

Have you serviced your milking machine recently?

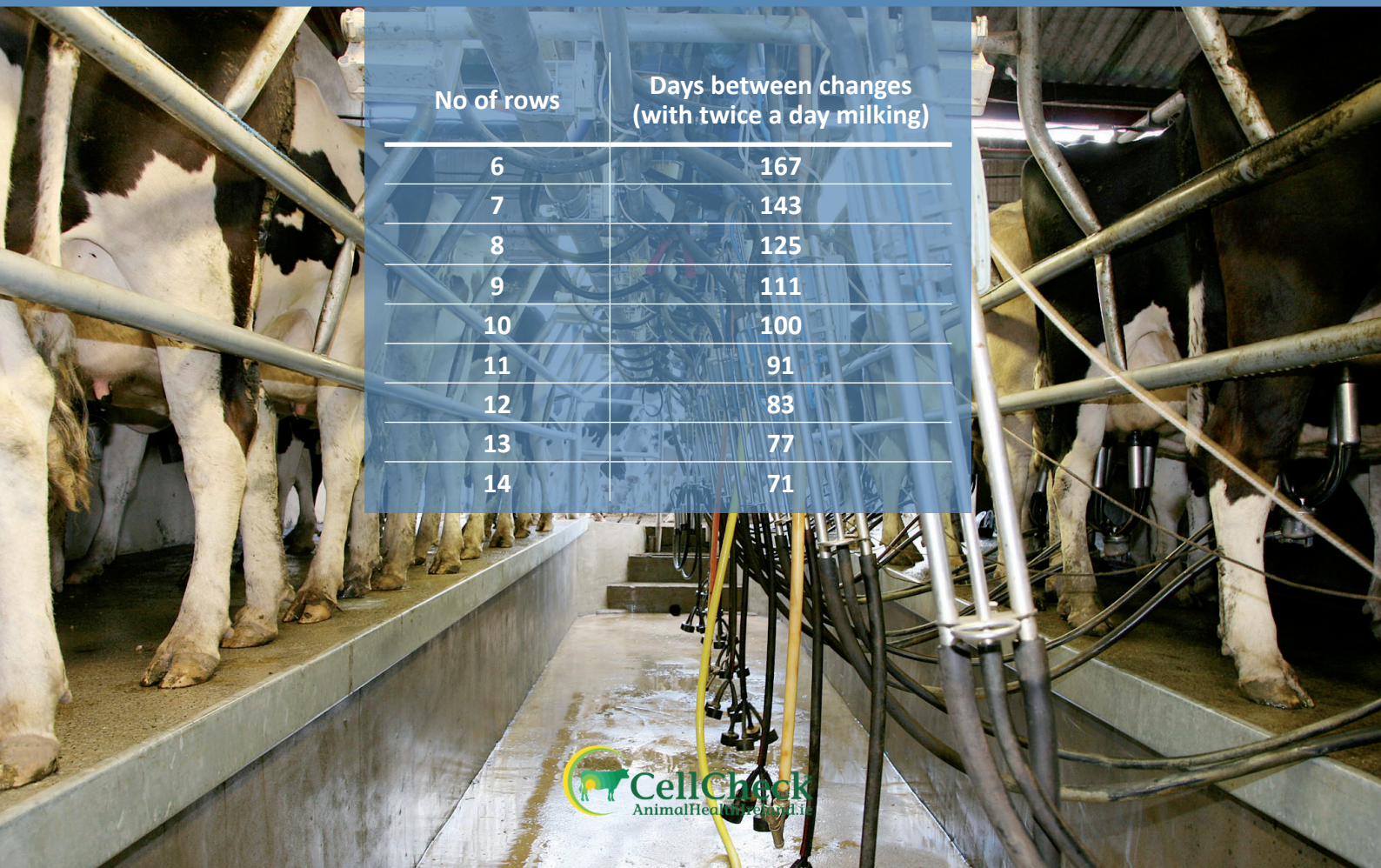
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CellCheck recommends that all milking machines are serviced twice a year by a registered technician. This equates to about 550 hours of work between services. If you haven't done this recently, get it done now- don't wait until you see a rise in SCC or cases of mastitis over the summer. Ask the milking machine technician to go through the report fully with you – it is important to understand how the machine is functioning and why certain recommendations may have been made.

Liners - the recommendation is to change liners after 2,000 milkings or 6 months, whichever comes first. Herds that have increased in size with parlour size staying the same, sometimes forget that each cluster is milking more cows now than it might have a few years ago. This means that liners need to be changed more often!

Below is a table that highlights how often liners should be changed depending on the number of rows that are being milked at each milking. Work it out for your herd, it may surprise you!

So if you are milking eight rows of cows, you need to be changing your liners every four months. But if you are milking twelve rows of cows liners should be changed approximately every three months.



No of rows	Days between changes (with twice a day milking)
6	167
7	143
8	125
9	111
10	100
11	91
12	83
13	77
14	71

It is important to check the inside of the liners regularly to see if they are soft and smooth or rough and cracked. The milk liner is the only part of the milking machine that comes in direct contact with the cow so their condition is critical for teat health, efficient milking and mastitis control. Over time, liners lose tension, absorb fat and hold bacteria. Rubber naturally deteriorates over time anyway and this deterioration happens more quickly with exposure to the cleaning products used for machine disinfection. Worn liners reduce milking performance resulting in increased teat damage and can also harbour bacteria, making cleaning and disinfection difficult and increasing the potential risk of mastitis and cross-contamination between cows.

Don't forget about the teat sprayers and have those serviced too; replace any nozzles that are blocked or faulty.

Finally don't forget to plan some time off- take advantage of the good weather to take some time away from the farm. It has been a challenging spring and you need to look after yourself. Even regular day trips are beneficial. Plan a catch up with some friends or attend one of the many planned activities that are on at this time of year.

