

MILK QUALITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

INTRODUCTION

This Programme outlines a monitoring and action plan for Milk Quality Management across all Dairy Holdings Limited (DHL) farms.

BACKGROUND

Analysis of milk quality performance of DHL farms has demonstrated a strong correlation between low bulk somatic cell counts and top production and financial performance.

It has also been apparent that poor milk quality results have been a good indicator of lack of attention to detail and problems in other facets of the farm operation.

Given this, DHL has implemented a Milk Quality Management Programme to identify issues as early as possible and ensure actions are taken before the profitability of a farm and the stakeholders is placed at risk. This is a partnership approach between DHL and the local DHL veterinary partner.

SELECTION OF FARMS

Problems in herds will be identified by using:

- Bulk Cell Counts (BTSCC) from the ten day production reports; and
- Clinical cases recorded by sharemilkers and farm managers, captured weekly on the DHL website.

The regular monitoring will be done by DHL staff and Vet staff will be informed at the appropriate time.

The selection criteria and follow-up actions are:

BTSCC:

Time Frame	Criteria	Action
All season	Daily BTSCC >400,000	Phone Contact
20 th Sept to 31 st October	10 day av BTSCC >200,000	Milk Quality Audit/Training
31 st October to season end	10 day av BTSCC >250,000	Milk Quality Audit/Training

Clinical Cases:

Time Frame	Level	Action
Before 30 th Sept	> 5% of cows that calved that week	Milk Quality Audit/Training
Before 30 th Sept	> 2% of cows calved >1 week	Milk Quality Audit/Training
After 30 th Sept	> 1% of cows in 1 week	Milk Quality Audit/Training
After 30 th Sept	> 3% of cows in 1 month	Milk Quality Audit/Training

Actions:

Phone Contact – This would entail a phone call to discuss what's happened on farm, possible causes and actions that can be taken. An Audit may follow.

FARM AUDITS AND TRAINING

The Milk Quality Audit/Training will entail the following:

1. Vet obtaining mastitis information from farm manager for analysis.
2. Vet performs shed visit and checks cows, milking machine and staff actions. If suitable have staff training/discussion.
3. Vet to write report. To be forwarded to farm manager, relevant staff and supervisor.
4. Meeting to discuss problems between vet, farm manager, all staff and supervisor.
5. Follow up by vet within two weeks, earlier if required.
6. Monitoring to continue.
7. Follow up by vet about one month after first follow up.

Where the appropriate actions are not completed on time, then performance management procedures may commence.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF DHL, SHAREMILKERS, CONTRACT MILKERS AND MANAGERS

As detailed above, all DHL farms will be expected to operate under the Milk Quality thresholds. All Sharemilkers, Managers and staff are expected to use their best endeavours to achieve these targets.

Where the local DHL veterinarian is asked by DHL to undertake a milk quality audit this will be regarded as external consultancy for the farm. The sharemilker, contract milker and farm owner will be required to pay their respective share of these costs in accordance with the Sharemilking or Contract Milking Agreement for that farm.

Subsequent staff training will only occur where this has been agreed to in advance by the farm employer. The staff training costs, where agreed, will be paid by the employer.

While Farm Managers will not be responsible for the payment of any audit or training costs, these will be noted and be taken into account by the Farm Supervisor when completing future staff performance appraisals.

SUMMARY

By improving Milk Quality the financial and production performance of all DHL farms should be improved to the mutual benefit of DHL, sharemilkers, contract milkers, managers and staff.

Any suggested improvements to this Policy would be welcome by the Supervisors or Veterinary partners at any time.

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