

WOULD YOU LIKE TO REGISTER FOR A FREE VETERINARY CONSULT?

It's that time of year again when the majority of Irish dairy farms need to start planning for drying off their spring calving cows.

'Blanket dry cow therapy', where all cows are treated with dry cow antibiotic tubes, was traditionally recognised as best practice in mastitis control. However, the new Veterinary Medicine Regulations, which became law in January 2022, require farmers to begin to implement 'selective dry cow strategies', which involve a more targeted use of antibiotic treatments. With the right hygiene, management and support, many herds are successfully reducing their antibiotic use at drying off, by developing selective dry cow strategies in consultation with their veterinary practitioners. It is important to remember that a selective dry cow strategy is not without risk and is not something to embark on without seeking professional support and advice. However, with preparation, planning and good management it can be successfully adopted on-farm.

CELLCHECK
TIP OF THE MONTH



Funded Dry Cow Consult- what does this involve?

A free Dry Cow Consult is available again this year for eligible herds, delivered through the Targeted Advisory Service on Animal Health (TASAH), funded by the Rural Development Programme and coordinated by Animal Health Ireland. This free 3-hour consultation is carried out with your selected trained veterinary practitioner (ideally this is your regular vet) and is an opportunity to assess the current drying off process and dry period performance and identify additional improvements that can be made. Milk recording results and farm records will be analysed to identify individual animals that could be dried off without any antibiotic treatment, and the best way of implementing this. It will also be an opportunity to discuss dry cow management and review housing.

Eligibility and Requirements

To be considered eligible for the free three hour consult with your vet, your herd must meet the following criteria:

- Average bulk milk tank SCC for the last 12 months is <200,000 cells/ml.
- At least 4 whole herd milk recordings in the last 12 months.

Applications for the 2023 drying off period are now open. Eligibility assessment of all applications received will be carried out at the start of October, at which time all applicants will be notified whether or not they are eligible for the free consult.



CELL COUNT SOLUTIONS

However if you do not meet these criteria, or are having problems managing your SCC or have mastitis cases in your herd, an alternative consult called 'Cell Count Solutions' is now also available. This consult is also free and delivered by a trained veterinary practitioner, chosen by you, and is an opportunity for you to begin the process of mastitis problem-solving. It involves choosing a team of people you already work with including your milk quality advisor, milking machine technician, farm advisor and your vet, to support you along the road of investigating and resolving mastitis issues. The consult will look at all relevant areas, including the cow, the milking routine, the environment, records etc. so that you can develop a farm-specific plan.

