

Quality Premiums

Mid-Maryland Dairy Veterinarians, Inc.

FUNKSTOWN, Md. — Dairy-men have little control over the price of milk they receive, but by obtaining a quality premium they can maximize the price they obtain.

Quality premiums usually involve both bacteria count (measurements of sanitation) and somatic cell count (measurement of udder health).

In many herds, the premium for somatic cell counts, can be a close, but never realized, goal.

The bulk tank somatic cell level is actually a weighted average of all the individual cow SCC inputs. By determining which cows are contributing at what level, a dairyman and his veterinarian can make decisions regarding the management of these cows.

Identification of problem cows is the first step in reducing bulk tank SCC. In most herds a small percentage of cows contribute up to 50 percent of the total bulk tank SCC.

In the accompanying table, four cows are contributing 45 percent of the bulk tank SCC. These four cows are identified as the major reason for the herd not obtaining a quality bonus. The monthly contribution to bulk tank report is the key to identifying these cows.

Diagnosing the cause of the high SCC count in these cows is the next step.

First examine each quarter, teat

and its respective milk. Then a California Mastitis Test (CMT) should be applied to each quarter.

This information should be written down for further reference.

Cultures could be taken at this time to further diagnose the problem. The results of the culture are to help in decision making, rather than to determine which drug to treat with.

Sore teats, abscessed quarters and many types of mastitis are not responsive to treatment during the lactating period.

Deciding how to manage these cows should be the next step. We usually divide the cows into four groups, as follows:

1. Dry-off. Often these cows are close to drying off and what is gained by increased milk sold is lost by not reaching the quality premium.

2. Culls. A cow that is a long-standing mastitis case or otherwise a problem cow that has lost her profitability to the herd.

3. Strip. Many types of mastitis that respond poorly to drug therapy will respond to frequent milk out during a 24 hour period.

4. Treatment. The decision to treat is usually based on how long the cow has had mastitis and the likelihood that treatment (based on the bacteria cultured) will result in a lowering of the SCC count.

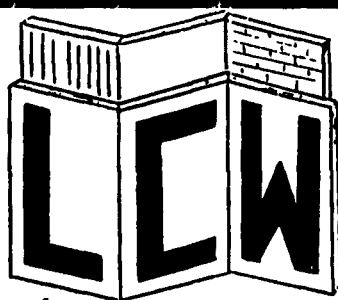
By acting on these decisions, the goal of obtaining the desired somatic cell count can be reached.

Table 1. BULK TANK CONTRIBUTION

| Control Number | Milk | Fat | Pro | SCC | Over 500,000 2nd Mo. | Cow's Individual Bulk Tank SCC Contribution % |
|----------------|------|-----|-----|------|----------------------|---|
| 45 | 58 | 3.5 | 3.2 | 3124 | ***** | 18.1 |
| 6 | 58 | 3.7 | 3.0 | 2943 | ***** | 15.4 |
| 87 | 55 | 3.5 | 2.9 | 2853 | | 12.5 |
| 23 | 85 | 3.1 | 2.9 | 1271 | | 8.6 |
| 32 | 86 | 2.8 | 2.7 | 425 | | 3.5 |
| 3 | 54 | 3.6 | 3.3 | 538 | ***** | 2.7 |

WORKSHEET:

| Cow | History | Findings | Management Decision | Date Acted On |
|-----|--|---|---------------------|---------------|
| #45 | not bred, fresh 6 mo. high SCC 3 mo. in row | 2 quarters almost dry from chronic mastitis | cull | 7/5 |
| #6 | pregnant 8 mos. | 1. front teat tramped 2 mos. ago | dry off | 7/15 |
| #87 | fresh 1 mo. milking 90 # | cmt 3 r. rear strep. ag | treat | 7/5 |
| #23 | fresh 2 mo. milk 85#; treated 2x, mastitis returns as soon as milk in tank | cmt 2 both front; strep ubertis | strip | 7/6 & 7/21 |



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PDPP Hires Green As Specialist

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — In mid October, Kris Green, of Fayetteville, N.Y., joined the Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program as a marketing specialist to handle marketing and promotions activities.

Green, originally from Bradford County, grew up on her family's dairy and poultry farm. From there she went to Penn State University where she earned her bachelor of science in agricultural business management. Green was inspired to bring a true understanding of milk production to the marketing arena, an aspect she believes most marketers lack.

Green worked for the USDA's Agricultural Cooperative Service

as an agricultural economist. While at the USDA, Green completed a master of science from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Most recently, Green worked as manager of economics and communications for Dairyland Cooperative. Green wrote and edited an award-winning quarterly magazine and two monthly newsletters, assisted with market analysis and reporting, and assisted with the writing of reports, resolutions and the New York-New Jersey Federal Milk Marketing Order's semiannual newsletter.

Eager to return to working with dairy farmers, Green assumed the role as marketing specialist with PDPP in October.

Influenza

(Continued from Page A26)

drop in egg production, or an unusual mortality, get the birds to a diagnostic laboratory, and participate in an AI surveillance program.

Indemnities

Maryland is studying the development of an industry indemnity program financed by commercial insurance.

Delaware has already established an industry voluntary indemnity program that requires flock owners to destroy the first two infected flocks at their own cost (up to \$100,000), followed by all poultry companies donated \$2.5 million on a pro-rata basis for diseased birds, with the state picking up the next \$5 million before having to request aid from the USDA.

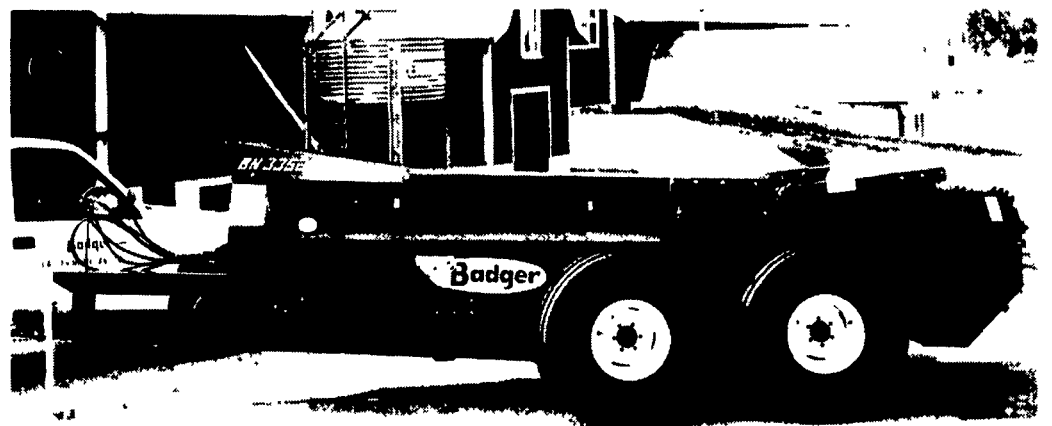
In Pennsylvania, the current program is a voluntary indemnity, whose contributions can be used to purchase and destroy small flocks.

USDA plans to survey the live bird markets twice this flu season.

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