Investigating goat kid mortality in Ontario dairy herds

Dr. Cathy Bauman, DVM, MPH, PhD
Why Does Kid Mortality Matter

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- Higher than calves (~5%) and lambs (10-15%)
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- Improves herd profitability - replacement animals
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Reducing mortality:
- Welfare Issue
- Preserve consumer perception of industry
- Improves herd profitability - replacement animals
- Interventions - reduce mortality - healthier kids
Objectives

- Provide provincial average of mortality (kids < 4 months)
- Identify age of highest risk
- Identify main causes of death
- Identify potential interventions
- Provide producers - skills - work up mortality
  - e.g. record-keeping
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Kid Mortality Study

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Timeline of Kid Mortality Project

Phase I  Fall 2017 - Summer 2018

1. Comprehensive Questionnaire
2. Farm Visits

September, 2017
Timeline of Kid Mortality Project

Phase I
1. Comprehensive Questionnaire
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Phase II
1. Carcass Collection

* Winter 2018 - Spring 2019

September, 2017
Timeline of Kid Mortality Project

Project started Fall 2017

Phase I
1. Comprehensive Questionnaire
2. Farm Visits

Phase II
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Phase III
1. Knowledge Transfer
   - Producer Modules
   - Postmortem training

* Spring 2019 - Winter 2020
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**Phase II**
1. Carcass Collection

**Phase III**
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   - Producer Modules
   - Postmortem training

* Spring 2019 - Winter 2020

**Project started** Fall 2017
Phase I - 120 producers randomly selected
  - 90 agreed to participate
  - 33 completed questionnaires
  - 25 completed on-farm assessments

Phase II - 17 farms enrolled
  - 144 carcasses postmortemmed

Goal: 13 more farms enrolled - May 31st
30-40 questionnaires/farm visits - Aug 30th
1. Investigate role failure of passive transfer (FPT)
   - collect blood samples - 10 kids/farm 3-7 days of age
   - collect colostrum samples - source fed - kids
   - correlate - level of FPT with farm’s mortality
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   - bacterial levels
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2. Investigate impact  - colostrum handling/source
   - bacterial levels

3. Investigate disbudding - impact - temperature
   - pressure
   - time
Questions?

Thank you!

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