

KVC Bovine Newsletter

August 2012

www.kirktonvetclinic.com

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Udder Health

August brings a new, lower somatic cell count limit of 400 000. Whether this change directly impacts your dairy or not, this is an excellent time to re-evaluate your mastitis control program to ensure you are maximizing your dairy's profitability. Even if you are well below the limit, implementing changes to further drop your bulk tank SCC may help improve your herd's health and productivity.

Mastitis causes losses in many ways: decreased production, dumping milk, cost of treatment, and possibly death or premature culling. Costs may be obvious when a cow is clinically infected, but sub clinical infections may actually be costing your dairy more money than you realize.

The National Mastitis Council has data which shows that production losses occur even in cows averaging 100 000 SCC over one lactation. ***Note that a single SCC doesn't correlate well with production losses - these numbers look at averages from an entire lactation.*



average SCC over entire lactation	Decrease in milk yield (lbs over 305 days)	
	lactation 1	lactation 2
50 000	0	0
100 000	200	400
200 000	400	800
400 000	600	1 200
800 000	800	1 600
1 600 000	1 000	2 000

On a herd level, a large scale study found that bulk tanks ranging from 200 000 - 400 000 SCC produced 4.6% less milk per cow compared with those <200 000 SCC. Herds above 400 000 had 11.9% less milk. (NAHMS Daily '96 Study)

So, how can we help?

Talk to your herd health veterinarian about your current mastitis control program, to see if your protocols and management tools are optimal. We will be happy to discuss your goals and challenges with you, and design a program that works best for you and your farm.

<http://nmconline.org/dhiSCC.htm>

A Case Study

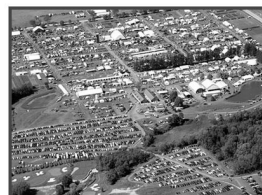
In a recent Milk Quality investigation at one farm we found 5 new cases of Staph Aureus on culture at the KVC lab. This represented a significant 'outbreak' of cases in this herd and led to further workup of the entire system to identify where the problems were coming from. Some of the significant findings from our investigation were that claw vacuum was very low and the pipeline was slugging near the entrance to the receiver jar. Pulsation was at 50:50 and vacuum stability was poor. Teat end scores on the cows were acceptable but it was noted during the prep routine that teat coverage was poor after spraying of the predip iodine.

After replacing the vacuum pump, upgrading the pulsation, and leveling the slope of the line the herd SCC dropped from between 250 000-350 000 to between 90 000-200 000. The individual cows were quarter sampled with 1 cow being culled having 2 strong positive quarters and 3 cows were treated with 8 days of Pirsue dropping their SCC to below 120 000. Follow up culture showed 1 of these cows still had a strong positive for staph but with a 96 000 SCC. Interestingly the butterfat from one DHI test to the next moved from 3.20% to 3.85% after the correction of the system vacuum issues. A methodical, test based workup has shown improvement towards better quality milk in this herd.

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