

Controlling mastitis in wet conditions



Some tips from Dairy Australia's Countdown program that may assist with controlling clinical mastitis or high cell counts in your dairy herd during and after periods of wet weather.

Rain and flood events like the one our region has just experienced recently with ex-tropical cyclone Debbie, bring increased risk of mastitis and increased cell counts.

Many old treatment routines may no longer work in the face of increased risks. brought about through excess water and mud, milking machine issues and missed milkings, feed issues and stressed cows.

In wet or muddy periods there are 4 key steps:

1. Wash all teats on wet or muddy days. Dry every teat with one paper towel per cow before cups go on.
2. Strip cows every day to detect, treat and isolate clinical cases.
3. When cups come off, cover all teat skin with disinfectant.
4. Keep teats clean for an hour after the cows leave the shed using feeding and other routines to prevent cows lying down.

If elevated BMCCs or clinical cases persist

Look for problems with teat condition, machine function, or opportunities for bacteria to spread between cows. Seek professional advice, your local vet or milk processor can help. Milk cultures can determine the type of bacteria involved.

At the end of lactation

Follow all the steps outlined previously. Dry cow antibiotic treatment is recommended to remove infections and reduce mastitis risk at calving. Talk to your vet about blanket or selective Dry Cow Treatment and teat sealant. ■■

Countdown fact sheets

High cell counts and clinical mastitis won't fix themselves!

Details the 4 key steps for reducing mastitis risk in wet and muddy periods

Countdown Resource Pack

Mastitis Control in and after wet conditions - Resource pack introduction/contents

Clinical cases

reducing the headache

Cow parking and mastitis risk

Drying off: the key to a better run next lactation

Using teat sealant in your herd

High cell count cows

what are the options

Milking machines

wet, muddy conditions can create significant challenges for milking machine operation

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