General Animal Care

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The Most Important Thing You Need to Learn at This Seminar!

- “As to the methods there may be a million and then some, but principles are few. The man who grasps principles can successfully select his own methods. The man who tries methods, ignoring principles, is sure to have trouble.”

  Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

Principle #1

- Clean
- Dry
- Comfortable

Clean

- The animals should be clean, not standing in wet manure, or have manure sticking to their coat.

Clean

- Forages should be clean, with no dirt or mold or them.
- Grains should be clean with no molds, or dirt, or manure from insects, rodents or birds.

Clean

- Water should be clean, not cloudy with dirt and moss growing in it.

Dry

- When animals are wet, a lot of energy is lost to keep the animal warm. This means more of the feed goes to keeping them warm, instead of making more milk, meat or babies.
- The bacteria and virus' that cause disease like wet, warm conditions. When animals are kept dry, there are less disease causing organisms to make them sick.

Comfortable

- Hard concrete is not a good place for animals to stand for long periods of time, especially cows. Have a dry area that has straw or corn stalks for them to lie on.

Comfortable

- If you are not comfortable standing or lying where your animals are, neither are they.

Ventilation

- Fresh air is important. Stale, warm, damp air has a lot of disease organisms in it, and can cause animals to get respiratory illnesses like pneumonia.

Ventilation

- A sign that air quality is not good - look for watery eyes, and runny noses.
- Air should not have a strong odor of manure.

Ventilation

- Lots of sunlight helps to kill diseases

Principle # 2

- All cows are Mothers – treat them with respect and kindness. If you do, they will give you the best that they have.

Principle # 2

- And take care of the babies – getting them started properly will enable them to be good producers. Animals never completely recover from a poor start!

Newborn animals

- Birth should take place in a clean, dry area.

Newborn animals

- A calf or lamb's navel should be disinfected with iodine or chlorine bleach as soon as it is born.

Newborn animals

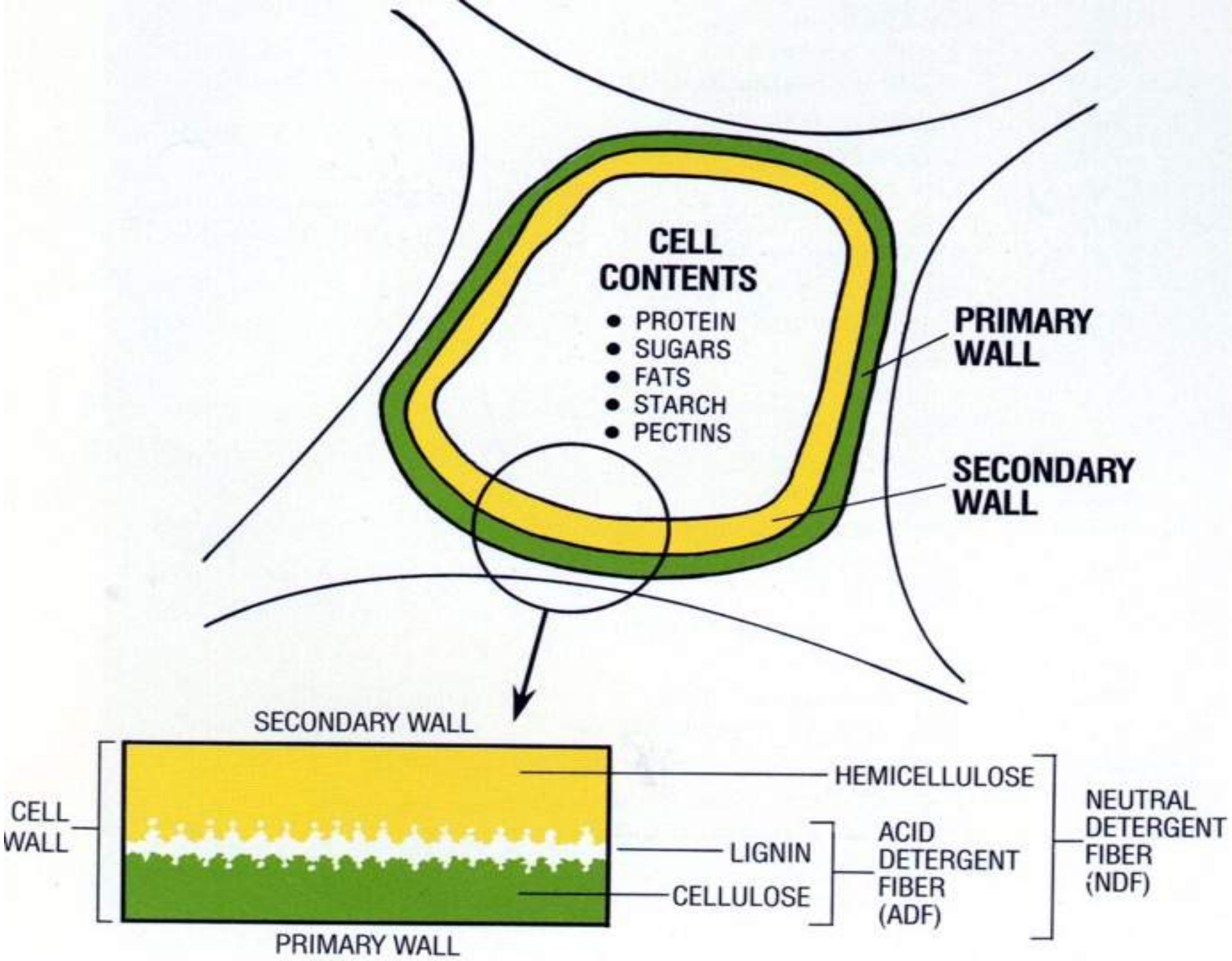
- They should also get colostrum (first milk) withi an hour of being born – this is important to help protect against diseases.
- Make sure the mother's teats are clean and free of dirt and manure.

Principle # 3

- When you feed a ruminant animal (cow, sheep or goat) you are not feeding the animal, you are feeding bugs.

Feeding

- Ruminants (cows, sheep, goats) are able to eat and live on feeds that humans, chickens and hogs can’t – feeds that are high in fiber, like grass.

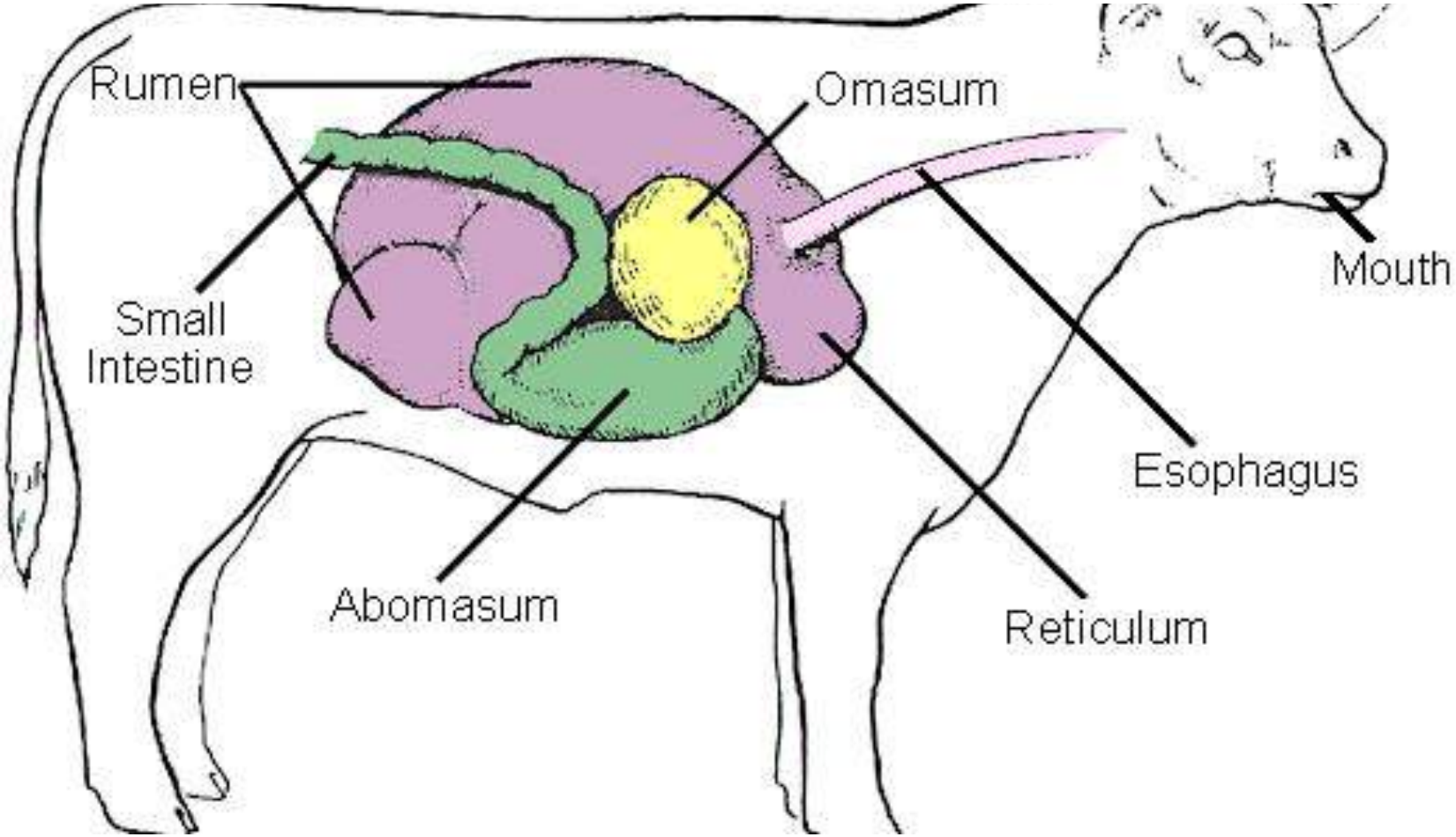

CELL CONTENTS
• PROTEIN
• SUGARS
• FATS
• STARCH
• PECTINS
PRIMARY WALL
SECONDARY WALL
SECONDARY WALL
CELL WALL
HEMICELLULOSE
LIGNIN
CELLULOSE
ACID DETERGENT FIBER (ADF)
NEUTRAL DETERGENT FIBER (NDF)
PRIMARY WALL

Feeding

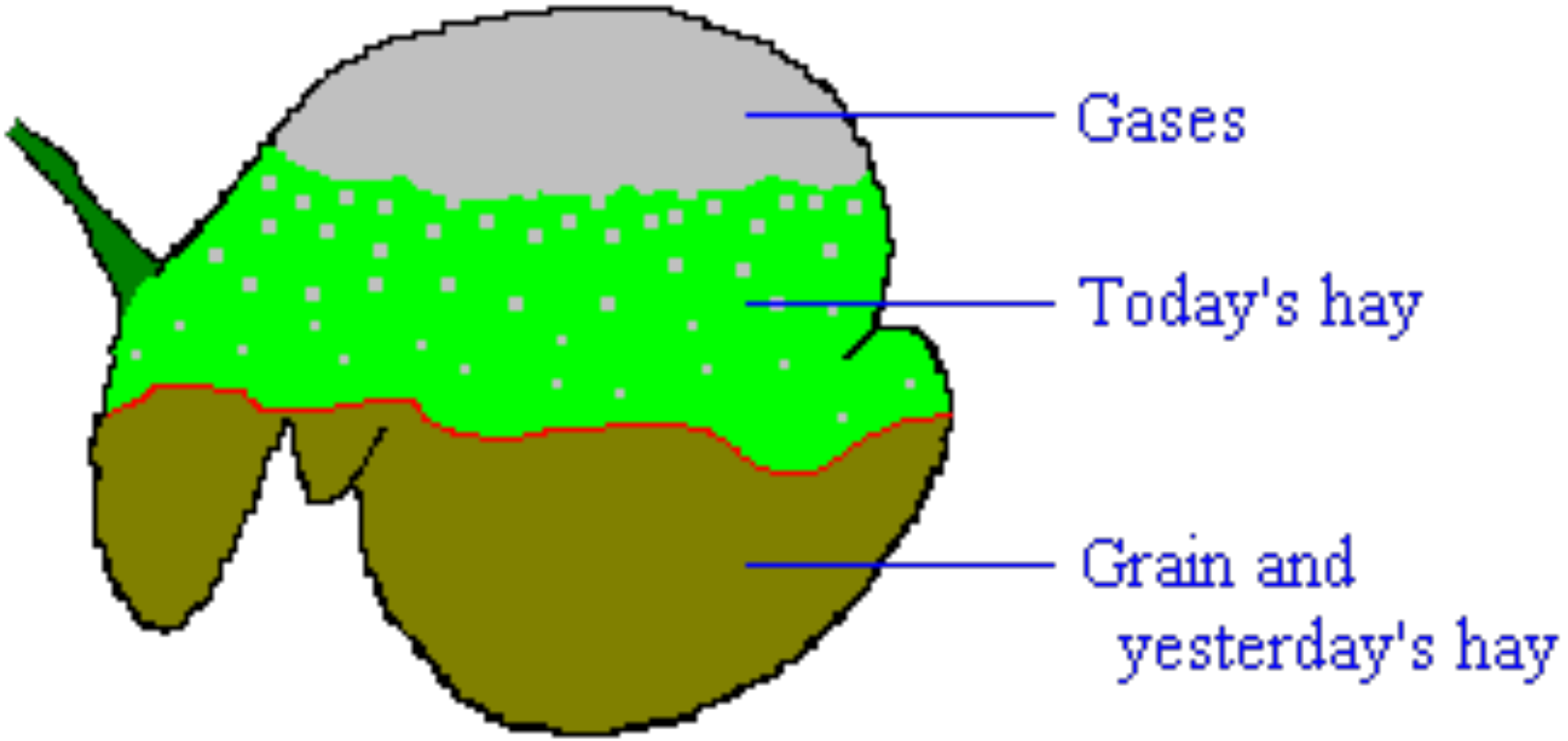
- The rumen is a big fermentation vat (like making bread or wine) that has over 600 different bacteria, 15 different fungi and 30 different protozoa that digest the feed to provide protein and energy for the animal.



Feeding


Rumen
Omasum
Mouth
Small Intestine
Esophagus
Abomasum
Reticulum

What's in the Rumen



Feeding

- It takes 2 – 4 weeks to change the microbial population in the rumen, so it is extremely important that feed changes happen gradually.

- This is especially important when feeding grains, introduce them slowly and in small amounts.

Feeding

- A cow is working hardest when she is lying down and chewing her cud.

Feeding

- She should spend at least as much time in a day (12 hours) lying down and chewing, as she does walking, standing, grazing.

Feeding Grain

- The reason we feed grain is because there may not be enough energy (carbohydrates) and protein in the forages we are feeding to support the amount of milk that an animal is giving.

Feeding Grain

- A good rule of feeding is to feed 1 kg of grain for each 4 liters of milk an animal is giving. This depends on the quality of forages the animal is eating.

Feed Values

Feeds that are Higher in Energy and Lower in Protein

- Corn
- Wheat
- Barley
- Corn silage

Feeds that are Higher in Protein and Lower in Energy

- Alfalfa
- Young Grass
- Sunflower Seed Cake
- Field Peas

Mixing Grain

- All of the grains in the mix should be about the same size in particle size, so that it mixes well and doesn't separate.
- The finer the grain is ground, the quicker the animal can digest it, and the more completely the animal can digest it.

Feeding – It's a Balancing Act!

- Feeding as much as you can to get the most production, while keeping the animal healthy, and getting more in value than it costs to feed the animal.
- Feeding the right ratios of energy and protein – it changes with age of the animal, stage of lactation, and forages that the animal is eating.

Grain Mixes

- Baby animals (for the first 180 days), and animals that have just given birth (for the first 90 days)
  - 1 Corn grain
  - 2 Sunflower Seed Cake
  - 1 Wheat Bran
- 18 ½ % Protein

Grain Mixes

- Young animals (150 days – 1 year), and milking animals (90-150 days)
  - 1 ½ Corn Grain
  - 1 ½ Sunflower Seed Cake
  - 1 Wheat Bran
- 16 ¼ % Protein

Grain Mixes

- Growing animals (older than 1 year), and animals milking more than 6 months
  - 2 Corn Grain
  - 1 Sunflower Seed Cake
  - 1 Wheat Bran
- 14 ¼ % Protein

Grain Mixes

- Mature animals that aren't milking, animals on lots of good, young grass (spring and fall) or lots of alfalfa.
  - 3 Corn Grain
  - 1 Wheat Bran
- 10 % Protein

Summary

- Keep your animals Clean, Dry and Comfortable!
- Take extra care of Mothers and Babies!
- Feed good feeds, and make changes slowly!