

October 15, 2017

Blend Price: The average price paid to New Brunswick producers who shipped milk in **September 2017: \$77.01/hl or \$19.01/kg of BF** for milk containing: BF **4.0489** kg/hl, Protein **3.2694** kg/hl and LOS **5.6880** kg/hl.

Quota Exchange Deadline:

**Wednesday, November 1, 2017
4:00 pm**

****Please email bids to
quota@nbmilk.org**

Credit Exchange Deadline:

**Thursday, October 19, 2017
4:00 pm**

**Please submit credit bids/offers on
the DFNB Portal at www.nbmilk.org**

Incentive Days 2017

**October 2017—3 days
November 2017—2 days**

**DFNB AGM: Dec 5-7, 2017
Delta Fredericton**

Email: Please provide an email to keep up-to-date on important dairy industry news. Should you wish to **stop** receiving your producer statement, newsletter, forms, etc. by mail, please advise the Board office at nbmilk@nbmilk.org

DFNB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Paul Gaunce Chairman	832-4756
Richard vanOord Vice-Chairman	461-8281
Denis Cyr North-West	445-3103
Fons De Jong Woodstock	375-4049
Nick Duivenvoorden Director-At-Large	237-2087
Reint-Jan Dykstra Moncton	372-4685
Peter Kaye Director-At-Large	546-3914
Gerald Daley North East	546-5969
Robert Woods Sussex	832-5888

DFNB Director Elections

The Board implemented a change to the director election schedule this fall so that a director at-large position becomes available each year instead of having all 3 at large positions become available in one year. This will be achieved over 3 years. The deadline for receiving nominations for the 3 director-at-large positions and the director positions in the Moncton and North East areas (three year terms) was October 11, 2017.

Gerald Daley will return to the Board, elected by acclamation, for the North East Area.

Reint-Jan Dykstra will return to the Board, elected by acclamation, for the Moncton Area.

Nick Duivenvoorden, Paul Gaunce, Frank Jopp, Peter Kaye and Wanda Schuttenbeld have agreed to let their names stand for nomination for the 3 Director-At-Large positions.

As more than three nominations were received for the director-at-large positions:

- a ballot will be sent to each eligible voter on or before **October 31, 2017**. The voter will then forward the ballot indicating the persons of their choice to the Farm Products Commission, postmarked **no later** than midnight, **November 10, 2017**. Only one ballot can be cast by each licensed producer.
- The persons elected with the most votes will be assigned a 3 year term, the next most votes will be assigned a 2 year term and the one with the third most votes will be assigned a 1 year term.

In **September 2018** the Board will ask for nominations for 3 director positions as follows: Director At-Large position that was granted a 1 year term. That position will be granted a three (3) year term starting December 2018; Fredericton Area: three (3) year term starting December 2018; Woodstock Area: three (3) year term starting December 2018.

In **September 2019** the Board will ask for nominations for 3 director positions as follows: Director At-Large position that was granted a 2 year term. That position will be granted a three (3) year term starting December 2019; Sussex Area: three (3) year term starting December 2019; North-West Area: three (3) year term starting December 2019.

This would complete the re-organization and elections would resume their restructured cycle as of September 2020.

Fall Meetings 2017 (*Note date change for Bathurst and Grand Falls meetings)

Monday	October 23	Sussex	Dept of Agriculture Office, Sussex	10:00 a.m.
Monday	October 23	Moncton	Salisbury Legion	10:30 a.m.
Tuesday	October 24	*Bathurst	Dept of Agriculture Office, Bathurst	10:00 a.m.
Wednesday	October 25	*Grand Falls	Dept of Agriculture Office, Grand Falls	10:00 a.m.
Thursday	October 26	Woodstock	Mount Pleasant Community Centre	10:00 a.m.
Thursday	October 26	Fredericton	Moco Restaurant 1265 Route 105	10:00 a.m.

Joint Atlantic Board Meeting

Directors attended a Joint Atlantic Board meeting on October 10, 2017 at the Nappan Research Pavilion with the meeting objective being to investigate possible solutions to the efficiency and effectiveness of A4 Board and Staff resources.

44th Annual Meeting of Dairy Farmers of NB

Delta Fredericton — Fredericton, NB

The DFNB Board of Directors invite all producers to attend the 44th Annual Meeting being held at the Delta Fredericton Hotel, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Tuesday, December 5, 2017 to Thursday, December 7, 2017.

For reservations, please call 1-866-892-4400 or 1-506-457-7000 or for online,

[Book your group rate for Dairy Farmers of New Brunswick 2017](#)

Reservations must be made by noon on Friday, November 3, 2017, to receive the guestroom rate of \$139/Delta room

Dairy Farmers of New Brunswick

Quota Exchange for October, 2017

Price in Dollars	# of Sellers	Kgs Offered By Sellers	Total Cum. kgs	Difference Between Sellers/Buyers	Total Cum. kgs	Kgs Wanted By Buyers	# of Buyers
\$12,000.00		.0	.0	45.4	45.4	5.0	
\$18,000.00		3.0	3.0	37.4	40.4	.0	
\$18,100.00		.0	3.0	37.4	40.4	2.0	
\$19,000.00		1.0	4.0	34.4	38.4	.0	
\$19,001.00		.0	4.0	34.4	38.4	11.0	
\$19,500.00		1.0	5.0	22.4	27.4	.0	
QESP \$20,000.00		16.5	21.5	5.9	27.4	.0	
\$20,007.00		.0	21.5	5.9	27.4	12.0	
\$20,100.00		.0	21.5	-6.1	15.4	.1	
\$20,103.00		.0	21.5	-6.2	15.3	12.0	
\$21,000.00		1.0	22.5	-19.2	3.3	.0	
\$21,100.00		.0	22.5	-19.2	3.3	3.1	
\$22,000.00		6.0	28.5	-28.3	.2	.0	
\$24,000.00		33.0	61.5	-61.3	.2	.2	
TOTALS	13	61.5				45.4	9

QESP = Quota Exchange Selling Price

QESP = Le prix de vente de quota

21.5 of 27.4 kgs wanted at or above the Quota Exchange Selling Price of \$20,000.00 were purchased.

21.5 des 27.4 kilos demandé au prix de vente de \$20,000.00 ou au dessus ont été acheté.

There was a total of 61.5 kgs offered for sale and total bids to purchase of 45.4 kgs.

Il y avait un total de 61.5 kgs proposés à la vente et le total des offres pour l'achat de 45.4kg.

Next Exchange closes at 4:00 p.m., Wednesday November 1, 2017

Results are available Monday November 6, 2017

Tel. : (506) 432-4330 Fax: (506) 432-4333 Quota: (506) 432-4330

Month	Oct	Sept	Aug	Jul	Jun	May	6 month avg.
Clearing Price	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$21,000	\$24,000	\$23,202	\$21,367
Kgs on Exchange	21.5	49.5	21.0	22.1	60.4	33.9	34.7
Kgs by Transfer	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0

NB Domestic Milk Pool

Domestic Market	Butterfat Quota	Butterfat Shipped	Fill Rate	Butterfat	Protein	Lactose	HL	Under SNF Incentive
September 2017	544,065	508,691	93.50%	\$10.6991	\$7.5963	\$1.5468	\$77.01	\$16,950.78
Dairy Year	1,106,266	1,030,986	93.20%	\$10.4815	\$7.3826	\$1.5040	\$74.79	\$39,226.14
Marginal Market								
September 2017		175		\$0.0000	\$0.0000	\$0.0000	\$0.00	
Dairy Year		288		\$0.0000	\$0.0000	\$0.0000	\$0.00	
Deductions & SNF Ratios	Transport	Promotion	Admin	Lab Fee	Total Ded Per HL	SNF Ratios	Target Ratio	
	Per HL	Per Kg of Total Solids						
September 2017	\$2.56	\$1.1139	\$0.0605	\$0.0011	\$4.84	Current Month	2.2123	2.2937
Dairy Year	\$2.53	\$1.1139	\$0.0605	\$0.0011	\$4.80	Past 12 Mo's	2.1818	
Components & Quality	Somatic Cell Count	Standard Plate Count	Lab Past. Count	Butter Fat	Protein	Lactose & O.S.	Total solids	Rejected Loads
September 2017	205,699	6,225	139	4.0489	3.2694	5.6880	13.0063	0
Dairy Year	209,404	8,853	1,208	4.0257	3.2476	5.6847	12.9580	0

September 2017 Credit Exchange \$0.56/kg

8797 kgs of the 8817 kgs wanted at or above the Credit Exchange Selling Price were purchased.

New Credit Exchange rules were effective August 1, 2017. Producers above -10 days of credits are eligible to buy credits.

Producers below -10 days of credits are eligible to sell credits.

Please review your statement to determine kgs eligible to sell / buy on the October 2017 Exchange.

****DFNB encourages all producers to submit credit bids/offers on the Portal at www.nbmilk.org - click on LOGIN link. ****

Forms are available on the DFNB website: <https://www.nbmilk.org/en/producer-info/forms-to-download>

Email to submit forms for bids/offers on the Quota Exchange: quota@nbmilk.org

Quota Exchange Procedures

Bids/Offers must be submitted on forms provided prior to **4:00 p.m. on 1st working day of month.**

All bids must be accompanied by confirmation of funds from your lending institution if bid is greater than prior month's "Due Producer". Producers will not be allowed to combine their "Due Producer" amount with their confirmation of funds from a financial institution to bid for quota equal to the combined amounts. Bids or offers above \$24,000 will not be accepted. Producers selling all of their quota on an exchange will be subject to a security deposit of \$1000/kg that will be returned 30 days after effective date of the transfer.

Credit Exchange Procedures

Bids/Offers must be submitted on forms provided prior to **4:00 p.m. on the 4th working day after the 15th of the month.** Results are available on the morning of 25th. Producers exiting industry may purchase/sell credits one month following effective date of sale. *If you do not receive your statement in time to review your credit position, please call the office and we will fax /email your statement to you.*

Milk Penalty Funding

Re-active funding: Producers subject to milk quality penalty may access **\$100** from Milk Penalty Fund to offset, **once per year**, cost of visit from a milk quality technician.

Pro-active funding: Producers advised of second or subsequent milk quality infraction, prior to a penalty assessed, is allowed to offset, **once per year**, cost of a visit from milk quality technician to a **maximum of \$500**. Producers may apply for funding by forwarding paid invoices to DFNB office.

Minimum Quota Holdings Policy

The Board will cease picking milk up when the farm's total daily quota falls below ten (10) kilograms.

Group Insurance Rates 12/01/16

The Co-operators, Group insurance:

Monthly Single Coverage: \$116.00
Monthly Family : \$321.00

Questions regarding claims, rates or enrolment? Please call:

Emily Murphy of Alodium Financial :
1-800-994-5155 or 506-850-1643
Email: emilymurphy@rogers.com

Weekend/After Hour Quality Milk

Problems: Should a producer require alternate transportation due to **quality related concerns**, Agropur will now be the first contact (**432-0476**). *If no answer, please leave a message.* Agropur personnel will advise of DFNB's policy with respect to extra transportation costs.

Weekend/After-Hour Service:

Please call **432-4330**. The Answering Service will contact DFNB staff.

DAIRY FARMERS OF CANADA PRESENTATION BEFORE THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, SEPTEMBER 28, 2017 (Abbreviated Version)

Presented by: Reint-Jan Dykstra, Vice President, Dairy Farmers of Canada

"Thank you, Mr. Chair and committee members, for the opportunity to share our perspectives on the proposed changes on Tax Planning Using Private Corporations.

Dairy Farmers of Canada is the national policy, lobbying and promotional organization representing Canada's farmers living on approximately 11,000 dairy farms. DFC strives to create stable conditions for the Canadian dairy industry, today and in the future, and works to maintain policies that foster the viability of Canadian dairy farmers, and promote dairy products and their health benefits. The Canadian dairy sector is a consistent positive contributor to the economic stability of the Canadian economy. In 2015, the sector's economic contributions amounted to \$19.9 billion towards Canada's GDP, and \$3.8 billion in tax revenues. In addition, the dairy sector sustains approximately 221,000 jobs (Source: ÉcoRessources) in Canada, while providing Canadians with fresh, high quality and nutritious products without any of the direct government subsidies provided in other jurisdictions.

Regarding the proposed tax changes, I would like to note that DFC fully supports the Canadian Federation of Agriculture in all of its advocacy on this issue. I'll continue by sharing some of my own personal experience to put these changes in context.

As a family, we came to Canada in 1979, and purchased, with a lot of help from banks, two farms. In 1990, my brother and I inherited these farms, and in 2003, we incorporated after a devastating fire, in which we lost 41 head of cattle plus a barn. Instead of rebuilding, we bought a second farm with an eye on the future, knowing that we had at least two sons that had the intentions to follow in our footsteps. At the time, they were 19 and 14 years old. We knew that if we could hang on long enough and make it work, we would be a step ahead by the time they reached the age of taking over. It remains very important to us to keep our farm in the family long into the future.

One major issue with farming is that it is hugely capital intensive; there are a lot of sunken costs with little immediate rewards other than being in an environment that is very satisfying – feeding people and working with nature. Because of the huge investment that farming requires, there needs to be an income of size in order to pay back all the borrowed capital.

Unfortunately, for farmers, the only thing these proposed changes will create is uncertainty. With so many sunken costs, it can be extremely difficult for a beginner farmer to start out, and many years of frugal living after that to make it all work. The average age of farmers is in the late fifties, and intergenerational transfer has never been more important. The government should be doing everything they can to facilitate that change, not make it more difficult.

I'd like to point out that, although the government has rightly identified agriculture as an economic driver and area for growth, some of the policies currently under consideration put all of that at risk. Indeed, as a farmer under supply management, it's hard not to feel like we are targeted in the current climate. The government, and all parties, noted their unanimous support for supply management in the house just this week, yet it is hard right now not to feel like we are being slashed by a thousand cuts. From quota taxes, income sprinkling, capital gains tax, passive investment; even the removal of dairy products as a category in the Canada Food Guide and demonizing our healthy dairy products characterizing them as unhealthy, and branding them with "warning" labels.

As mentioned by the CFA, even the timing of the consultation period shows lack of support and understanding of a farmer's reality. The use of the term "loophole" by the government while describing how farmers manage their money is offensive, the negative connotation makes it sound like we are doing something wrong. We are hardworking, honest people – we are not tax cheats.

It is also hard to understand how the government can consider farmers in the same way as the average person for tax purposes. Farmers work countless hours, manage animals, crops, employees and finances-(many hours we work are not paid); we are not eligible for employment insurance, maternity/paternity leave or benefits, health/disability insurance — let's not talk about our pension plans. We also reinvest the overwhelming majority of our income back into our family business and therefore in our communities, we certainly do not invest in off-shore bank accounts, we invest locally. While we certainly continue to appreciate the government's ongoing support in the international arena through ongoing challenges like the re-negotiation of NAFTA, Canada's domestic policies are completely within the government's control.

We are asking you to:

- **Allow for more time to debate and study the proposed changes**
- **Exempt legitimate farm income from the new Income Sprinkling rules because they cannot be applied fairly in the context of a family farm;**
- **Exempt qualified farm property because the new rules are detrimental to farm transfers and are inconsistent with current farm transfer tax rules.**
- **Delay the implementation of these proposals to no earlier than 2019, and any transitional rules must be further refined to avoid unintended consequences."**

Dairy Farmers of Canada

Are you passionate about the dairy industry? Do you participate in various local events or offer farm tours? Do you enjoy teaching people about how milk gets from the farm to the table? If so, Dairy Farmers of Canada can help by providing you with various promotional items, resources as well as material (i.e. outdoor tent, table top game, table cover, etc.). Note that all requests will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis and should be put-in **at least 6 weeks** prior to your event. To learn more about what we can offer, just contact Dairy Farmers of Canada's Regional Project Manager, Michelle Arseneau Leger, at 1-800-465-2697 (ext. 3) or michelle.arseneauleger@dfc-plc.ca.

Advertising Rates: Active producers may submit dairy related word ads at no charge. *Producer ads will be advertised for two months only, unless otherwise notified.* For other parties interested in advertising, the monthly rates will be **\$400 (full page), \$225 (½ page), \$120 (¼ page) and \$65 (1/8 page)**. All ads must be received by 8th of month.

Office Space For Lease: 29 Milk Board Road, Roachville, 1100 sq feet divided in 4 Offices, Boardroom, and Storage Room. Please call: 432-4330 or email: nbmilk@nbmilk.org

SERVICES

Maritime Quality Milk: www.milkquality.ca

Quality Milk Management: Don Anderson 432-5598 or udder1@nb.aibn.com

Antibiotic Testing: Agropur Cooperative. 432-1950, Ext 245. Sample bottle must include Name, Producer#, Email, Phone #, Cow#, Drug Used.

Dairy Specialist: Brian MacDonald Cell: 433-0509
Email: brian.macdonald@gnb.ca

Livestock Feed Specialist: David Dykstra phone: 434-5755
david.dykstra@gnb.ca; @NbForage

AgExpert Analyst Certified Advisers:

David Christie 466-4305; Kim Waalderbos 260-3004

Hoof Trimming: E. Duivenvoorden 433-1864;
Peter Jones 866-0531

Relief Milking and Farm Sitting—Daily & Hourly rates
Jens vanderHeide 851-1793; jvan_der_heide@hotmail.com

Custom Manure Spreading:
1-800-833-9899 or 433-0867; 756-3645 or 756-2957

NB Environmental Farm Plan

John Russell 452-8101 or 381-2887 john@fermeNBfarm.ca

Sussex Co-op Livestock Auction:

Sales every other Wednesday at 11:30 am Call: 432-1841

Bob Calve Prices : <http://bovin.qc.ca/en/price-info/cull-cattle-and-bob-calves/daily/>

Wood Ash for Growers: Call Gerben at 506-235-0652

NB Beef Cattle Research Council: Free webinars:
<http://www.beefresearch.ca/resources/webinars.cfm>

Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia newsletter:
<https://www.dfns.ca/resources-links/newsletters/>

Milk Producer magazine
<http://www.milk.org/Corporate/Content.aspx?id=1941>

Canadian Dairy Commission Market Bulletins:
<http://www.cdc-clc.gc.ca/CDC/index-eng.php?id=3830>

Atlantic Dairy Industry Central Event Calendar

<http://www.valacta.com/EN/Atlantic/Pages/Atlantic-infos.aspx>

If you have events to add, email : Jeff Gunn at jgunn@valacta.com ;
Fred Vanderkloet fsvanderkloet@gov.pe.ca or
Brian MacDonald brian.macdonald@gnb.ca

AgWeather Atlantic: <http://atl.agrometeo.org/index.php/weather/local>

NB Research & Productivity Council (RPC) 506-452-1212

RPC Building, 921 College Hill Rd, Fredericton NB E3B 6Z9

Composition testing inquiries, contact: Jill.Hay@rpc.ca

Microbiology testing inquiries, contact Corrie.Maston@rpc.ca

Transportation: If you have concerns about your pickups, contact:

Eagle Transportation – 432-9128 Ext 287 - (Cell) 432-0476

R.F. Mason Ltd. – 433-2049 - (Cell) 434-4486

Veronica McEwen – (Office) 432-4330 Ext. 102 - (Cell) 432-0092

Bulk Milk Tanks:

All bulk milk tanks needing calibrated will be coordinated by DFNB staff using the calibration services of both Dairy Farmers of Ontario (DFO) and International Dairy Calibrations Atlantic Ltd. (Eric Hope-Rapp). If you are planning to install a new tank or have installed one recently, please call **432-4330** so your farm can be added to the schedule.

Before replacing your bulk milk tank remember:

New tanks of 1000 US gallons (3780 liters) must have a minimum outlet of 3 inches with a butterfly valve; New tanks less than 1000 must have a minimum tank outlet of 2 inches with a butterfly valve; **Used tanks of any size must have a minimum tank outlet of 2 inches with a butterfly valve.**

Additional Pickups:

Currently producers can request (if bulk milk transporters have the equipment/capacity) up to 45 pickups over 24 months at an extra charge of \$2.00 per hl over monthly transportation rate. Producers may now request between 46 and 90 everyday pickups over 24 months at an extra charge of \$4.00 per hl over monthly transportation rate. The \$2.00 and \$4.00 per hl will be the minimum charge. In the event that additional equipment has to be dispatched, then the charge will be equivalent to the actual transportation costs.

Upcoming Events

DFNB BOARD MEETING: October 31, 2017-November 1, 2017

DFNB AGM: December 5-7, 2017 at Delta Fredericton

Reservations: Online: [Book your group rate for Dairy Farmers of New Brunswick 2017](#) or telephone: 1-866-892-4400 or 457-7000

Christie Farms Ltd. Open House for new Robotic Dairy Barn

Saturday, October 21, 2017 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Location: 30 Christy Rd., Lynnfield, Charlotte county (15 miles north of St. Stephen, N.B.)

Ferme Laviolette Farm Ltée/Ltd. Open Farm Day

Saturday, October 21, 2017 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Location: 610 Chaleur Street, Charlo, NB Phone: 506-684-0355

DFNB Fall Meetings

October 23—Sussex —NBDAAF office—10:00 a.m.

October 23—Moncton—Salisbury Legion—10:30 a.m.

October 24—Bathurst—NBDAAF Office—10:00 a.m.

October 25—Grand Falls—NBDAAF Office—10:00 a.m.

October 26—Woodstock—Mount Pleasant Community Ctr—10:00 a.m.

October 26—Fredericton—Moco Restaurant, Mactaquac—10:30 a.m.

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Ferme Laviolette Farm Inc./Ltd
COWS WITH A VIEW

October 21, 2017
1:00 – 6:00

**OPEN FARM DAY/
PORTES
OUVERTES**

We will be having our open Farm day from 1 -6. Come and check out our new setup and new technology available for the dairy industry. Our Family and cows welcome you to come and visit us!

Nous allons avoir notre Journée portes ouvertes le 21 Octobre de 13h – 18h. Venez voir notre nouveau setup et la nouvelle technologie disponible pour l'industrie du lait. Notre famille et nos vaches vous invitent à venir voir!!

Lely Astronaut
Lely Vector
Isocell Ventilation
Valmetal Combox
Jamesway

Equipements Agricole CPR
D & L Electric
FCC
Cain Insurance
Matapedienne Coop
Bremner & Sons
Agropur
Local Milk Committee

610 Chaleur St
Charlo, NB
506-684-0355

Regulation 2010-19 under the Natural Products Act

<http://laws.gnb.ca/en/ShowTdm/cr/2010-19/>

Plans for construction, extension, alteration, installation or replacement

50(1) Plans for the construction, extension or alteration of a dairy farm, including a dairy barn, milking parlour or milk house, shall be submitted to the Commission or an inspector for approval before the work is undertaken.

50(2) Plans for the installation or replacement of a farm bulk tank shall be submitted to the Commission or an inspector for approval before the work is undertaken.

50(3) Plans for the installation of automatic milking systems shall be submitted to the Commission or an inspector for approval before the work is undertaken.

Check that bulk milk tank cooling times are within specs:

All producers should make sure that the their bulk milk tank(s) are cooling the milk quickly and keeping at the proper temperature. The Food Safety Module of proAction®, section 6.1, provides the following helpful reference points: The first milking must be cooled to 10°C or less within one hour and to a temperature greater than 0°C and less than or equal to 4°C within two hours after milking and maintained at that temperature. When subsequent milkings enter the tank, blend temperature shall not rise above 10°C for longer than 15 consecutive minutes, and milk shall be cooled to a temperature greater than 0°C and less than or equal to 4°C within one hour after milking and maintained at that temperature.

DFNB Mission

To represent the interests of New Brunswick dairy farmers in their pursuit of operating sustainable dairy farms that produce high quality milk within a supply management system.

Hello Dairy Farmers of New Brunswick!

Carrying on from last month's article about Mastitis, this article will detail how to take a good quality milk sample for culture and how to use milk sampling to get the best knowledge for your farm. When you first notice a problem, the ability to take good milk samples followed by prompt collection and submission of appropriate samples, will save you time and money. Be meticulous in your sample taking when you decide to submit a milk sample to the laboratory.

At the lab, milk samples are inoculated onto growth media which are designed to grow specific types of bacteria that cause disease. These media can grow many different strains of bacteria, including contaminants from the outside of the teat, your hands or the environment. For this reason it is imperative that you collect a milk sample that is as clean and as fresh as possible, from a cow that has not yet been treated with an antibiotic. This will help ensure that your sample has the highest chance of growing any significant bacteria that are present in the milk. The most common contaminant comes from manure present on the cow, dirty hands from the person taking the sample, and normal bacteria on the animal's teat skin that find their way into the milk. Antibiotics that are already in the milk can inhibit the laboratory from recovering bacteria. Good sampling technique aims at reducing these potential exposures to get a clean and accurate sample and the best "bang for your buck".

The best time to take a milk sample is during milking. This is the time when most new cases of mastitis are discovered and when the cow's udder has already been cleaned. When mastitis is discovered in an animal, take a milk sample immediately (even if you do not submit it) before deciding how to proceed. This fresh sample can be submitted or plated on farm as soon as possible for best results, or it can be frozen and submitted later to find out what bacteria or other disease agents (e.g., fungi or algae) are causing problems in the herd and why treatment may not have worked.

When taking a sample at milking time, clean and prep the cow as usual, making sure to dust off any loose manure or other debris from her belly to minimise the risk contaminating the sample. After her pre-milking preparation, wash hands and put on a new pair of clean milking gloves. The teat from the quarter to be sampled should then be washed meticulously with alcohol swabs until the swabs stop showing dirt, paying particular attention to the teat end. Once clean the sample can be taken. The milk bottle is held out from under the cow at an angle with the lid still partially covering the container, again to minimize the risk of debris falling into the vial. The first stream of milk is discarded by squirting it onto the floor and the subsequent streams of milk are diverted into the vial until enough milk has been collected. The more the better; however, it is more important to have quality over quantity so do not risk contaminating the sample just to get more milk. Ensure that only milk enters the sample vial, and that the cow's teat does not touch the top or the inside of the vial. Once enough milk has been collected, screw the cover tightly into place. Examine the bottom of the milk bottle to make sure absolutely no manure or dirt has fallen in. If there is any dirt in the sample you should discard this sample, get a new bottle and start over from the beginning (annoying I know but remember, you still have to pay for a contaminated sample so it is worth it in the end). When you are satisfied with your pristine sample of milk, place it immediately on ice or store it at 4°C (fridge) until it reaches the laboratory, or freeze it for submission later. The cow can be treated immediately after milking her out, however recent data suggests that it is a much better practice to wait until you have the culture results before initiating treatment. Treating animals during milking is not the best management practice. Any swollen quarters can be treated with an approved anti-inflammatory such as Anafen or Metacam. Please remember that all laboratory samples must be clearly labelled with the cow's identification (name or number), the quarter the sample was taken from, the name of the farm and the date on which the sample was collected. A brief history of the case is also helpful (details about the animal, if it is a new or recurrent infection, what the mastitis looks like, if treatment been tried previously, if the sample was fresh or frozen and how long it was stored for, etc.).

Remember that just submitting a milk sample because you want to see what bacteria are present or want to know why a particular treatment is not working is not the greatest value to your herd. Milk samples can and should be used to determine when to initiate treatment and most modern research suggests that farmers can wait for culture result before they decide how to proceed. Frequent somatic cell testing, backed by results from many samples will help provide a good picture of the state of your herd. You and your veterinarian would have already developed standard operating procedures for dealing with cases of mastitis. This, along with the testing, will give you the best picture of what is going on in your herd so that you can be confident in dealing with it. Now you and your veterinarian can both work together to control and prevent mastitis and to limit use of antibiotics, saving your farm money and lost milk. The better the results you get from your samples, the better this data will be! It all begins with you as farmers taking excellent, clean samples!

Thanks for reading!

If you have a specific topic you would like to see in this feature, feel free to email me or one of your local DAAF Veterinarians your suggestions.

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