

Blind Faith

AgrAbility Aids Disabled Ranchers

BY JOE SNYDER

I still fix fence, by feel, and drive nails by sound better than when I could see.

A blind rancher with a seeing-eye horse is something you don't encounter every day. "People don't believe it until they see me on my horse working cattle," says Gail Claussen, Yoder, Colo.

Despite being legally blind, Gail manages a 50-60 head cow-calf operation and sells breeding stock. Macular degeneration, which may have been inherited or caused by diabetes, began robbing him of his eyesight in the 1970s. It worsened after 1985, and by 1990 his depth perception was gone and a dense fog replaced his vision of the world. He lost his job driving a grader and became depressed.

"I wanted to commit suicide when I lost my job," Gail recalls. "I couldn't weld, couldn't fix fence, couldn't do woodwork,

couldn't drive."

One thing Gail did have, besides an understanding family and loyal neighbors, was one of the best natural-born cow horses in the world. Silk Shotgun is a 14-year-old registered quarter horse, born and trained on Gail's ranch. "I can't see the ear tags on the cows, but when I put the stud horse on a cow, it follows the cow and keeps on it no matter what," says Gail.

"When he was 3 years old and I was riding him, we were driving a bull home, and the bull attacked us and began slamming into the horse. The stud fought back, biting and kicking the bull until the bull got back in line."

The Denver Post wrote about Gail and his horse, and afterwards, Gail was contacted by the producer of the cable television channel Animal Planet, who asked him and his horse to be on TV.



AgrAbility

Enter the AgrAbility Project, which became aware of Gail through his television appearance. AgrAbility is a nationwide network of U.S. Department of Agriculture programs, begun through the 1990 Farm Bill, which seek to inform and assist those with disabilities who work in production agriculture. The project links the Cooperative Extension Service at a land-grant university with a private nonprofit disability service organization to provide practical education and assistance that promotes independence in ag production and rural living. The project assists people involved in both small and large operations.

USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service administers the project and funds both the national program and several state AgrAbility Projects. In partnership, the National AgrAbility Project staff at the University of Wisconsin - Extension, Cooperative Extension Biological Systems Engineering Department and Easter Seals provide training and technical assistance to state AgrAbility Project staffs. In turn, state staffs provide training, site visits, on-farm assessments, technical assistance and other information directly to the farmer or rancher with a disability.

Twenty-four state AgrAbility projects now engage Extension educators, disability experts, rural professionals and volunteers. Their services include identifying farmers with disabilities and referring them to appropriate resources, providing agriculture-based education to help prevent further injury and disability, providing training to help Extension educators and other rural professionals upgrade their skills in assisting farmers with disabilities, developing and coordinating peer support networks, and providing on-site technical assistance on adapting and using farm equipment and tools and modifying farm operations and buildings.

Assistive technology provided through the program includes such innovations as platform or chair lifts to provide access to equipment, tools that can be used with one hand, hand controls or level extensions for equipment, and special ladders for access to irrigation ditches.

Those eligible for AgrAbility services may have any type of disability — physical, cognitive, or illness related, including amputations, arthritis, back pain, vision or hearing impairments, cancer, cardiac problems, cerebral palsy, diabetes, mental retardation, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, post-polio syndrome, respiratory problems, spinal cord injury, stroke or traumatic brain injuries.

The service provided Gail Claussen with a Zoomtux computer screen print enlarger. But more important than that, he says, "AgrAbility provided people to talk to when I was depressed, and reminded me that there are people worse off than me. Colorado AgrAbility does an awful lot of good by just listening to people talk."

The 68-year-old member of NCBA, the Colorado Cattlemen's Association and the El Paso County Cattlemen says he performs many activities he never figured he'd ever get to again. "I still fix fence, by feel, and drive nails by sound better than when I could see. I find my cattle with binoculars and the stud carries me right to them. I can tell by the intensity of his actions whether my horse is looking at antelopes, dogs, people or cattle.

"I artificially breed cows — and now I can do it even after it gets dark! I drive the tractor. I can't see to run the mower, but I can run the loader, although it takes a while to push bales around."

NCBA has a fundraiser each year that contributes to the national AgrAbility Project. The project, like Silk Shotgun the seeing-eye horse, provides a unique and valuable service! **NC**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Those interested in learning more about AgrAbility should contact their state AgrAbility office. If your state doesn't have an AgrAbility Project, contact the National Project staff toll free through either the University of

Wisconsin (866-259-6280) or the National Easter Seals (800-914-4424).

You can also check out the national Web site at www.agrabilityproject.com.

The site allows you to locate projects by state. Services vary from state to state.

EXCEDE™ (Ceftiofur Crystalline Free Acid) Sterile Suspension

For subcutaneous injection in the middle third of the posterior aspect of the ear of beef and non-lactating dairy cattle.

CAUTION

Federal (USA) law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

INDICATIONS

EXCEDE Sterile Suspension is indicated for treatment of BRD (shipping fever, pneumonia) associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *P. multocida* and *H. somnus*. EXCEDE Sterile Suspension is also indicated for the control of respiratory disease in cattle which are at high risk of developing BRD associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *P. mu. lcidia* and *H. somnus*.

DOSAGE

Treatment

Administer as a single subcutaneous injection in the middle third of the posterior aspect of the ear of beef and non-lactating dairy cattle at a dosage of 3.0 mg ceftiofur equivalent/16 (1.6 mg CE/kg) body weight (1.5 mL sterile suspension per 100 lb body weight). Most animals will respond to treatment within three to five days. If no improvement is observed, the diagnosis should be re-evaluated.

Control

Administer as a single subcutaneous injection in the middle third of the posterior aspect of the ear to beef and non-lactating dairy cattle at the dosage of 3.0 mg CE/kg (1.6 mg CE/kg) body weight (1.5 mL sterile suspension per 100 lb body weight).

Clinical studies indicate that administration of EXCEDE Sterile Suspension is effective for the control of respiratory disease in cattle at "high risk" of developing BRD. One or more of the following factors typically characterize calves on arrival at high risk of developing BRD:

- Cattle are from multiple farm origins.
- and/or cattle have extended transport times (that may have included less than any rest stops).
- and/or ambient temperature change from origin to arrival of 30°F or more.
- and/or animals have had continued exposure to extremely wet and cold weather conditions.
- and/or cattle have experienced excessive shrink or stressful arrival processing procedures (such as castration, dehorning).

ADMINISTRATION

- Shake well before using. Please read the complete package insert before administering EXCEDE Sterile Suspension subcutaneously in the posterior ear of cattle.
- Deposit as a single subcutaneous injection in the middle third of the posterior aspect of the ear, avoiding all blood vessels.
- Adjust the needle insertion point to avoid any blood vessels, previous implants, ear tags or ear lag holes. Do not administer intra-arterially.
- Deliver the full contents of the syringe.
- When administered correctly, a subcutaneous bleb of EXCEDE Sterile Suspension will appear.
- When withdrawing the needle, apply pressure to the needle insertion point, and massage toward the base of the ear.

CONTRAINDICATIONS

As with all drugs, the use of EXCEDE Sterile Suspension is contraindicated in animals previously found to be hypersensitive to the drug.

WARNINGS

FOR USE IN ANIMALS ONLY. NOT FOR HUMAN USE.

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN.

Restricted Drug — Use Only as Directed (California).

Penicillins and cephalosporins can cause allergic reactions in sensitized individuals. Topical exposures to such antimicrobials, including ceftiofur, may elicit mild to severe allergic reactions in some individuals. Repeated or prolonged exposure may lead to sensitization. Avoid direct contact of the product with the skin, eyes, mouth and clothing. Sensitization of the skin may be avoided by wearing latex gloves.

Persons with a known hypersensitivity to penicillin or cephalosporins should avoid exposure to this product.

In case of accidental eye exposure, flush with water for 15 minutes. In case of accidental skin exposure, wash with soap and water. Remove contaminated clothing. If allergic reaction occurs (e.g., skin rash, hives, difficult breathing), seek medical attention.

The material safety data sheet contains more detailed occupational safety information. To obtain a material safety data sheet (MSDS), please call 1-800-733-5500. To report any adverse events, please call 1-800-366-5288.

Injection of EXCEDE Sterile Suspension into the arteries of the ear is likely to result in sudden death to the animal.

RESIDUE WARNINGS

Because ears are inedible tissue and are removed and discarded at slaughter (9 CFR 301.2), there is no pre-slaughter withdrawal period following label treatment with EXCEDE Sterile Suspension. Use of dosages in excess of 5.0 mg CE/kg or administration by an unapproved route (subcutaneous injection in the neck or intramuscular injection) may lead to violative residues. Do not use in female dairy cattle 20 months of age or older. Use in this class of cattle may cause violative milk residues. A withdrawal period has not been established for this product in pre-ruminating calves. Do not use in calves to be processed for veal.

ADVERSE EFFECTS

Administration of EXCEDE Sterile Suspension into the ear arteries is likely to result in sudden death in cattle. During the conduct of clinical studies, there was a low incidence of acute death (one out of approximately 6000 animals). Three of these deaths were confirmed to be the result of inadvertent intra-arterial injection. No other adverse systemic effects were noted for either the antibiotic or formulation during any of the clinical and target animal safety studies.

PRECAUTIONS

Following subcutaneous injection in the middle third of the posterior aspect of the ear, thickening and swelling (characterized by aseptic cellular infiltrate) of the ear may occur. As with other parenteral injections, localized post-injection bacterial infections may result in abscess formation. Attention to hygienic procedures can minimize their occurrence.

HOW SUPPLIED

EXCEDE Sterile Suspension is available in the following package size: 100 mL vial

NADA #141-209. Approved by FDA



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www.EXCEDE.com or call 1-866-387-2287

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