

dhia

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Pennsylvania Dairy Herd Improvement Association
DHIA Service Center, Orchard Road, University Park, PA 16802

Question: Bulk tank SCC has increased for the past two years in our herd, yet we are not seeing any more signs of mastitis. Can this be from differences in SCC testing?

DHIA testing of SCC has not changed significantly in recent years. Bulk tank SCC or weighted SCC as it is sometimes referred to is the raw count of cells per volume of milk multiplied by the total volume of milk. DHIA then reports the calculated SCC of the total milk produced by the herd. This should be similar to the SCC measurement of a representative sample of milk taken from the bulk tank.


Let us first look at some of the recorded DHIA information for the herd. Actually I want to look at some very specific parts of the herd to see why it is not apparent that the WSCC is going to be higher. The following will look at the past two years of cows and their SCC as they are tested for the first time following calving.

The left side of the chart is the information about fresh cow infection for the period two years ago and we see that the summer

Dairyman To Dairyman

GEORGE CUDOC

PA DHIA
Consulting
Dairyman



months are the most troublesome. June new infections were double the average for the year. If we then look at the right side of the chart we see that the summer months were again the start of a lot of new infections. The difference now is that the problem is persistent through late summer and fall months.

The other thing to note about the changing trend in this herd is that the fresh cows are the ones that are infected at a higher rate and of course make more milk than cows in later lactation. In this case we may actually treat less cows for mastitis in the herd and still the WSCC will go up due to the larger impact of the higher producing cows that are infected.

DHIA statistics prove their value in cases like this because

Date	Infections # Cows	Fresh # Cows	Infected %
Mar-98	1	9	11.11%
Apr-98	1	10	10.00%
May-98	2	9	22.22%
Jun-98	5	12	41.67%
Jul-98	7	22	31.82%
Aug-98	3	10	30.00%
Sep-98	3	8	37.50%
Oct-98	2	11	18.18%
Nov-98	2	17	11.76%
Dec-98	2	11	18.18%
Jan-99	5	28	17.86%
Feb-99	3	12	25.00%
average			22.94%

even the best observers can be fooled by the severity of a SCC problem when we use head counts to evaluate mastitis controls. We should also take the time to find out what part of the herd is affected the greatest. This will lead to better plans of attack and may avoid a step backward for every one forward.

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.

Date	Infections # Cows	Fresh # Cows	Infected %
Mar-99	1	8	12.50%
Apr-99	0	5	0.00%
May-99	2	10	20.00%
Jun-99	7	16	43.75%
Jul-99	11	21	52.38%
Aug-99	4	15	26.67%
Sep-99	6	19	31.58%
Oct-99	2	7	28.57%
Nov-99	5	17	29.41%
Dec-99	5	17	29.41%
Jan-00	3	17	17.65%
Feb-00	7	23	30.43%
average			26.86%

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 — 2.36 bu., 4.22 cwt.
- Wheat, No.2 — 2.31 bu., 3.85 cwt.
- Barley, No.3 — 1.39 bu., 2.96 cwt.

- Oats, No.2 — 1.47 bu., 4.57 cwt.
- Soybeans, No.1 — 4.48 bu., 7.49 cwt.
- Ear Corn — 75.23 ton, 3.76 cwt.
- Alfalfa Hay — 120.00 ton, 6.0 cwt.
- Mixed Hay — 97.50 ton, 4.88 cwt.
- Timothy Hay — 105.00 ton, 5.25 cwt.

Blue Mold Hotline Ready

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — Blue mold on tobacco is showing up in various places in the county.

A tobacco blue mold hotline was recently established to inform growers about the disease.

Updates are provided by Bob Anderson, Lancaster County extension agent, or John Yocum, manager of the Penn State Southeast Research Laboratory in Landisville.

The number, toll-free, is (888) 632-8590.



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