

Everywhere a cow goes, her teats go too!

[\[Click here\]](#) for previously published tips

Mastitis is not a mystery disease. It occurs when bacteria get into the quarter, through the teat end. These bacteria multiply and cause inflammation and infection. The cow's immune response to this infection results in an increase in the somatic cell count (SCC) of that quarter, and sometimes clinical signs. The bacteria come from 2 main sources - other cows, and the environment. We can identify the cows that are a potential source of infection i.e. the cows with clinical mastitis and those that have a subclinical infection or simply a high SCC. But what exactly do we mean by environmental risk? Very often we focus on housing and cubicle management when we think of reducing the environmental risk. But we need to remember that everywhere a cow goes, her teats go too!

Even if cows are not housed, they still have an environment all around them - grazing, roadways, muddy gateways, collecting yards, parlour etc. All of these areas are potential sources of environmental bacteria and hence infection. Reducing the numbers of bacteria at the teat ends reduces the risk of mastitis.

REMEMBER!

CLEAN COWS

+

CLEAN MILKER

+

CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

= LESS MASTITIS!



Ensure collecting yards are clean



Always milk with clean gloves

1. Milk clean cows

- a. Clip tails and udders.
- b. Put cups on clean, dry teats. If teats are not clean, wash and dry them.

2. Clean up your act!

- a. Wear clean **gloves** when milking.
- b. Wear clean **overalls** and **aprons** for milking.

3. Work in clean surroundings

- a. Keep the parlour clean during milking-be careful with that hose while the cows are still there, or you will create a shower of bacteria!
- b. Clean concrete yards between each milking to ensure cow standing areas are clean.
- c. If cows are being housed, even for short periods of time, don't forget to clean and lime cubicles and mats daily.

4. Fix areas that make teats muddy

- a. Clean and renovate areas around troughs, gates, roadways, housing and the entrance to the parlour area. Ensure adequate drainage and proper construction of roadways.



Keep roadways clean and in good repair

For more tips on reducing the risk of mastitis see the *CellCheck Farm Guidelines for Mastitis Control*, particularly Guidelines 1,8, 27 & Management Note L.