

by Julie Mais
Editor



Until it happens to you

I was feeling uninspired, and therefore unmotivated to write this column. Herd health can sometimes appear to be a humdrum topic.

So I started asking around. “What comes to mind when you think herd health?” The answer I got was, “It’s like your personal health — you probably don’t think much about it until something happens to you.” Then it becomes not so much of a routine subject.

Isn’t it easy to take your good health for granted?

I’ve never experienced the need for a restrictive diet until around two years ago, during my pregnancy, when I was diagnosed with gestational diabetes. This required me to drastically change the types of food I was consuming.

My plan to spend a Kansas summer eating copious amounts of watermelon and ice cream was uprooted. I had to track every carb I ate, increase my protein intake and even cut back on certain fruits, watermelon included, to keep my blood sugar in check — all to keep myself and my baby as healthy as possible. Thankfully for me this condition went away once my daughter was born, but I have good friends who have lived with diabetes

most of their lives. I gained a new appreciation for the freedom I have with food choices.

Even on a less serious scale, that’s how I feel my personal health journey has been. Understanding the importance of a balanced diet to fuel my body. The realization that I need to regularly incorporate cardio for heart health — and so I don’t become winded after walking up just a few flights of stairs. How hydrating throughout the day wards off headaches and gives me a boost of energy. Keeping up with regular vision, dental and medical appointments to maintain health and hopefully catch anything concerning early. Also, learning to healthfully manage stress by going for a walk or taking deep breaths.

Advancing herd health

As I thought more about the June *Angus Journal*, “Advancing Herd Health,” and the articles included, it comes to light sometimes it’s the basic things that have major effects. Our team tackles topics like keeping dewormers working and how ticks

can affect your herd in more ways than one. We also cover the need for a biosecurity plan — something uncommon in beef production, but becoming increasingly important.

Managing herd health is a constant — from vaccine schedules, preventing parasites and monitoring for sickness to treat it quickly, to managing nutrition and year-round access to water. It’s a never-ending drumbeat, a rhythm that can affect the efficiency and profitability of your herd. **AJ**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie".

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