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HOW TO PRODUCE CLEAN MILK

By J. T. McNALLY, Dairy Instructor

ALTHOUGH every dairy farmer would like to be the possessor of soundly-constructed dairy premises and a complete set of up to date equipment, many are compelled to use buildings and equipment which fall far short of this ideal. Even with limited facilities however, the production of clean good-quality milk is neither difficult nor impossible, provided that the farmer applies the knowledge of dairy hygiene which is readily available to him.

Whatever else may be lacking there are two items which must be freely available if clean milk is to be produced. The first is an abundant supply of clean water at the dairy shed; the second is an ample supply of boiling water, and this calls for a 12-gallon copper or its equivalent as the minimum water-heating equipment for normal needs.

Other important requirements for satisfactory dairy hygiene are:

Suitable washtroughs.

A good drainage rack, preferably constructed from piping.

A supply of sound brushes with the necessary cleaning compounds such as washing soda or soda ash for the utensils and caustic soda for the milking machines.

If the farmer has the equipment mentioned above and follows a few basic rules he should have no difficulty in producing clean, high-quality milk. If his milk output is below standard in quality, study of the following rules should put him in a position to bring about an immediate improvement in the quality of the product.

1. All cows in the herd should be sound and healthy.

2. Should a cow develop symptoms of mastitis, apply penicillin treatment to the affected quarters immediately. Discard the milk from these quarters and do not use it until the infection is entirely eliminated. Even when the quarter and the milk appear normal, the milk should be discarded for at least five days after the last injection.

3. In order to detect mastitis infections before the disease becomes serious, test the foremilk from each teat. A strip cup fitted with a fine black gauze or a piece of black cloth over the cup helps in detecting clots or other abnormal milk conditions which provide evidence of udder trouble.

4. Always wash the udders and teats, using a clean cloth which has been moistened with a weak chlorine solution.

5. Do not feed strong-smelling food or allow the cows access to rank weed growth for at least two hours prior to milking.

6. After milking, wash and scald the udder cloth and hang it up to dry. Wash and scald strip cups and other utensils used.

7. Provide facilities at the dairy for washing the hands of the milkers, and practise dry milking if the milking machine is not in use.

8. The thorough cleaning and sterilising of dairy utensils is the most important factor in the production of high-quality milk.

Immediately after milking, rinse all utensils with ample cold or lukewarm water to remove the milk. Next wash thoroughly with warm water to which soda ash or some similar cleanser has been added, and after thoroughly cleansing both the inside and the outside of the utensils immerse them in boiling water or sterilise by steam if steam treatment is available.

All utensils should then be inverted on a draining rack situated in a dust-free portion of the building. Do not use cloths to
dry dairy utensils; use good quality brush-ware for washing up, and keep this brush-ware clean and sweet at all times.

9. The milking machines should be rinsed through with cold water immediately after milking and the rinsing should be continued until the water comes through clear. Next put through at least a gallon per unit of a solution in which caustic soda has been added to boiling water at the rate of a teaspoonful to each four gallons of water. Finally rinse well with clean boiling water, again using not less than a gallon to each unit, dismantle and allow to drain and dry.

In addition to the daily cleansing routine, dismantle the milking machine at least once a week and thoroughly clean and sterilise all parts. Flush out and sterilise the air-line as often as necessary.

10. When cans are returned from the factory, they should be emptied, thoroughly cleaned and sterilised and then placed on the rack to dry. All milk cans and other utensils should be kept in good repair and should be re-tinned or replaced when damaged.

11. Renew all rubber ware as required.

12. Sweep and wash down dairy premises daily and ensure that all manure is removed from the yards each day. Do all that is possible to abate the dust and mud nuisances.

13. Limewash all buildings inside and out at least twice a year. The use of tar is permissible and it is recommended that the lower three to four feet of the walls in the milk shed and bails should be treated with this substance.

14. Immediately after, or during milking, cool the milk as much as possible, preferably to a temperature of below 60° F. and keep it cool until it is transported to the factory. Do not mix the hot morning milk with milk that has been held overnight.

While awaiting transport, store the milk in a clean place and in a cool position out of the sun.

15. At all times protect dairy produce from contamination by flies, dust, animals or strong-smelling substances. Never expose it to direct sunlight. Finally keep your milking shed and dairy tidy, using the buildings exclusively for dairy purposes and not as general store rooms.

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