

TOP FARMERS KNOW-HOW

MANAGE THE HERD FOR DRY-OFF



DRY-OFF GOALS

- Cure existing sub-clinical mastitis infections
- Prevent new mastitis infections through dry-period and next calving

HERD MANAGEMENT TIPS TO CURE INFECTIONS

- Sort tags and marking systems before dry-off
- Identify infected cows with herd test or RMT (Rapid Mastitis Test) — work with your vet to decide how to treat these cows
- Dry cows off when making 5 – 20 L / day
- Change diet (follow vet or consultant advice) to 'shut cows down' if heavy-milking
- Keep cows away from shed after dry-off for at least 7 days

HERD MANAGEMENT TIPS TO PREVENT NEW INFECTIONS

- Dry-off during fine weather
- Check for clinical mastitis — don't dry off cows if they have clinical mastitis
- Keep teat ends clean around drying off
 - Dry-off before cows go onto wet / muddy paddocks
 - Avoid hosing sheds / yards with cows nearby

- Consider staff training — get your vet involved
- Manage workload
 - Antibiotic OR sealant (1 tube per quarter): 25 cows/person/hour
 - Antibiotic & sealant: 15 cows/person/hour
- Stand cows on clean paddock with feed for 30 mins after dry-off

MANAGEMENT TIPS FOR CLINICAL CASES THAT ARISE DURING THE DRY PERIOD

- Consult your vet if the cow is sick ("black mastitis" can kill)
- Treat all dry period mastitis following vet advice
- Do not repeat dry cow therapy

REFERENCES:

1. DairyNZ SmartSAMB. (2020). Drying off TechNote 16. Dry off abruptly taking steps to reduce yield. www.dairynz.co.nz
2. DairyNZ SmartSAMB. (2020). Drying off TechNote 14. Decide dry cow management strategy. www.dairynz.co.nz

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