

CELLCHECK TIP OF THE MONTH



To treat or not to treat? That is the question!

MANY farmers will shortly be preparing for the dry period, and making decisions about what dry cow therapy to use in their herd. Many farmers may also be considering using antibiotic dry cow therapy only on selected cows in the herd, for various reasons. Remember-these are key decisions that you should first discuss with your veterinary practitioner. It is also important to remember why we use dry cow therapy, and what the various options are:

REMEMBER!

Dry cow therapy (DCT) consists of intramammary antibiotic tubes and/or internal teat sealer. The purpose of DCT is to:

1. eliminate existing udder infections at the end of lactation
2. and prevent new infections over the dry period.

BLANKET DCT:

This is when all quarters of all cows are treated with antibiotic.

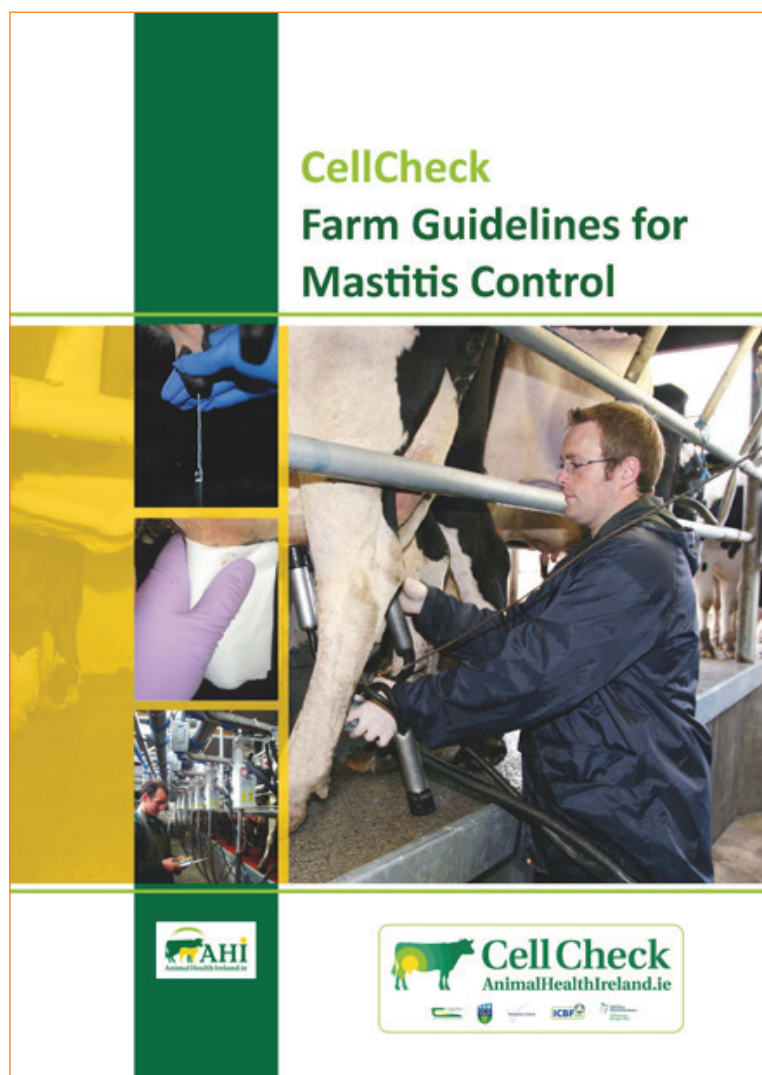
SELECTIVE DCT:

This is when only selected cows i.e. those with infected quarters, are treated with antibiotic. Internal teat sealer can then be used in the remainder of the herd.



Hygiene when administering any type of dry cow therapy is critical.

There are many criteria to consider and discuss with your vet, before deciding if selective dry cow therapy is suitable for your herd, and how to implement it. These include herd SCC, milk recording results from the whole lactation, milk culture results, treatment records etc. Regardless of what product is used, antibiotic or non-antibiotic, excellent hygiene when administering DCT is critical. Bacteria introduced accidentally at this time can cause serious problems, not just during the dry period, but in early lactation too. Research has shown that 50-60% of all new infections caused by environmental pathogens occur during the dry period, with many of these infections becoming clinical after calving.



For more information and practical tips on Dry Cow Treatment, see *CellCheck Farm Guidelines for Mastitis Control-Guidelines 16 – 18 & Management Notes C – F.*