and you decide to cull, you're faced with waiting for drug withdrawal, while weight loss and salvage value decrease. Another critical point: antibiotic treatment is often unsuccessful because we use an inadequate dose and/or too infrequent dosing. Call your local veterinarian on this subject; he or she will usually be willing to answer and help you get off on the right foot to treat your cow's bad foot.

The following veterinarians provided me with written or verbal information. Drs Jerry Frost and Eddie Tomlinson, Bethlehem; Roger Ellis, UGA; David Van Metre, CO; and Tom Edwards, NE. Two more pieces of advice come from Drs Frost and Tomlinson. Keep cows out of bogs and backwaters of your pond in hot summer, which predispose to foot rot. And, curly toe in cows is a common problem causing lowered reproductive efficiency, poor milk production, and recurrence if treated. Cull curly toed cows and bulls. Curly toe is a costly heritable trait all too often tolerated by you and me.



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### Barrow County Farm Bureau Insurance

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### Barrow County Cattlewomen's Association



We Meet with the Cattlemen's Association the  
3rd Tuesday of each month

**Mission: To Promote Beef**

"Come Join Us"

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