

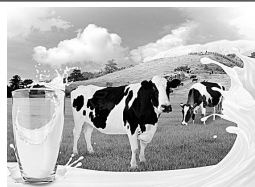


IRISH POLICE

A police trainer officer was interrogating 3 Irish men who were training to become detectives.

To test their skills in recognizing a suspect, he shows the first man a picture for 5 seconds and then hides it. "This is your suspect, How would you recognize him?" The first man answers, "Tat's easy, we'll catch him fast because he only has one eye!" The trainer says, "Well...uh...that's because the picture I showed is his side profile." Slightly flustered by this ridiculous response, he flashes the picture for 5 seconds at the second Irishman and asks him, "This is your suspect, how would you recognize him?" The second man smiles, flips his hair and says, "Ha! He'd be too easy to catch because he only has one ear!" The trainer angrily responds, "What's the matter with you two?? Of course only one eye and one ear because it's a picture of his side profile! Is that the best answer you can come up with?" Extremely frustrated at this point, he shows the picture to the third Irishman and in a very testy voice asks, "This is your suspect, how would you recognize him?" He quickly adds, "Think hard before giving me a stupid answer." The man looks at the picture intently for a moment and says, "The suspect wears contact lenses." The trainer is surprised and speechless because he really doesn't know himself if the suspect wears contacts or not. "Well, that's an interesting answer. Wait here for a few minutes while I check his file and I'll get back to you on that." He leaves the room and goes to his office, checks the suspect's file in his computer, and comes back with a beaming smile on his face. "Wow! I can't believe it. It's TRUE! The suspect does in fact wear contact lenses. Good work! How were you able to make such an astute observation?" "That's easy," the man replied. "He can't wear regular glasses because he only has one eye and one ear."

MAINTAINING MILK QUALITY



At this time of the year with mating taking up your attention it would be easy to understand if milk quality was not at the forefront of your mind. Even small increases in the number of clinical cases or bulk milk somatic cell count (BMSCC) can cost you and issues occurring now can compound as we move through the season. At the current payout (according to the SmartSamm gap calculator) every case of mastitis will cost you \$150 on average, in treatments and lost milk. Every 50,000 cells/ml increase in average BMSCC for the season costs you \$4,050 in lost milk production.

It is worth taking 10 minutes to ask yourself and/or chat with your team to make sure you are on track with milk quality. Ask yourself these questions:

- **Am I getting too many clinical cases of mastitis?** Aim for less than 1% of the herd per month in the months outside of calving.
- **Are too many cows in the herd over 150,000 cell/ml on herd test?** Cows with cell counts over 150,000 are likely to be harbouring an infection. We want less than 10% of heifers and less than 20% of the whole herd to be over 150,000 c/ml on every herd test.
- **Is our milking technique and teat spraying up to scratch?** Work out if you are using 20ml of teat spray, per cow, per milking for manual sprayers or 30ml, per cow, per milking for automatic sprayers. Make sure you aren't making up too much teat spray mixture at a time. Three days is the maximum recommended time for mixed up spray. Check that cows aren't being over-milked. Cups should not be on for more than 1 minute once the milk stops flowing. Check that cups are being put on with minimal air sucking and are being removed by cutting the vacuum and allowing the cups to slip free of the teats.

As always if you're having trouble maintaining milk quality give your veterinarian a call.

DRY COW CHANGES ARE COMING

Remember a few years ago when we were told that whole herd dry cow therapy would be essentially banned by 2020? And 2020 came and went and that particular edict went away? Well, it's worming it's way back into the picture. Not in the form of an out and out decree but by way of updated guidelines on the use of and authorisation of DCT. There are lots of "musts" in the new guidelines but the occasional "should" which leaves us a little wriggle room. Not a lot, but enough for us to come to the decision that while we will continue to educate, encourage & advise on the reduction of "unnecessary use of antibiotics" we don't intend (well not this coming season anyway) coming at you with a big stick yelling "you must do this and you can't do that" because we've all seen what happens when farmers get regulations pushed down their throats - they don't tend to take it too well. However the guidelines do push pretty hard towards justified individual selective treatment of infected cows rather than across the board use over the whole herd unless you have legitimate pressing reasons to treat the whole herd. The advent of high-quality teat sealants has meant that uninfected cows no longer need an antibiotic to protect them over the dry period; infact a properly administered teat sealant will protect them for much longer. The key wording there is "properly administered" teat sealant because we know that a poorly administered teat sealant can result in some very poor outcomes. And that tends to be what scares people & makes them default back to a "safer" option of whole herd therapy with DCT if they're doing the job themselves. However once you learn to do it properly & with appropriate care & attention, you will see the benefits of a good teat sealant and in doing so you will be helping the industry meet its obligations on reduction and appropriate use of antibiotics. The Milk companies will continue to apply pressure at your end and the Veterinary bodies & Government agencies will do the same at our end. So, this is just a gentle end of year reminder that the days of routine whole herd dry cow therapy are definitely coming to an end, and probably sooner than any of us think (or would like). Be ready. There will be plenty more relating to this in future newsletters & communications as we get closer to drying off.



CALF WEIGHING

Weighing systems and weigh scales are essential for good heifer management. Poor growth in calves has long lasting effects and can result in poor reproduction and production in the 1st and 2nd years of lactation. Good practice for weighing is a minimum of every 12 weeks and younger heifers can benefit from monthly weighs because the necessary growth rates are a higher percentage of body weight at a young age. If heifers fall behind in weight early, it can be difficult to get them back on track. To achieve target weights heifers should double their weight in the first 3 months of life and double it again over the next 7 months. Knowing calf weights is important for an accurate worm prevention drench program. Some drenches have minimum weights and should not be used in smaller calves as they can be toxic. Drenches should be dosed to the highest weight of the animal in the mob. Mobs with large variation in weights should be divided into smaller mobs by size to avoid overdosing smaller calves. If you need help weighing your calves, we have scales for hire as well as a large animal technician who can come out and assist with weighing and recording to make the job as stress free as possible. We are currently offering the scales hireage **free** when booking in a technician. Get in touch with our tech Erin or ring the office to book this in. We can also offer vaccination and drenching at weighing.



With Summer just around the corner so too is the potential for Facial Eczema

Fonterra are once again offering one free bulk milk ZincCheck test per farm from the 16th January 2023. Additional tests can be ordered after this and will cost \$99/test. ZincCheck by Farm Source is an exclusive service for Fonterra Suppliers that uses your bulk milk sample to check your herd's zinc levels, giving you confidence that your zinc dosing is effective. Fonterra's On-Farm Excellence Research and Development Group developed ZincCheck, a vat milk-based diagnostic test, to identify if a herd is receiving sufficient zinc to provide maximum risk mitigation against Facial Eczema. If zinc use is managed effectively it can eliminate associated health costs along with animal losses, while protecting productivity levels. **How does ZincCheck work?**

1. Request a ZincCheck test from Fonterra (should be a minimum of two weeks after you have gone to full zinc dose)
2. Your bulk milk sample is tested
3. Results are emailed within 10 days of the test, showing you how confident you can be that your zinc dosing is achieving optimal protective levels

This test provides an overview of the herd to give an indication of the average zinc supplementation level. We can also come out on farm and blood sample cows to check zinc levels for those that aren't Fonterra suppliers or need follow up testing from the ZincCheck. This is as simple as bleeding 10 mixed age cows 2 weeks after you have started your full rate of zinc supplementation. Testing costs around \$15 a cow so it is very cost-effective way to make sure you are doing everything you can to avoid facial eczema in your herd.

CIDR USE

We have seen a lot of CIDRs used in dairy cows this season, particularly CIDRs going in late, 3-5 weeks into AB. It is very frustrating to see lots of non-cycling cows and while there have been multiple studies showing that late CIDR use is not financially viable, it can feel like this is your only option. If you used more CIDRs than normal this season, you may qualify for one of our **REPRO CONSULTS at a specially discounted rate.** A repro consult works through your mating data and will help identify problem/work on areas. If you are interested, contact the clinic to see if your herd qualifies.

