

- Yields below 9 litres
- Reducing yields
- Manipulating diet
- Drying-off areas
- Maintaining water supply

### 16.1 Dry-off cows as soon as their production reaches 9 litres or less per day

### 16.2 Cease milking cows producing 12 litres or less per day at the drying-off date

### 16.3 Take steps with cows producing more than 12 L/day, to reduce production to 12 L/day or less by the drying-off date. These steps involve reducing feed intake and changing routine

Decide the date of the final milking for target cows.

Start preparation for drying-off at least a week before the date of the final milking.

One week prior to the final milking date:

- Reduce concentrate feeding to less than 2 kg per cow per day.

Three days prior to the final milking date:

#### Where indoors

- Cease concentrate feeding.
- Separate the cows from the main herd if practical.

#### Where outdoors

- As above.
- Move to a paddock with minimal pasture.

Continue the 'maintenance only' diet for another 3-4 days after drying-off for these cows.

Animal welfare guidelines require that water is available throughout the drying-off process.

**Refer to Guideline 17**

Administer dry cow treatment (DCT) as recommended.

**16.4 Dry-off abruptly; do not skip days and preferably do not skip milkings**

Milk out as usual at each milking until drying-off.

Do not deliberately leave some milk in the udder (undermilk). It is not necessary to leave milk in the udder at the last milking to improve the action of antibiotic dry cow treatment (DCT).

At the last milking:

- Milk out as usual.
- Administer teat sealer (and antibiotic, if required) as recommended by CellCheck Guideline 17.
- Cover whole surface of teat in freshly prepared teat disinfectant (dip is preferable to spray).

**16.5 Do not leave cows in roadways or yards immediately after drying-off**

Avoid allowing them to lie down on bare ground or areas that are soiled with manure in the two hours immediately after drying off.

**16.6 Put the cows in a dry, clean paddock (not heavily soiled with manure, no bare ground, no exposure to dairy effluent) for 3 - 4 days after drying-off**

This paddock should be well away from the milking herd and the milking area, so cows do not have the stimulus to let down milk.

**16.7 If the cows are being housed directly after drying off, ensure that cows have access to clean dry cubicles**

This house should ideally be well away from the milking herd and the milking area, so cows do not have the stimulus to let down milk.

Maintain the cubicles in a clean hygienic manner throughout the dry period.

It is important to allow access to water at all times.

**Refer to Management Note L**

The impact of housing on mastitis and SCC.