

CELLCHECK TIP OF THE MONTH

Gloves-looking after your cows and hands!

LET'S BE practical-considering the broad range of jobs you do daily as a farmer, it is going to be very difficult to have very clean hands. Yet milkers' hands are an important vehicle for the transfer of bacteria from cow to cow at milking time. Research done in the 1960's in England showed that 50% of milkers' hands were contaminated with bacteria (that could cause mastitis) before milking, and 100% of hands were contaminated by the end of milking. Wearing gloves during milking can reduce the risk of transferring bacteria in 2 main ways:

1. Prevents bacteria from getting lodged in skin cracks, creases and around the nails
2. The smooth surface of the glove makes it easier to remove any bacteria by washing and disinfecting.

A recent Dutch study showed a bacterial reduction of up to 98% between gloved hands that were disinfected, and bare hands after milking.

Another added, and often underestimated benefit, is the protection that gloves give the skin on your hands. Gloved hands will have less dirt engrained and are therefore easier to scrub clean. The gloves will also protect against direct contact with chemicals, and help prevent the chapping that can occur when hands are constantly getting wet, especially in cold temperatures. Milkers that wear gloves generally have hands that are smoother, softer and cleaner....something both you and the people in your life will appreciate! It's time to dispel the myth that gloves are for "sissies"!





1. Gloves come in various sizes, so find the size that fits you.



2. Use 2 new disposable gloves for every milking, and replace them if they get torn during milking.



3. It's easier to put gloves on dry hands before milking, rather than on wet hands when a problem appears.



4. Rinse and disinfect them at regular intervals during milking, especially after finding clinical cases and after forestripping known high SCC cows i.e. subclinically infected.

For more information, see the *CellCheck Farm Guidelines for Mastitis Control*