

# MILKING MACHINE MAINTENANCE

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**E**nsuring the proper maintenance of milking machines and their components is crucial for maintaining udder health and preventing issues such as mastitis.

## Service Frequency

Milking machines should be serviced twice a year (every six months) by a registered technician. This equates to approximately every 550 hours of work. Schedule a service if it hasn't been done recently. Don't wait for issues like an increase in Somatic Cell Count (SCC) or mastitis to arise.

## Liners

- Regularly check the inside of the liners, which should be soft and smooth without any cracks or roughness indicating that they need to be changed. Liners are the only part of the milking machine in direct contact with the cow, having the potential to affect teat health and milking efficiency. Worn liners mean reduced milking performance, increased teat damage, and higher risk of mastitis and cross-contamination.
- Over time, liners lose tension, absorb fat, hold bacteria (making them more difficult to clean properly), and deteriorate due to cleaning products, so they should be replaced after 2,000 milkings or every six months, whichever comes first. For herds that have expanded in size but that are still using the same parlour size, the frequency of liner changes needs to increase. A rule of thumb to help work out how often the liners need to be changed is based on the number of rows of cows being milked at each milking.
  - » 8 Rows: Change liners every four months.
  - » 12 Rows: Change liners approximately every three months.
- Teat sprayers also need to be serviced and any blocked or faulty nozzles replaced.

## Take a break!

It is really important to plan some time off during this quieter time of the year, especially after such a challenging spring. Engage in day trips, catch up with friends, or participate in planned activities to manage stress and avoid burnout.