



CELLCHECK TIP OF THE MONTH

Don't cut corners on the dry period this year!

IN THE ABSENCE of quotas this year, there may be a temptation to continue milking cows as long as they keep producing milk. However, this could prove to be a costly exercise in the long run. It is important to remember that every cow needs a dry period before she calves again, and starts her next lactation. This is the time when mammary tissue regenerates, repairs and prepares to produce milk again. It is also the period when cows have an opportunity to reach the optimal body condition score, in preparation for calving and the start of the next breeding cycle. The dry period is also the time when the milker gets to take a break, which is important for their own mental and physical health. The general recommendation is that cows need a dry period that is at least 42 days long. To ignore, or significantly shorten the dry period, could have a detrimental effect on the productivity of the herd in 2016. Shorter dry periods can also increase the risk of antibiotic residues in milk after calving, if sufficient attention is not given to the minimum dry period duration of the product. Just because the product was fine to use last year on cows that had a 7 week dry period, doesn't automatically mean that is ok to use this year in cows that might only be dry for 6 weeks!

Remember!

Hygiene at drying off is absolutely crucial-what you do now will have an impact on udder health in 2016.

See the *CellCheck Farm Guidelines* or [\[click here\]](#) to see our video for more information on this topic.

