

CELLCHECK TIP OF THE MONTH



The importance of changing your milk liners

I was back in Kerry this month with Eoghan McCarthy. His season is going well and when I spoke to him at the beginning of June he had completed his third milk recording of the year. Weather conditions have been challenging this year so I asked him how he avoids mucky areas in fields that can result in dirty udders, 'My water troughs are on a raised stone platform so that area isn't usually a problem and I use back fencing to avoid cows walking over the same area repeatedly'. He 'dry wipes any cow that is a bit muddy with paper towel before milking' and 'while I don't fore strip cows at this time of year I carry out a clot check on the filter sock after each milking which is graded and any evidence of clots means that all the cows are fore stripped before the next milking to identify the culprit'.

Eoghan was also about to change his liners. The milk liner is the only part of the milking machine that comes in direct contact with the cow so their condition is critical for mastitis control and an efficient milking process. Over time liners lose tension, absorb fat and hold bacteria. Rubber naturally deteriorates over time anyway, and this deterioration is enhanced with exposure to the cleaning products used for machine disinfection. This deterioration is sufficient to reduce the speed and completeness of milking while increasing teat end damage and the spread of mastitis bacteria. The interior of the liner can also become rough, making it more difficult to clean and disinfect allowing it to harbour bacteria, increasing the potential of mastitis and cross-contamination between cows. The industry recommendation is to change liners after 2,000 milkings or 6 months, whichever comes first. Herds that have increased in size, with parlour size staying the same, sometimes forget that each cluster is milking more cows now than it might have a few years ago meaning that liners may need to be changed every 3 or 4 months.

To work out exactly when you should change your liners, simply complete the following calculation.

$$\frac{2,000 \times \text{Number of milking units}}{\text{Herd size} \times \text{Number of milkings per day}} = \text{Number of days in between liner changes}$$

For more information, see our short video on the Animal Health Ireland website - When Should I Change My Liners?

In this section we will advertise dairy replacement/stock bull requests for our milk suppliers. Please contact **087-3453495** or email **ghunt@bandoncoop.ie**. Please note that Bandon Co-op cannot take responsibility for livestock advertised in this section.

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