

## CELLCHECK TIP OF THE MONTH



### No quick-fix when it comes to mastitis control!

“For over 35 years the more I learn about mastitis, the more I realize how much I do not know”, explains Michelle McGrath, Assistant Programme Manager for the CellCheck programme. Looking back to my youth, growing up on a dairy farm, if a cow had mastitis you gave her a few tubes and more often than not she got better, or so it seemed. Nowadays, when farmers have a cow with mastitis, they are encouraged to look at the bigger picture, or even better still, to have good management systems in place to reduce the risk of mastitis happening in the first place. There are many different elements required for in effective mastitis control and consequently, many opportunities for things to go wrong. What I am trying to say is there is no quick fix to mastitis control and sometimes it can be the smallest of issues that result in very large problems.

I spoke with Martin Davin in Laois this month as part of our farmer profile and he explained to me about a recent problem he was experiencing with the cows on the farm. ‘I began noticing a gradual increase in clinical cases of mastitis in late Spring and the cows were becoming very cranky in the parlour.’ ‘I set about investigating it with my Veterinary Practitioner, Co-Op advisor and Milking Machine technician and from this collaborative approach we identified a high proportion of cows with teat end damage. The cause of which was the vacuum being too high in the clusters.’ Martin says that looking back, it was probably a problem for longer than he had realized. The issue is sorted now and the cows have settled and teat ends are returning to normal.

#### Some timely CellCheck reminders for July

- 1. REGULAR MACHINE CHECKS:** Using simple daily, weekly and monthly checks will keep your machine problem free, and provide an early warning if anything is amiss. Check out the farm Guidelines on the AHl website for more detail. <https://animalhealthireland.ie/programmes/cellcheck>
- 2. TEAT DISINFECTION:** Do not stop during the summer months! Completely cover every teat, of every cow, after every milking. It’s the most effective way of preventing new infections and reducing SCC. Some disinfectants also act as fly repellents, helping reduce the number of flies in the parlour during these warm evenings- don’t forget that flies also carry mastitis-causing bacteria.
- 3. MILK RECORD:** By recording your cows regularly (at least 6 times per lactation) you can easily see what’s happening within your herd- which are the problem cows or top performers? Use the CellCheck Farm Summary Report to see the areas of excellence, and those that need attention. All this information will be extremely useful when it comes to drying off cows.

In this section we will advertise dairy replacement/stock bull requests for our milk suppliers.

Please contact **087-3453495** or email **ghunt@bandoncoop.ie**.

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2



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