



B.C. DAIRY TALK

Editor: Annette Moore

Changes in the Frequency of Bacterial Content Testing January 1, 1999

Dr. Merv Wetzstein
Health Management and Regulatory Unit Manager, BCMAF

The BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food has amended the Milk Industry Standards Regulations. Effective January 1, 1999 the frequency of testing for bacteria (Standard Plate Count), will change from twice a month to once a month. However, if the producer's milk shows a bacteria count in excess of 50,000 colony forming units (cfu) per millilitre, a further examination of the producer's milk will take place within 10 to 14 calendar days following that examination. Both tests will be considered official results and will be subject to infractions and penalties

Minimal impact on producer's is anticipated. However, there will be a reduced cost to the industry as the frequency of testing will be dramatically reduced. The focus of testing will now be on those with counts exceeding industry standards rather than all producers. This change has been made after consultation with industry.

The BC 1998 average SPC, an indicator of cleanliness, was the best across the west:

Prov	Approx. Nos of Producers	SPC cfu/ml (cleanliness)
BC	792	7,106
Alta	1060	11,184
Sask	439	15,538
Man	742	17,000
Ont	7800	13,000

To help achieve top quality milk the following general reminders are provided:

1. Check all washing and sanitizing of equipment to ensure proper function:
 - rinse cycle water: 35 - 43 °C,
 - washing cycle: proper strength (pH = 11-12, chlorine 50-80 ppm), temperature at start is 74°C and at end is >49 °C,
 - acid rinse: pH = 3, temperature is 35 - 43°C,
 - sanitize before *every* milking with either chlorine (200 ppm) or iodine (25 ppm),
 - milk filters are used once,
 - bulk tank spray head, diffuser is working,
 - bulk milk tank cools adequately:
 - * first milk is under 4 °C within 2 hours after milking
 - * blended milk is between 0 and 4 °C within 1 hour after milking.
2. Cow's are kept clean and dry
3. Maintain a good udder health program.

Any concerns or questions please contact your area Dairy Inspector or the author at (604) 556-3013.