Showcasing New Products

Find the best indicator for your herd or how to read tags efficiently and how a whisper is all it will take to diagnose respiratory diseases from the squeeze chute from these new products showcased at the Angus Convention trade show.

by Lindsay King, assistant editor

ESTROTECT™ Breeding Indicator

The ESTROTECT™ Breeding Indicator features a new and improved precision design that includes the, patent pending, Breeding Bullseye™ to help producers and breeding specialists know exactly when animals are ready to breed.

This takes all the guesswork out of the breeding process. It's the first product of its kind to serve a variety of uses: heat detection, confirming pregnancies, identifying potential embryonic loss and pinpointing timing for various modern artificial insemination (AI) and breeding protocols.

"We listened to our customers and leading researchers to launch a new product design that provides producers and breeding specialists with high accuracy on not only when an animal is in heat, but precisely when to breed that animal," says Boyd Dingus, ESTROTECT general manager. "ESTROTECT is the only product of its kind with thorough research and third-party data to support its use."

Third party university research has demonstrated that when the new ESTROTECT Breeding Bullseye (or the equivalent amount) is rubbed off

of the patch by mounting activity, the confirmed pregnancy rate for those cows was up to three times higher than those where the Breeding Bullseye was not rubbed off. With a missed or failed pregnancy resulting in lost revenues anywhere between $42 and $126 per cow, the economics of utilizing the ESTROTECT Breeding Indicator for breeding success has never been more clear.

Separate university trials tested ESTROTECT Breeding Indicators in extreme conditions across three different breeds of cows in the United States and South America. When the Breeding Bullseye was activated, those cows had 30-day pregnancy rates up to 180% higher than those bred without activated ESTROTECT Breeding Indicators.

Just like the original ESTROTECT patches, the ESTROTECT Breeding Indicator has a unique, self-adhesive design with rub

off silver and now new black ink. When cows experience mounting activity, ESTROTECT's silver and black surface ink is rubbed off by the friction of mounting to reveal one of five indicator colors — red-orange, green, blue, yellow or fuchsia. When the black Breeding Bullseye (or the equivalent amount) is rubbed off, it is time to breed the animal.

"There is no difference in the colors on the indicators, that is mostly personal preference for the cattleman," says Jerry Jones, ESTROTECT account manager. "The only difference is in the yellow, someone who is color blind can see when that color is rubbed off."

For more information about ESTROTECT Breeding Indicators, visit *ESTROTECT.com*.

Tru-Test® ERS Handheld EID Reader

Tough, compact and easy to use, the new ERS Handheld Reader from Tru-Test takes the hassle out of recording EID ear tags. Eliminate the hassle of manually reading and recording tags on lively stock. EID's can be quickly recorded by waving the reader past the animal's ear.

"When they were first on the market it was a tool to get the fifteen-digit number off the tag on the animal into the scale," says Jason Jones, Eastern regional manager for Tru-Test.

The ERS can be used as a standalone reader, holding up to 4,000 records for downloading onto a PC. Up to five fields can be added when an EID is read. This makes it easy to take field notes on cattle that will later show up in the spreadsheet when the data is downloaded.

"When you purchase match pair tags (pictured above), the package they ship to you in has a code on it and you can go to the Datamars website and enter that code in. It will open a spreadsheet with the visual tags and EIDs to be uploaded to the device itself," Jones explains. "But you can also manually enter those as well. We are just trying to make it easier to collect more data for producers."

Alternatively, using built in Bluetooth the ERS can be paired with your Tru-Test Weigh Scale Indicator, to form a part of your Complete Stock Management Solution. This enables you to monitor individual animal performance by recording weights and other information against an animal's EID tag. You can accurately identify poor performers, catch health issues early or split animals into groups.

With the ability to read FDX and HDX tags, this reader is also NAIT tag compatible. Easily create session files to record groups of animals. Its battery lasts up to eight hours and works off an easy-to-use, icon-based menu. This device is ideally suited to the tough agricultural environment, designed with farmers in mind.

For more information about the ERS Handheld EID Reader, visit *ritchey.co.uk*.

Whisper

Artificial intelligence is no longer just for the combine drivers of the agricultural industry. Merck Animal Health adopted a new agency to develop precision technology for cattle. Whisper is the first of many tools Merck intends to develop for cattlemen. Though this one is used for the diagnosis and treatment of bovine respiratory disease (BRD).

"We don't want to replace the human, just optimize their job through tools using big data and artificial intelligence," says Jason Nickell, DVM and Merck associate director for the precision technology cattle group. "Retaining labor is an ongoing issue for producers and retraining new employees."

The typical diagnostic procedure for BRD is visual and then a rectal temperature to confirm. Nickell says many cases of BRD are misdiagnosed and plenty of animals are over or undertreated for the severity of their specific case of BRD.

"The goal is to individualize the treatment to the animal based on their whisper score and rectal temperature," Nickell explains of the device his team developed that looks like a typical stethoscope, with a few more bells and whistles.

Using machine learning, similar to the function of a smart phone, Whisper takes an 8-second recording of the animal's chest sounds. The 60,000 recorded points of the sounds categorize that animal based on the severity of their BRD case, on a scale of 1 to 5.

Similar to how a veterinarian would listen to an animal's heart, Whisper needs to be in a certain location for the most accurate reading. The end of the stethoscope is placed on the right side of the chest, two inches back and two inches up from the elbow. The user simply hits the record button and waits for a diagnosis.

"This is all done wirelessly to a computer and without any Internet while working at the chute," Nickell says. "All the info is pushed to the cloud once the computer is connected to an Internet source so we can monitor sound quality of our scope. This allows us to provide quality control, remotely."

Merck provides full installation and personal training for this technology to ensure producers use Whisper to its fullest potential.

For more information about Whisper, visit *merck-animal-health-usa.com/whisper*. **AJ**