



OPINION

Time To Lower SCC

Beginning July 1993, the somatic cell count (scc) limit for bulk tank milk drops to 750,000 cells/ml, or a linear score of 5.9. It is not easy to lower the herd scc quickly when there is no scc or culture history for the herd. Historical records of individual monthly sccs are needed, and culture results are helpful in identifying the problem cows and designing control procedures for a herd. Cows with clinical mastitis have sccs in excess of 1,000,000 while subclinical (invisible mastitis) cows can have cell counts between 200,000 and 1,000,000. Clinical cows represent a small percentage of the herd, but they indicate that many other cows in the herd have subclinical mastitis. To control mastitis, both the clinical and subclinical mastitis cows need to be identified. Individual cow sccs that show the number of cows at risk for subclinical mastitis are available from DHIA at a low cost, while milk bacterial cultures are nearly ten times more expensive and more difficult to arrange.

According to Bill Heald, Penn State Dairy & Animal Science, somatic cell counts for a herd should be less than 300,000 cells/ml, but require concerted mastitis control efforts. This level of cell count is well worth the effort and should be the goal of most dairy farmers. Some herds need more than three years of mastitis control procedures to get to this lower level of cell counts. A change in cell count of this size returns 400 to 800 pounds of milk per lactation. In added milk production alone, that amounts to \$2,880 to \$5,760 per year for a 60-cow herd. Procedures that lower cell counts include dry cow therapy, teat dipping, milking hygiene practices that maintain clean dry udders at all times, milking machines kept in good working order, and isolation of and eventual culling of chronic cows that fail to recover. Elimination of the source of the infection is the primary concern, while treatment of clinically infected cows is secondary and often not very helpful.

Don't be caught with high sccs that could jeopardize your income. Set a goal for a somatic cell count of less than 300,000 cells/ml. Develop a mastitis control program with your veterinarian or advisers to accomplish the goal. To measure your success, subscribe to an scc program such as DHIA that monitors udder health. Good udder health can pay you big dividends.

Farm Calendar



Saturday, January 16

Franklin County Holstein Assoc. meeting, Lemaster Community Building, 7 p.m.

Dauphin County Holstein Assoc. meeting, Western Sizzlin, Harrisburg, noon.

New Jersey Bred Equine Breeder awards dinner, Freehold Garden Hotel and Conference Center, Freehold, N.J.

Mercer County Dairy Day, Vo-Tech Center, Mercer, 10:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Sunday, January 17

Monday, January 18

Northeast Winter Dairy Management Schools (West), Sheraton Inn, Batavia, N.Y., thru Jan. 19. Northeast Winter Dairy Management Schools (East), Ramada Inn, Watertown, N.Y., thru Jan. 19.

Eastern Pennsylvania Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show, Valley Forge Convention Center, thru Jan. 21.

Crop Production Satellite Seminar, Forage Crops, Penn State. Raleigh DHIA Workshop, Robert Fulton Fire Hall, Wakefield, 12:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m.

Westmoreland County Holstein annual meeting, Knights Court, New Stanton, 10:30 a.m.

Agricultural Issues Forum, Kreider's Restaurant, Manheim, 3 p.m.

Forage Crop Seminar, Penn State Schuylkill Campus Conference Center, 7 p.m.-9:30 p.m.

Tuesday, January 19

NYS Farm Direct Marketing Conference, Kingston Holiday Inn, Kingston, thru Jan. 21.

Lime, Fertilizer and Pesticide Conference, Days Inn, State College, thru Jan. 21.

Dairy Cow Nutrition Short Course, Cecil County Courthouse, Elkton, Md., 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Ag Information Series, Forest Stewardship and Erosion and Sedimentation Control, UNILEC Building, DuBois, 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.

Beef Evaluation Program, Live Evaluation, Leesport Farmers Market, Leesport, 6:30 p.m.

Farm and Home Foundation annual meeting, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 6:30 p.m.

Composting poultry and large animal carcasses workshop, 191 Franklin Farms Lane, Chambersburg, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Pa. Holstein Southcentral Championship planning meeting, Western Sizzlin Steakhouse, Harrisburg, 10:30 a.m.

Bradford County Holstein annual meeting, North Towanda Methodist Church, North Towanda, 7:45 p.m.

Forage Crop Seminar, Penn State Schuylkill Campus Conference



NOW IS THE TIME

By John Schwartz
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Look For Fire Hazards

The recent fires in poultry and swine operations reminds us we need to be constantly looking for fire hazards and correcting them.

- Some areas to check are:
- Electrical wiring. Check for exposed wires and broken insulation. Especially look at electric motors and light fixtures.
 - Check gas and fuel oil systems for leaks and unsafe installations.
 - Keep all types of heating devices clean and in good condition. Inspect flexible gas hoses for wear and replace when necessary.
 - Inspect safety chains and cables used in hanging the brooders to determine that chains and cables are properly connected and in good condition.
 - Be extremely careful when handling gasoline. It is flammable and explosive.
 - Store all combustible scrap debris and waste material in covered metal containers.
 - Select, provide, and regularly service the proper fire extinguishers for the type of material in areas they are to be used.

There are many people who will help you with a fire hazard assessment. They include your insurance agent, local fire company, and fire safety equipment sales people. You should also invite your local fire company officers to visit your farm so they may become familiar with your facilities, location of key items, and specific hazards.

To Cope With Stress

Farming is a stressful occupation. Recent weather problems, increased government regulations, pests, diseases, long hours and money problems are a few of the things contributing to stress.

According to a recent study, farmers have the highest rates of death due to stress related conditions. Heart and artery disease, hypertension, ulcers, and nervous disorders top the list of killers.

The National Safety Council

Center, 7 p.m.-9:30 p.m.

Wednesday, January 20

Northeast Winter Dairy Management School (West), BPO Elks Lodge, Meadville, thru Jan. 21.

Northeast Winter Dairy Management School (East), Holiday Inn, Oneonata, thru Jan. 21.

Dairy MAP, Family Time Restaurant, York, 9:45 a.m.-3 p.m.

Urban Forestry Workshop, Capri's Restaurant, Lake Wallenpaupack, 8:30 a.m.-2:45 p.m.

Part I Beef Cow Herd Management Short Course, Belle Vernon Holiday Inn, also Jan. 27 and Feb. 2.

Dairy MAP, Mercer Extension Center, also Jan. 27.

Dairy MAP, Somerset Vocational

(Turn to Page A31)

offers the following tips to reduce stress and improve mental and physical condition:

- Acknowledging that stress exists in your life is the first line of defense.
- Do not minimize your reactions to stress. If you keep stress buried inside, it is liable to create mental and physical problems.
- Talk out your problems with family, friends, or clergy.
- Eat a well-balanced diet and try to limit the amount of caffeine and alcohol intake.
- Get enough sleep.
- Keep all machinery in good condition. Eliminating possible breakdowns will help reduce stressful bad days.

Remember, you can not control the weather, but you can control your ability to deal with stress in productive, not destructive ways.

To Keep Disease Off Your Farm

We are in the heart of winter when disease becomes a more

important factor in our animal operations.

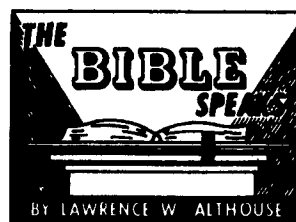
To reduce the risk of a disease outbreak, tighten up your biosecurity. Do not go to local auctions, especially if you are a poultry producer. These poultry auctions have birds coming from many small flocks with an unknown disease status.

MG, LT, and AI are a few of the diseases you could bring home with you. Keep visitors out of your barns. Make sure people entering your barns are wearing clean clothes and boots that have not been on another farm.

Keep your farm and buildings clean. Have an effective rodent control program.

By practicing a good biosecurity program, staying away from other animals, keeping a clean operation, and controlling people traffic in your buildings you will be placing several excellent barriers to keep diseases off your farm.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "The man on the top of the mountain did not fall there."



THE ONLY WAY
January 17, 1993

Background Scripture:

Acts 11.

Devotional Reading:

Ephesians 2:11-22.

More churches have floundered and even come apart at the seams because of someone's insistence that their way is "the only way". Sometimes, like that, it is boldly said, and other times more subtly. Nevertheless, many of us assume that there is but one way to worship, to baptize, to teach, to believe, or to witness, and it is our way!

Several times a year I am engaged by local churches to conduct a weekend program. I am often surprised to find that one or more members of these churches begin their participation in these programs with an attitude of deep suspicion. My wife and I have just returned from such a weekend in a United Methodist church several hundred miles from Dallas, our home. At the end of the last program, one man told me that, his first impression was that I might have been "of the Devil", but that he was glad to find that, despite some things I had said that were troubling to him, I wasn't.

FINALLY "O.K."

This man and I are both followers of Jesus Christ, but, because I didn't enunciate my faith in the same terminology that he does and believes to be essential, he began with considerable doubts about the validity of my Christianity. I am glad that eventually he came to the conclusion that I am "O.K.", but troubled to think that we could have been alienated from each other because my way was not his way. Although we come from two different worlds, the fact that we are both disciples of Jesus Christ should have been a bridge to bring us together, rather than to separate us.

Maybe I've used analogy here before, but it doesn't matter. A little boy charged his friends an admission fee, admitting them to his backyard so they could see the eclipse. Christians are sometimes like that, assuming that the eclipse

can only be seen from their own backyard, when, in reality, it belongs in no one's backyard. So, the experience of God is dependent upon no "one way", no single doctrinal interpretation, no one candle statement, because God is bigger than any of our backyards.

In Acts 11 we can see the painful manner in which some of the earliest Christians learned this lesson. Whatever they thought about Gentile converts to Christ, they did not believe that it was possible for them to have any kind of relationship with them. Circumcised Jewish Christians certainly could have nothing to do with uncircumcised Gentile Christians. There was but one way and that was not the way! Even the most discerning of the apostles knew that.

WITHSTANDING GOD

But, apparently, God's way was different from theirs. So, Peter returns to the Jerusalem church and tells of an absolutely amazing thing that happened to him at Joppa: God told him to minister to some Gentiles and then, when they accepted Christ, the Holy Spirit fell on them, just as it had to the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. Reluctantly, Peter let God's revelation overcome his prejudice: "If, then, God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?" (11:17).

Good for Peter! He asked the skeptics in the Jerusalem church the same question we must always ask ourselves: who are we that we should withstand God? And we need to take personally the admonition which God gave Peter in his dream: "What God has cleansed you must not call common" (11:9). Other Christians may worship differently, verbalize their faith differently, and have experiences that are beyond our own, but we must not reject them. It matters little if they do not do it our way, so long as it is one of God's ways.

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