

TECHNOTE

24

Service teat spray units and review teat disinfectant

24.1

Clean and check teat spraying equipment.

Routine checks for the maintenance of teat spraying equipment are very basic and include:

- ensuring spray nozzles are not blocked or worn;
- checking filters for blockages in the spray line;
- inspecting tubes for any cracks or leaks. Stains on the floor underneath the spray line may alert users to a problem;
- examining each individual spray unit for dirt, damage or corrosion;
- ensuring that the container of stock solution of teat disinfectant does not contain sediment and is protected from environmental contamination.

Technote 7 discusses teat spray units.

24.2

Review teat disinfectant and method of application to be used.

It is important to encourage farmers to review regularly their satisfaction with the teat disinfectant they are using and discourage them from making a snap decision at the time of purchase of new stock.

The types of factors to consider include:

- Skin reactions on the hands and arms of milking staff. Hands should be wetted before being exposed to teat disinfectant, to reduce irritant properties. The type of disinfectant may need to be changed if it has caused dermatitis on hands of any staff in the farm dairy. Products should be reviewed when there are changes in staff. People who wear gloves will have less skin exposure to disinfectants.

Publications about testing of different teat disinfectants can be accessed by NMC members from the National Mastitis Council website: www.nmconline.org

- Reaction of teat skin to disinfectants. Teats should be regularly checked to ensure the skin is supple and in good condition. Corrective changes may involve altering the concentration of emollient or changing the product. It is very important to monitor changes whenever a new product is used.
- The concentration and/or choice of active ingredient for the herd situation. Published information on product efficacy is available from the product manufacturer.
- The method of application. If there is any problem with coverage of the teat, check the equipment and the operator technique. Consider changing the method of application (e.g. from auto teat spraying to manual teat spraying) if the problem continues.

Technote 9.1 describes how to assess teat skin condition.

Technote 7.5 discusses the use of emollients in the teat dip.

Guideline 7.7 describes how to check teat coverage.

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