

CELLCHECK TIP OF THE MONTH



Better late than never!

YOU may not have done a milk recording yet this year in an effort to reduce costs. However, the longer you continue to manage your herd without any individual cow information, the more profit you are likely to be losing. Milk recording is the best tool you have to establish which cows are the most productive in terms of fat, protein and milk yields, and 'paying their way'. It also allows you to identify cows with elevated SCC-these may have no visible signs of infection, but they will spread infection within your herd and raise your bulk tank SCC. Cows with a high SCC are losing you money. Can you afford to keep carrying all of these 'passengers'?

Regular milk recording will give much better information than ad hoc individual cow testing. Don't leave it until next year to start milk recording again-remember it is better late than never! If you start milk recording now it will allow you to:

1. Identify cows with high SCC:
 - a. consider drying these cows off early. It will reduce their impact on your bulk tank SCC, reduce the risk of spread to other cows and with targeted dry cow treatment (DCT) they will have the best chance of curing.
 - b. segregate high SCC cows, and milk them last if you are not going to dry them off yet. If it is not possible to run them as a separate herd, hold them back and milk them last. This will prevent them infecting other cows.
2. Develop a culling list of cows that have had recurring high SCC and mastitis problems and are unlikely to cure – consider culling cows that have had high SCC for two consecutive lactations.
3. Consider selective DCT this year i.e. selecting which cows to treat with dry cow antibiotic based on their infection status. You can only make informed decisions with milk recording information. Discuss this with your vet.

For milk recording services contact:

Munster Cattle Breeding Group	(023) 43228
Progressive Genetics	(01) 4502142
Tipperary Co-op	(062) 33111

Further information on milk recording is available in **Guideline 23 of the CellCheck Farm Guidelines for Mastitis Control.**

GUIDELINE

23

Sign on for milk recording

• Milk recording

23.1 Sign on for milk recording.

After all year round teat disinfection, regular milk recording is the next most important tool in dealing with high SCC and mastitis.

ICBF coordinates the Irish milk recording service and there are two types of milk recording service, the Recorder service or the Electronic DIY (EDIY) service. The newer EDIY offers flexibility and is designed to remove the hassles and take away the excuses.

EDIY makes it easy:

- no upfront meter costs
- no 'stranger' in pit or disruption of your routine
- farmer is in control
- meter auto agitates and auto samples
- no writing - less mistakes
- quicker turn around time for results.

Monthly milk recording gives best results for mastitis control allowing:

- regular and prompt identification of problem cows
- reviewing of treatment efficacy
- monitoring spread of infection within the herd
- monitoring stage of lactation SCC changes.

Milk recording makes money:

- the lower the milk price the more important to identify 'passenger cows' and get rid of them
- monthly milk recording is cheap - approx. €16 per cow annually
- a 5,000 litre cow generates €1,250 milk income at 25cpl. => even at this price you can afford to milk record.



Milk recording is a valuable source of information.

Refer to Guideline 12:
Use individual cow SCC for management decisions.



Use the CellCheck Farm reports for your herd.

The CellCheck Farm reports (Summary and Analysis) use your milk recording results, and clinical case records to give an accurate overview of udder health in your herd. They help you identify problem areas and potential risks as well as tracking progress after any management changes are made.

Contact ICBF or your CellCheck Advisor for more information, or visit www.cellcheck.ie or www.icbf.com



CellCheck Farm Guidelines for Mastitis Control

