

High SCC Levels Don't Always Equal Mastitis

NEWARK, Del. — The July 1, 1986 deadline is fast approaching for dairy farmers who will be confronted with new somatic cell count regulations. The new regulations state that unless herd milk tests are below 1 million levels per milliliter, milk shipment will be cut off.

While many dairy farmers have managed to keep somatic counts low in recent years, "the new regulation could not come at a worse time," according to George W. Haenlein, dairy extension specialist at the University of Delaware. Farmer financing of the federal buyout program and continued milk surpluses have put dairy farmers under a lot of new financial stress.

Parts of the Northeast are experiencing unusual heat and drought much earlier in the year than normal, and the stress of the coming summer heat is fast approaching.

"These factors can affect somatic cell counts," the specialist says, "just when the new regulations are going into effect. While in many cases high somatic counts indicate the presence of mastitis or subclinical mastitis, studies at the University of Delaware Agricultural Experiment Station and elsewhere have shown this is not always true."

Dairy farmers can take several steps to keep cell counts low in tanks, Haenlein says. For example, during the first week or so after calving and during the last month before drying up, many cows have high somatic counts without the presence of mastitis. Keeping milk from these cows out of the tank will help keep tank

counts low. Cows in heat also have higher somatic counts, though it is harder to keep this milk out of the tank.

Haenlein's studies have shown that first strippings and last milk — especially last strippings by hand or machine — have higher somatic counts. So he advises farmers not to strip, or to strip and discard that milk before milking.

Keeping cows calm and quiet can also help hold down somatic counts, as shown by a University of Arizona study.

In an attempt to simulate stress conditions, cows were injected with a steroid which stimulated adrenalin production. These cows experienced significant somatic cell increases by the next day, which lasted up to seven days. The cows had no previous history of mastitis, had been free of pathogenic microorganisms, and had tested low on somatic cell counts before the injections.

High summer temperatures also affect somatic cell counts in milk, Haenlein says.

In the Arizona study, cows with previous low cell counts experienced significant cell count elevations when exposed to heat. These higher levels lasted as long as the hot weather did, with a carry-over effect into November. In this study, leucocyte levels in the blood also rose. In mastitis-free quarters of cows, the fluctuation in somatic cell counts of milk was found to be a function of the leucocytes of the blood.

While not all high somatic cell counts are a sign of mastitis,

Haenlein says elevated levels often do indicate subclinical mastitis.

In order to sell more of their milk, producers must do the best possible milk and cow management job. Keeping cows disease-free and monitoring stress and heat factors can help. Also, keep milk from drying-up-cows out of the tank, and don't afterstrip.

Haenlein advises dairy farmers to get a California Mastitis paddle (CMT) for their milking parlors and use it on each cow every day. Then farmers should have no worries about the July 1 deadline.

Furchtenicht and Stern Join Journal

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Gayle Furchtenicht, Saron, Wisconsin has accepted the position of assistant editor with the Guernsey Breeders' Journal. Since May 27 she has been assisting with magazine production and promotional efforts of the American Guernsey Cattle Club.

Furchtenicht earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in dairy science and agricultural journalism from the University of Wisconsin-Madison this May.

While at the university, she was a member of the dairy cattle judging team for three years and was part of the high overall team at the 1985 National Intercollegiate Contest. While active in the UW-Badger Dairy Club and Association of Women in Agriculture, she was also on the Dean's Honor List.

During the summer of 1984 Furchtenicht interned with American Breeders Service in DeForest, Wisconsin. Last fall she worked in cooperation with Wisconsin Dairy Herd Im-

provement Cooperative to promote the somatic cell count option statewide.

Currently she is writing feature articles for Hoard's Dairyman Magazine. Other experience includes an internship with the Washburn County Register, the newspaper for Shell Lake, Wisconsin.

Furchtenicht is the daughter of Howard and Jean Furchtenicht of Nu-Wing Holstein Farm, Saron, Wisconsin. She works out of the AGCC headquarters office in Columbus, Ohio.

Sondra Stern of Highland, Maryland has also joined the Guernsey Breeders' Journal staff as an intern for six months. Starting in mid-June Stern will assist with advertising, feature stories, magazine production and promotional efforts of the American Guernsey Cattle Club.

Currently a student at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University of Blacksburg, Virginia, she is majoring in dairy science. She is active in the

Virginia Tech Dairy Club, the American Dairy Science Association and the Alpha Gamma Rho mates.

Stern has directed publicity campaigns for the Virginia Tech Dairy Club. She also has coordinated workshops and developed both radio and television broadcasts to promote the dairy industry, on both county- and state levels.

A former 4-Her, Stern has had work experience in research analysis, assisting with lactation studies at Virginia Tech. At the University of Maryland she has assisted with data entry for mainframe computers and bulk mailing data collection.

Stern is the daughter of Melvin Stern, Highland, Maryland. She will work out of the AGCC headquarters office in Columbus, Ohio.

May Meat Production Up

Pennsylvania's commercial red meat production (dressed weight basis) during May 1986 at 85 million pounds, was up six percent from last year according to the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service.

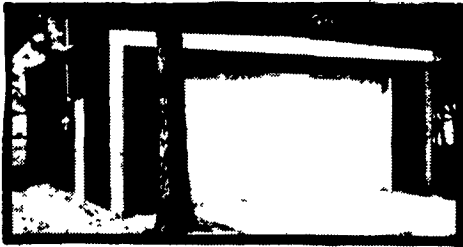
Beef slaughter all 111 million pounds liveweight was up 18 percent from May 1985. Total head slaughtered

were 96,000, an 18 percent increase, while the average liveweight decreased seven pounds to 1,156 pounds. The veal slaughter was 3.4 million pounds liveweight, up 13 percent. Calf slaughter of 18,900 head was up seven percent, and the average liveweight increased nine pounds to 179.

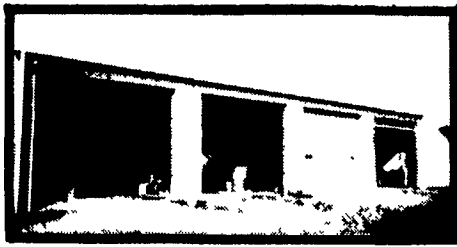
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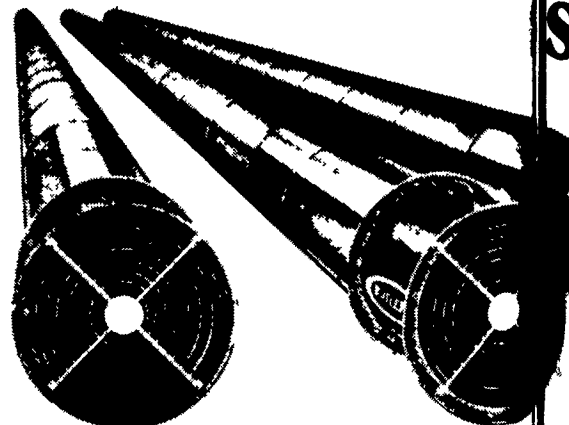
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