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Chronic cows may not have extremely high SCS, but because the elevated counts continue for months, significant milk loss is experienced. The mildly infected cows are losing 45 to 90 pounds of milk per month and are likely candidates to become clinical cases.

Such cows are potential sources of bacteria to infect healthy cows and should be isolated from the other cows if contagious mastitis is a problem in the herd. Milk these cows last or with separate milking equipment. It is generally not practical to treat these cows with antibiotics.

Reviewing your DHIA SCS information can provide important clues as to the sources of you mastitis problem and help you to improve your mastitis control program. Is the mastitis in your herd caused by contagious or environmental bacteria, or both kinds?

Environmental mastitis tends to occur early in lactation and affected cows have elevated SCS for short durations. Environmental mastitis can be controlled by cleaning up the environment especially the bedding areas.

Change bedding types and if possible use sand as a bedding. Sand will not allow the environmental bacteria to grow.

You should work to eliminate standing water and mud.

Evaluate your milking hygiene program — predipping is believed to be an effective control measure against environmental

mastitis.

Reduce the use of water during udder preparation, keep udders clean, and clip or singe udder hair.

Finally, eliminate "squawking," otherwise known as liner slipping, particularly at the end of milking.

Contagious mastitis is more likely to occur later in lactation and cows, typically have elevated SCS month after month. To combat this type of mastitis consider changing milking procedures, pay particular attention to teat dipping and dry cow therapy.

Prevent teat sores and isolate cows that are known to be infected. These measures tend to reduce

the transmission of the disease to uninfected cows and slowly reduces the number of new cases of contagious mastitis.

In a herd with contagious mastitis, progress in reducing herd SCS can be slow especially if problem cows are not isolated.

An increase in the percentage of cows with SCS of 0, 1, and 2 indicates progress is being made, even when other signs are discouraging. Your DHIA SCS report will be your best monitor of progress.

We have discussed some of the uses of SCS to monitor individual cows, and will next (in a future article) talk about using SCS to monitor cow groups. The important point here is that preventing one case of clinical mastitis can pay for the DHIA testing of 119 cows for a year.

Preventing mastitis by using your DHIA records puts money into your pocket with little extra

Average Farm Feed Costs For Handy Reference

To help farmers across the state to have handy reference of commodity input costs in their feeding operations for DHIA record sheets or to develop livestock feed cost data, here's last week's average costs of various ingredients as compiled from regional reports across the state of Pennsylvania. Remember these are averages so you will need to adjust your figures up or down according to your location and the quality of your crop. Corn, No. 2y - 2.33 bu. 4.16 cwt.

Wheat, No. 2 - 3.53 bu. 5.89 CWL.

Barley, No. 3 - 1.85 bu. 3.96 cwt

Oats, No. 2 - 1.56 bu. 4.85 cwt. Soybeans, No. 1 - 5.27 bu. 8.79 **CWL**

Ear Corn 59.65 ton 2.98 cwt. Alfalfa Hay - 91.75 ton 4.59 CWL.

Mixed Hay - 92.50 ton 4.63 cwt. Timothy Hay - 91.75 ton 4.59 CWL

cost.

Each year that mastitis control measures are continued and mastitis is closely controlled compounds the dividends you make by having invested in somatic cell monitoring and learned how to interpret the SCS report.

Pa. Holstein Breeders

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