



OPINION

Lower SCC Counts Prove Wholesomeness Of Dairy Products

Dairymen know that the Somatic Cell Counts (SCC) in Grade A milk determines the quality of the product they produce. In addition, the level of SCC has a direct reflection on cheese yields. Higher SCC counts mean lower cheese yields.

High SCC can also lead to off-flavors in cream cheese and butter. And lower protein, solids not fat, and butterfat may also be part of the results.

Increased awareness of the impact that SCC has on milk quality and the yield of dairy products has caused the National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments to lower the acceptable levels of SCC. Effective July 1, 1993, the legal limit of SCC will be lowered to 750,000. Most dairy farmers are aware that high SCC is a reflection on udder health. Healthy udders produce more milk and fatten the milk check.

While compliance with the new limits will not be difficult or a problem for most producers, it should be recognized that some industry officials will continue to seek a lower standard. The standard can only be changed with proposals that are made and adopted at the National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments. The last conference was held in 1991 and is scheduled every two years. So in the 1993 conference, another change may be forthcoming.

Historical data from the U.S. and other countries may be helpful in visualizing the big picture. In the U. S., the legal limit for SCC was set at 3.5 million in 1965; 1.5 million in 1970; 1.0 million in 1986 and 750,000 in 1993. In Canada a six year program was implemented to lower the regulatory limits from 800,000 to 500,000. In the European Community the regulatory limit has been 500,000 for many years but was set at 400,000 starting in January of 1992. Some individual states also have lower standards.

At the next NCIMS Conference we expect the National Mastitis Council will propose to lower the bulk tank SCC to 500,000. The 500,000 standard was originally proposed at the 1991 Conference by the Mastitis Council and endorsed by the American Association of Bovine Practitioners.

Whether a change in the SCC standard will be adopted and further reduced is not known, but certainly some countries and individual states are moving their standards down to or below the 500,000 mark. And it is quite likely the trend will keep moving downward.

Because this emphasizes a continued improvement in milk quality, we believe this is a progressive step for the dairy industry. This also shows consumers that dairy products are and continue to be very wholesome foods on their dinner tables.



NOW IS THE TIME

By John Schwartz
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Control Mastitis In Heifers
Research studies show that 20 to 70 per cent of heifers have mastitis, even before calving.

The staph species represents a large number of these cases. The staph bacteria may colonize on or inside the calf's udder, starting at a very young age. They could infect the heifer by being sucked by another calf, which had consumed some staph containing milk, or the bacteria may be spread by flies as the flies travel from cows to calves.

To minimize the risk of heifers acquiring mastitis, house calves in individual pens and hutches so they will not suck one another. Also, do not feed staph containing milk to calves that may suck one another. Segregate heifers from cows and control flies.

By properly managing calves and heifers, you should be able to reduce the level of mastitis in

wardship Program," Game Commission Office, Jersey Shore, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 22
Pennsylvania Poultry Federation Annual Fund-Raising Banquet, Hershey Convention Center. Bradford Co. Sheep and Wool Growers Cooperative annual meeting, extension office, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 23
Safe Drinking Water Clinics, UGI Auditorium, Bethlehem. Farm Pond Management, Penn State Fruit Research Lab, Biglerville, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, April 24
Pennsylvania Arbor Day. Lancaster Conservation District Legislative Breakfast, Kreider's Restaurant, Manheim, 7:30. Safe Drinking Water Clinics, Bi-State Water Quality Program, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Wellsville Water Treatment Plant, Wellsville, N.Y., 9 a.m. Friends of Ag breakfast, Sheraton Inn, Dover, Del., 7:30 a.m.

Saturday, April 25
Beef Field Day, western Berks County. Lehigh County Small-Scale Farming Trip. York County Dairy Princess and Dairy Miss Pageant, 4-H Cen-

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heifers.

To Look For Black Cutworms

Robert Anderson, extension agronomy agent, reminds us that black cutworms are one of the first spring insects to be on the outlook for.

The black cutworm is a migratory insect in Pennsylvania. They begin to move into the state in late March and early April.

When it arrives in the state, there are very few crops for the adults to lay their eggs on. Therefore, the adult females seek winter annual weeds such as chickweed, mustards, and shepherds purse to lay their eggs.

Fields which have these weeds and are planted to corn have a high potential for cutworm feeding after eggs hatch. However, if weeds are eliminated at least 10 days prior to corn planting, the problem may be greatly reduced.

By eliminating the weeds, when the eggs hatch, the larvae will die for lack of food. Fields which had winter annual weeds growing should be scouted for cutworm

feeding activity.

When 3 per cent of the corn plants are cut off and there are 5 or more cutworms per 100 plants, the field should be sprayed.

Tobacco Plant Population

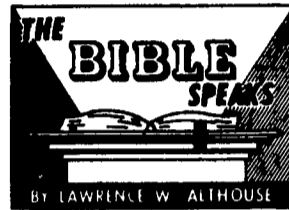
The effects of plant spacing on yield is an often-asked question.

If you are using 40 inch rows and change your plant spacing from 26 inches to 24 inches, you will increase your plant population from 6,031 plants per acre to 6,534 plants per acre. This would be an increase of 503 plants per acre or about 100 sticks per acre.

Research has shown that, in most growing seasons, as plant population increases, yield per plant decreases. Thus, you will see very little increase in yield per acre while you increase your work load.

Based on our experience, we recommend a plant population of 6,000 to 6,100 plants per acre.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters, compared to what lies within us." — Oliver Wendell Holmes.



ROLLING AWAY THE STONES?

April 19, 1992

Background Scripture: Romans 6:1-11.

Devotional Scripture: Mark 15:42 through 16:8.

No matter how often I read this account, each time I am struck by the freshness and urgency of its message. No one tells of the death and resurrection of Jesus as simply and pointedly as Mark does. He wastes no words: yet nothing essential is left out.

Here is the enigmatic Joseph of Arimathea, whom Mark describes as "a respected member of the council, who was also looking for the kingdom of God." Some people have observed — unfairly, I think — that Joseph didn't commit himself until after the nastiness of Calvary was over. Yet, here is a man, often portrayed as the timid disciple, who, Mark says, "took courage and went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus" (15:43). Facing Pilate and his own peers of the council and asking for the body of Jesus took considerable courage. Not even his closest disciples had manifested that kind of brave resolve. Maybe Nicodemus was late in declaring himself for Jesus, but not too late. He stepped forward when everyone else was still in hiding. Perhaps the cross gave him the courage he formerly lacked.

GRAVESTONES

There is a starkness in Mark's account: Joseph of Arimathea "laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of rock; and he rolled a stone against the door of

the tomb" (15:46). That's the way it is with death: the terrible finality of it all. Joseph rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and that was that! We put up a gravestone and we know that is the end of a once-vibrant life. We write "finis" to a once-promising career, marriage, or business venture. There are so many failures and death in life and each one is marked with some kind of stone, literally or figuratively.

But what seems to be the end of things is not necessarily the end. What we regard as death, defeat and disappointment may be only the beginning of something else. For, as one commentator has remarked, "history shows that God never notices stones. Earth's finalities are never his." So using our God-given minds and seeing no further than our own eyes can see, we roll our stones of death and defeat, never dreaming that Something or Someone has the power to roll them away.

THE STONE ROLLED BACK
We can understand why the three women, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome should wonder: "Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?" (16:3). But, when they got there, "they saw that the stone was rolled back; for it was very large." The huge stone of Joseph of Arimathea was heavy, but not heavy enough to keep Jesus in his tomb.

So it is with us: the stones we place to mark our defeats and failures, our disappointed hopes and unfulfilled faith, are heavy and often seem immovable. But the Easter message tells us that God can roll away these great stones, just as he rolled away the stone before the tomb of Jesus. The key to our faith is found in the message of the angel inside the tomb: "Do not be amazed; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, he is not here" (16:7).



Farm Calendar

Saturday, April 18

18th annual Freestate Invitational Spring Sale, Frederick Fairgrounds, Frederick, Md., 1:30 p.m.

Easter ham and chicken dinner, Berks County 4-H Community Center, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Franklin County apple queen contest and banquet, Shady Grove Community Center, 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 19

Happy Easter!

Monday, April 20

Farm Accident and Rescue Seminar, Memorial Hall, Emporium, 8 p.m.

Tuesday, April 21

Delmarva Poultry Booster Banquet, Wicomico Youth and Civic Center, Salisbury, Md.

Lehigh County Small-Scale Farming Workshop, Lehigh County Ag Center, 7:30 p.m.

Berks County 4-H Spring Kickoff, Berks County 4-H Center, 8 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

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