

QUALITY MILK PANEL

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Nearly eight years ago we moved into a side opening stall parlor that had low level pipelines, plenty of vacuum reserve and I think we followed fairly good milking practices. I thought this would solve all bacteria problems and really help the mastitis problem.

I think it did help some but every so often we had a bacteria problem. Not real high counts but persistently too high to suit most people. We spent money and hours cleaning and looking for the trouble, with the help of the sanitarians and quality control people.

Lab work didn't show us to have a high mastitis count nor were leucocytes excessively high.

At this time we were using a siphoning type iodine dispenser in the water line for washing the udder and a spray type system for sanitizing the inflations. These work good sometimes.

We replaced this with a positive pump type dispenser that works most of the time.

Also as a last resort, more or less, we started post dipping the teats with iodine. Within one month the bacteria count was down to a respectable level and for the last seven or eight months has been below 10,000 count. The leucocyte count runs below 500,000 most all the time.

This has been good as far as the production of high quality milk and this is what we are supposed to talk about.

But let's just take a little time to talk about something that gets to you and me real quick and that's the pocketbook.

In the last eight to ten months, we have had very few new cases of mastitis. I believe I could count them on one hand.

We also use a dry cow treatment program. This has been a big help. We still have some old cows that have reoccurrence problems but they are much less than ever before.

I had a little problem starting the teat dip program as the men thought it would take more time to milk. This wasn't the case. In fact now it takes less time to milk, because they seldom have a bad quarter to milk.

These men would give you an argument now if you tried to take the iodine out.

Of course this has given us a higher production rate and a much lower replacement rate. This I think we all like.

I heard one fellow say teat dipping was the greatest thing that had happened to dairymen since Pangola Grass came about. But who has any Pangola Grass now?