Motivations for treatment decisions made by calf care workers on western United States dairies
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INTRODUCTION
Cases of calf diarrhea tend to be over treated with antimicrobials (Berge 2009).
• Identification & treatment of sick calves is in the hands of employees on large Western US farms.
• Understanding motivation behind why and how calf care workers make treatment decisions could help Extension educators and dairy advisors create more tailored messages about judicious antimicrobial use.
• Purpose – better understand decision making by assessing employee motivation and influences on learning.

METHODS
• Western United States dairy farms and calf ranches with >300 pre-weaned calves (>500 milking cows) contacted through their veterinarian to participate.
• Utilizing employee motivation research (Leonard et al. 1999), we developed a survey tool to learn about motivation behind calf treatment decision-making; administered as face-to-face interviews.
• 5 motivation-type responses for each of 10 questions
  - Intrinsic: motivated by personal satisfaction with the tasks
  - Extrinsic: motivated by financial rewards
  - Internal: motivated by a belief system and values
  - Goal Internal: motivated to follow the goals of the farm
  - External: motivated by recognition from supervisor or coworkers
• Latent class analysis of motivation-type responses to 10 questions (Proc LCA-SAS)
• Resulting Latent classes evaluated by demographic variables

RESULTS
• Most common motivation type overall was INTERNAL. Two answered EXTRINSIC to one question each despite 42% saying that their workplace has a reward system for meeting workplace goals.
• Sick Calf Identification Questions – Predominant responses were INTERNAL
• Calf Treatment Questions – Predominant responses were GOAL INTERNAL
• Answers to 10 motivation questions fell into 4 latent classes:

CONCLUSIONS
• Providing information to calf care workers is not as simple as “telling” them what to do.
• There is variability in individual motivations for decision-making and variation in motivation depending on the decision to be made.
• If most are Intrinsic-Internal with respect to deciding when to treat, could be reason for “over treatment”.
• Need to provide information on why they might need to do a job a specific way (more background)
• Educational programs for calf care workers also need to incorporate an individual’s belief system and values into the messages – specifically that they will be doing the right thing by making a change in antimicrobial use.