

Review of CellCheck Farm Guidelines

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Do you continue to have high somatic cells counts (SCC) with ongoing clinical mastitis cases on your farm? If you do, then the CellCheck Farm Guidelines for Mastitis Control are a very useful resource for you. They are available free-of-charge on the Animal Health Ireland website at CellCheck Farm Guidelines - Animal Health Ireland, and divided into the five key stages of the cow's lactation cycle for ease of use. They explain the challenges and provide simple recommendations on farm management to control mastitis.

Lactation cycle

For each specific period of the lactation cycle a detailed set of Guidelines can be referred to by farmers and service providers. These Guidelines describe steps to monitor, review and plan mastitis management practices on farm throughout the lactation cycle. For example, Guidelines 4 and 10 advise you on identification, treatment and recording of mastitis cases. Guideline 15 examines the culling options of 'the problem cow'. Management Notes explain the 'how to' for particular tasks.

Mastitis performance in your herd can be **monitored** and **reviewed** using individual somatic cell counts (SCC) for your cows as part of milk recording and your own clinical case/treatment records. Guideline 23 outlines what is involved in milk recording, Guideline 12 deals with the management of SCC in your herd and Management Note G with the recording of mastitis cases. The review is also enhanced by the CellCheck Summary report which every farmer that milk records has access to after each milk recording along with each cow's individual information. This report highlights various targets necessary to have good mastitis control in your herd. The herd is also ranked nationally. Similarly, clinical mastitis cases targets are outlined in each cycle.

Even in the absence of milk recording, the Guidelines are an excellent management resource. The development of a strong multidisciplinary team with your vet, milking machine technician, Coop milk quality and Teagasc advisor to help identify cows having evidence of infection is vital to mastitis control. As a minimum, milk recording within 4-6 weeks before drying off or use of the California Milk Test (CMT) by you or your veterinary practitioner will highlight problem cows.

In the future, mastitis control decisions on your farm will depend on using as little antibiotic as possible and only as much as is necessary. The Guidelines take account of this in the drying off and treatment strategies for mastitis during each cycle.

Click on the individual images to open up that section of the Farm Guidelines



CALVING

Two weeks before calving to two weeks after

GUIDELINES

- 01 Reduce exposure to environmental mastitis bacteria
- 02 Take care with freshly calved heifers and cows
- 03 Check that milk is suitable to go in the bulk tank
- 04 Rapidly find, treat and record clinical cases in freshly calved cows



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LACTATION

After calving until last 2 - 3 months lactation

GUIDELINES

- 05 Use good milking technique and a consistent routine
- 06 Maintain and monitor milking machine function
- 07 Use post-milking teat disinfection
- 08 Practise good hygiene during milking
- 09 Manage teat sores and cracks
- 10 Rapidly find, treat and record clinical cases
- 11 Monitor bulk tank SCC
- 12 Use individual cow SCC for management decisions
- 13 Seek professional advice if problems persist



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LATE LACTATION

Last 2 - 3 months of lactation

GUIDELINES

- 14 Decide dry cow management strategy
- 15 Consider culling persistently infected cows



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DRYING-OFF

One week before drying-off to one week after

GUIDELINES

- 16 Dry-off abruptly taking steps to reduce yields
- 17 Administer dry cow treatment (DCT) as recommended
- 18 Check udders daily



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Dry Period

After drying-off and before calving

GUIDELINES

- 19 Observe cows daily
- 20 Selling cows - check withholding periods



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Review and Planning

Each herd should set a specific time that suits to review and plan

GUIDELINE

- 21 Buying cows - check histories and examine udders
- 22 Set a time to do annual mastitis control activities and review achievements
- 23 Sign on for milk recording
- 24 Review farm records
- 25 Test, service and upgrade milking machines
- 26 Service teat spray units and review teat disinfectant to be used
- 27 Fix areas that udders muddy



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Management Notes

A Milk cultures
 B The correct way to give lactating cow intramammary treatments
 C Guide to the choice of selective or blanket dry cow treatment
 D The correct way to give dry cow intramammary treatments
 E Using teat sealers in your herd
 F Guide to withholding periods after use of dry cow treatment
 G Records to keep on clinical cases of mastitis
 H IMQCS milking machine reports
 I The correct way to mix and use teat disinfectant
 J The impact of genetics on mastitis and SCC
 K The impact of nutrition on mastitis and SCC
 L The impact of housing on mastitis and SCC
 M Dealing with high SCC cows
 N Take care with heifers



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