



## Sure-Fire Combo For Top-Notch Injections

*New pistol-type metal syringes and detectable needles make an unbeatable one-two punch to get good injections, eliminate broken needle concerns and save big dollars over the long run, says Wilf Campbell.*

You could call him a straight shooter talking straight shooting.

*"If you're losing needles in cattle, there's no doubt you need to look at the syringe and needle that you're using. In today's world, we as a beef industry simply can't afford to have broken needles or any other concerns that affect our reputation for food safety."  
Tompkins, Sask., producer Wilf Campbell*

For Tompkins, Sask., beef producer Wilf Campbell, there's no mincing of words when it comes to the subject of medical injections for his livestock. For this long-time cattleman, there's no beating the combination of using new metal, pistol-type syringes along with detectable needles.

"In my opinion, the old plastic pistols should be outlawed – they have been the root of a lot of our broken needle problems and getting rid of them would save our industry a lot of trouble," says Campbell.

"With the new metal, pistol-type guns, you get a much better injection and far less chance of breaking a needle."

Compared to standard aluminum needles, Campbell has found that detectable needles are much firmer, stay sharper much longer and as a result are far more difficult to break. "Of course if you do break one, you can detect it and get it out so you don't have a problem," he says.

"To me, it's a no brainer that the new metal-style, pistol-type syringes and detectable needles are the way to go."

In addition to saving cost and improving results on-farm, taking steps to prevent broken needles is also critical to maintaining Canada's reputation for producing safe, high quality beef, he says. That's one reason why Campbell supports standard operating procedures (SOPs) found in the Verified Beef Production (VBP) program, Canada's verified on-farm food safety program for beef.

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### Better Quality, Better Results

When it comes to the benefits of the new injection tools, Campbell knows well what he preaches. "Last fall helping out at the neighbour's I injected a large number of calves with 2cc's to test one of my new metal syringes and the detectable needles. The needles stay sharp, stay firm and I've yet to break one."

The higher quality syringes and needles also make for far more reliable and accurate injections, especially for 2cc product, he says. “You just don’t get a good feel for the needle on the animal or the product injection with a plastic syringe – often a 2cc shot is a shot in the dark. With my setup, when you run the needle into the neck or run it under the hide, you get a good feel for when the needle goes into the animal. And every time you squeeze the trigger, you can feel the product move out. The new metal syringes are smaller in size and fit your hand real good, so you get a much better feel for everything.”

Producers using plastic guns may find after, say, 100 calves, they have a lot more product left than they should, says Campbell. “That’s a telltale sign you’re not getting enough product through the needle. And of course, if you’re losing needles in cattle, there’s no doubt you need to look at the gun and needle that you’re using.”



### **Dollar Saved Is Dollar Earned**

Even cost is better in the long run with the higher quality syringes and needles, he says.

“The two guns I’ve picked up are made in Germany. One is a 25cc and one is a 50cc. They run about \$135 each but they are very good syringes and worth every penny. More producers are using this type and the veterinarians are recommending them more and more. The detectable needles are about \$0.42 a piece, and I tend to buy 100 at a time – a good supply of sharp needles.”

The initial costs of a decent quality syringe is higher but ends up cheaper considering the costs saved in improved animal health through better injections, as well as in the dramatic reduction in risk of broken needles, he says.

“If you’ve got one of the big plastic pistol syringes, give it early retirement. You’ve bought product now that maybe the animal is getting or maybe it isn’t getting. And it’s much easier to snap a needle off with those guns. If that happens and you don’t have a detectable needle and the vet can’t find it, you risk losing the animal. Forty-two cents for a detectable needle looks pretty cheap when that happens.”

Among the detectable needle types now available are two types – the Ideal D3 from Neogen and the HDN from Rivard Instruments. The cattle industry has funded some of the research to bring these needles to the marketplace. Producers who can’t find these needles at their supplier can ask for them to be ordered because they are now more readily available. An early detectable needle version had some problems with breaking at the hub but the new detectable needles do not have that problem.

### **Learn More On Good Injection Practices**

Following good practices when delivering medical injections is also key to avoid problems and get the best results, notes Campbell.

Producers can ensure good practices by following standard operating procedures (SOPs) included in the VBP program, which are designed to reduce or eliminate the possibility of a food safety concern on a beef cattle operation.

SOPs in the VBP program include a set of “must do” requirements as well as recommended procedures to help reduce the chance of a hazard, along with a record keeping component to demonstrate what was done. VBP program SOPs cover animal health management, cattle shipping, medicated feed, pesticide control and training / communications.

Procedures for medical injections are included in the VBP program’s SOP for animal health management.

More information on detectable needles is available by contacting: Rivard Instruments at [www.rivardinstruments.com](http://www.rivardinstruments.com), phone (204)837-4435 or email [cr@rivardinstruments.com](mailto:cr@rivardinstruments.com); or Neogen at [www.neogen.com/d3.htm](http://www.neogen.com/d3.htm), phone 1-800-525-2022 or email [inform@neogen.com](mailto:inform@neogen.com)