

ID Mastitis To Determine Correct Treatment

C. Bovis Increases Somatic Cell Counts

ARLINGTON, VA — Minor mastitis pathogens cause "slight" increases in the somatic cell count when they infect the udder. *Corynebacterium bovis* is one of these "minor" pathogens. The exact source of *C. bovis* is not known, but *C. bovis* is very infectious and once a few quarters become infected, it can spread rapidly from infected quarters to uninfected ones.

No research data is available concerning effects of *C. bovis* on milk production and milk quality. Somatic cell counts of uninfected quarters may double when infected with this minor pathogen. Increases from 150,000 to 300,000 cells per milliliter are common. *C. bovis* rarely is isolated from quarters with clinical mastitis.

The greatest concern is quarters infected with *C. bovis* are more susceptible to infection with *Streptococcus agalactiae* and nonagalactiae streptococci than uninfected ones. These major

mastitis pathogens can cause a dramatic drop in milk production and quality.

Prevention of *C. bovis* infections depends on effective udder hygiene - premilking udder preparation and postmilking teat dipping. Dry cow therapy eliminates most *C. bovis* infections. The prevalence of *C. bovis* is low in herds that practice teat dipping and dry cow therapy.

Incidence of *C. bovis* infection increases from calving throughout lactation in herds that have ineffective udder hygiene programs. Intramammary therapy of infected cows during lactation is not recommended because there is no economic advantage. It is more advantageous to dry-treat infected cows. Eradication of *C. bovis* is highly probable in well-managed herds under a rigid mastitis control program.

No Effective Treatment For Mycoplasma

Mycoplasma are a special kind of bacteria causing mastitis. *Mycoplasma bovis* and several other mycoplasma are involved.

The major problems have been in New York, California, Arizona, and Florida, but many other areas throughout the United States have been affected.

Mycoplasma mastitis is usually severe and long lasting. Often several or all quarters are involved. Flakes and tan discoloration of milk appear first; thereafter, serum separates from clots of fibrin and cells. The udder is hard and swollen, but the cow usually eats well and has a normal temperature. The symptoms may last for days, weeks, or months, sometimes even into the next lactation. Milk production may return, possibly reduced, in the same or next lactation.

It spreads on infected milking machines and hands during milking, or when careless treatment procedures are used. To prevent the spread of mycoplasma mastitis, an effective udder hygiene program must be followed. Teat dipping and other sanitary practices should be carried out, and mastitic cows should be milked last. It is especially important that intramammary treatment be carried out with great attention to sanitation as infection is easily carried from one cow to another on contaminated hands, syringes, and cannulas.

Purchased cows or heifers may carry the infection. A good safety precaution against introduction from other herds is to have a bulk tank milk sample of the herd of origin cultured for mycoplasma

and to culture milk of individual animals at time of purchase or before they enter the milking herd.

There is no effective treatment for mycoplasma mastitis, but it can be eradicated from herds. To do so, follow the preventative measures which have been listed. Furthermore, the entire herd must be cultured for mycoplasma. Infected cows should be segregated from all others at least for

that lactation, and be mycoplasma free on culture before returning to the herd. Consider culling *M. bovis* infected cows. Be sure not to buy infected replacements.

This article is one of a continuing series made available by the National Mastitis Council. For additional information, contact the NMC, 1840 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201; (703) 243-8268.

Wayne County Dairy Seminar

HONESDALE (Wayne) — A dairy cattle reproductive management seminar, sponsored by Penn State Cooperative Extension, will be held January 4, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., in the extension meeting room, Courthouse, Honesdale. Topics will include reproductive anatomy, examination of reproductive tracts, prevention and treatment of reproductive diseases, reproductive management practices, and uses of hormones and progesterone tests in reproductive management.

Speakers will be Dr. Michael O'Conner, Penn State University extension dairy specialist; Dr. Larry Hutchinson, Penn State extension veterinarian; and Nick Place, Susquehanna county extension agent, who formally was an artificial breeding technician.

Advanced registrations are requested by calling Wayne County Extension Office at 717-253-5970. There is a \$3.00 registration and lunch fee. Refreshments will be provided by Sire Power and Eastern Milk Producers Cooperative.



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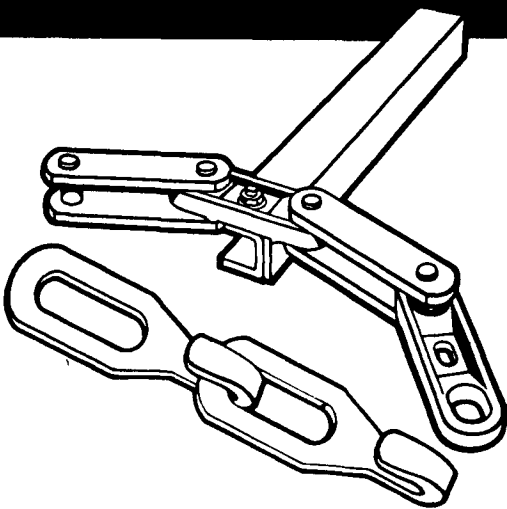
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