

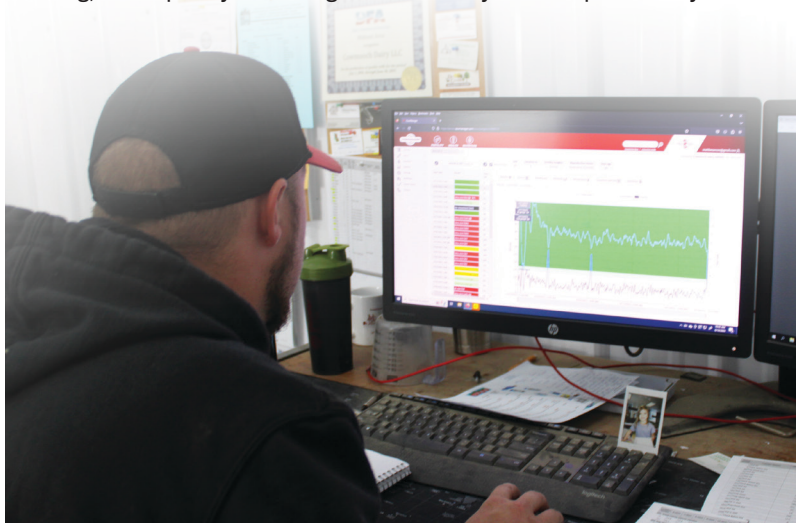
YOUR SUCCESS *Our Passion.*

# SELECTIONS

## ROUND-THE-CLOCK MONITORING FOR YOUR HERD

Busy schedules, labor challenges and personnel constraints have most dairies looking for shortcuts to get the work done on the farm. Sometimes, however, shortcuts come with short results because the task wasn't completed effectively or efficiently. CowManager® offers dairy producers an additional set of resources to help achieve the herd's reproductive and health related goals. This ear tag sensor provides producers the latest in technology to monitor animal fertility, rumination, activity and temperature. Making the system one of the most resourceful "employees" on the farm.

Herd size or facility design doesn't matter when it comes to CowManager. A pasture-based herd of 25 cows or a freestall setup with 20,000 cows can both take advantage of the technology. The information is always available and always updating. The software used is able to interface with nearly all dairy management software. This prevents redundancies in data entry and allows existing systems and sort gates to communicate with CowManager. Automated sort gates assist in bringing only the cows that need attention. This practice will decrease cow handling, consequently increasing labor efficiency and cow productivity.



All team members can have access to the information and alerts. You can share with your veterinarian, nutritionist, reproductive specialist and herd manager. Involving each member of the dairy's support team helps ensure the best use of the information. Together, your management team can integrate these records with the parlor data, dairy management software and sort gates to efficiently identify, treat or breed individuals based on your herd's parameters. The reproductive specialist can go to the sorted cows and not spend time searching in the freestalls and interrupting the non-estrus cows. The nutritionist can look at herd data and notice that the herd has dropped in total rumination time. The herd manager can better focus his efforts on the cows that need attention, versus walking pens trying to get eyes on every cow. The multifunctionality of CowManager technology helps everyone on the dairy make better use of the real-time information, time and labor.

Pat Ihrke, Hidden Hill Dairy of St. Charles, Minnesota, says, "We saw an immediate increase in conception rates after the installation of CowManager. The 24/7 access to current data is one of the premier advantages of the system. Almost everyone on our dairy's management team uses the mobile app to reference the graphs and data, including our veterinarian, breeding technician and nutritionist. The various functions of the CowManager system allow us to pinpoint the cows that need attention and saves us time in the long-run."

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The daily health alerts identify which cows have an elevated temperature, reduced activity or decreased rumination. The CowManager health module frees up time for the highly skilled farm staff. Along with the health and temperature alerts, some simple protocols can be set up to evaluate, diagnose and treat sick cows. CowManager's versatility stretches beyond physical facilities to the many ways it can be used to operate at top efficiency.

"My daily routine has changed; I start with the alerts on my phone and then go to the computer to find more information. The alerts identify a problem two to three days before I see her show clinical signs or we see a drop in production," says Matt Besancon of Cowsmooch Dairy in Wooster, Ohio. The economic impact of helping cows early is real. Getting the cows turned around quickly protects the bottom line from costly treatments and reduced milk production.

Activity alerts in the fertility module help increase conception rates on dairies using CowManager. Graphs indicate exactly when a cow comes into heat, so the timing of insemination can be more precise. Even cows that don't exhibit strong, visual estrous signs can be caught with CowManager. Catching cows in heat allows for high conception and pregnancy rates. Minnesota/Select Sires Service Technician Colten Carlson appreciates the technology in use on the dairies he serves. "CowManager saves me a lot of time and steps. I no longer need to look at each cow in the barn, just the ones in heat. One farm went from two hours on site per day to just 45 minutes after the installation of CowManager," says Colten.

New and long-term subscribers of the CowManager system have access to the latest version of the software. The system routinely updates the user portal and mobile app as part of their standard service. The system is never out of date unless the internet is down. You can choose one or all three modules: fertility, health and nutrition. Your local CowManager specialist will be with you every step of the way from purchase, install and support. Our local team works with CowManager to monitor and support each of the systems we install. Designed by dairymen for dairymen, CowManager is an efficiency enhancer on the farm. ♦

## CowManager SERVICE REVIEW



*By Rick Ellerbrock, Eastern Training Service Program Manager, Select Sires Inc.*

Over the course of my 17 years working for COBA/Select Sires, I have garnered experience with several herd monitoring systems.

I have sold, installed and provided the training and troubleshooting services to our customers to help them best utilize these programs. As both the salesman and the service specialist, I receive a great deal of feedback concerning the pros and cons of these systems. It is this experience that allows me to share my one-word description of CowManager: versatile.

CowManager is one of the few systems that can serve herds of different sizes, ranging from 10 to more than 50,000 cows. It can meet the needs of both dairy and beef producers, and is well suited for various facilities. I have seen CowManager work well in drive-through freestall barns, facilities with several additions and even pasture-based operations. Producers can easily use this herd monitoring system in congruence with robotic milking or even beef facilities. Herds with multiple sites can function as one system – the only requirement is an internet connection. The coordinator and router can reach up to a quarter mile if there is a clear line of sight. Cows only need to be within 300 feet of the router for their ear tags to be read, and their data continues to stay with them even when they are out of range. The routers are relatively small, about the size of a deck of cards, with easy installation and only require a standard outlet. CowManager is truly versatile.

There is not a one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to the monitoring package. Much like subscribing to a television network provider, a producer can choose whether they want heat detection, health monitoring, and/or nutrition monitoring. This is especially important for herds only monitoring heifer groups or beef producers only focused on keeping a tight breeding season.

Cow monitoring is here to stay. Producers are becoming more efficient with healthier and higher producing herds. The versatility CowManager offers will fit into operations of all shapes and sizes while helping producers meet their business goals. Having the versatility of hardware, accuracy of detection and most importantly, a knowledgeable team to assist customers in gaining the highest return on their investment is important for long-term success and readily available with CowManager. ♦



# OUTSTANDING SUMMER INTERNS



**New employees and interns attending the orientation program.**

*Left to right: Ella Prigge, new employee; Jack Saemrow, University of Wisconsin-River Falls; Annabelle Pronschinske, Ridgewater College; Peyton Luehman, Northeast Iowa Community College; Brittany Johnson, new employee; Bridget Weese, South Dakota State University; Madison Rediske, University of Wisconsin-River Falls.*

Minnesota/Select Sires hosted five outstanding interns this summer. These individuals gained experience working for a member-owned cooperative and interacted with customers throughout the region. While each of their internships varied, they enjoyed learning about Select Sires, the dairy and beef industries and the important role that genetics play in advancing herd success. They also sharpened and widened their skillset by doing A.I. services, evaluating cows and working with team members to develop and implement genetic strategies.

Minnesota/Select Sires is very grateful for these individuals and their contributions to the cooperative. You can learn more about their individual experiences on the Minnesota/Select Sires Facebook page.

If you or someone you know is a college student looking for an internship, be on the lookout this Fall for more information about the application process for 2024 summer internships. ♦

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## FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER Chris Sigurdson, Minnesota/Select Sires Co-op, Inc.



For many of our member-owner-customers, summer means vacations, baling straw and fairs. Aside from baling straw, the season is similar for me. My family and I recently spent time exploring Wyoming. Even though there were some significant travel challenges, we enjoyed being together. The people in our lives are important and we need to take time to make sure they know that.

The employees of this great cooperative are important to me, as are you, the member-owner-customers. One of the ways our employees demonstrate their support is through their service. Many of our employees are involved at the local, state and national level in dairy organizations, breed associations, 4-H, FFA and more. Their time is also valuable, yet they choose to invest their time and talents in the agricultural community. We appreciate their efforts and applaud their involvement.

Another way in which we encourage our member-owner-customers is by supporting the agricultural organizations and events that are important to you. It might be the blue ribbon for the county 4-H show or the meal for dairymen attending a conference about water quality. We strive to walk alongside you and favor those entities that are lifting up the agricultural community. Annually, thousands of dollars are directed in support of these groups, events and scholarships for our member-owner-customer families.

### Popular products and tools for your herd

As we walk alongside our farmers and support communities, we are also here to support your herd with the best products and service. It seems unbelievable, but the year is half over. It has been an exceptionally strong year for product sales. Products like Select DTX<sup>TM</sup>, Bovine Accellyte II and CowManager<sup>®</sup> are yielding great results for many of our member-owner-customers. You will see elsewhere in this edition, information about CowManager and the incentives CowManager is offering. This ear tag monitoring system is an excellent way to incorporate new technology that can pay real dividends in terms of labor savings that lead to getting cows pregnant as well as identifying sick cows before a loss in production occurs. If you are looking at adding technology to your herd, be sure to investigate all that CowManager has to offer including no downpayment for you to get started.

Bovine Accellyte II has been a great addition to our product offering. As the summer heat cranks up, this product helps animals retain water so their bodies are not under as much stress; helping to maintain production and other normal functions. Also, there is some new research information from a field study on another great product addition, AccelAIRate. This product can help reduce the number of instances of pneumonia in calves from a day old. You will see more about this research later this fall.

Thank you for your patronage of this cooperative. We are excited about everything that is happening within our organization. We hope that you see and feel the value of being associated with Minnesota/Select Sires. ♦

Cooperatively, *Chris Sigurdson*