Total Herd Screening for Milk Quality and Animal Health

Monthly or bimonthly screening for milk quality using the PortaSCC® milk test will track SCC levels and inform producers of the infection status of the herd.

Protocol for screening cows:

- Randomly select 10% of herd for screening
- Test a composite sample from each cow in the group
- Retest the individual quarters of cows with a composite sample >200,000 cells/mL
- Culture the samples >200,000 cells/mL for bacterial identification

Benefits and Uses of SCC Testing

Benefits of SCC screening:

- Improved animal health & milk quality
- Increased production & higher premiums
- Lower treatment costs

Uses of on-farm SCC test:

- Monitoring animals between monthly lab screenings
- Checking suspicious cows
- Testing clinical and treated cows
- Monthly herd health screening
- Checking animals prior to purchase and insemination
- Managing fresh heifers

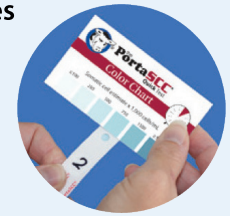
Sub-clinical mastitis detection with the PortaSCC® Milk Test

The PortaSCC® milk test estimates somatic cell counts right on the farm. It is used and proven worldwide.

The test is available in 2 versions:

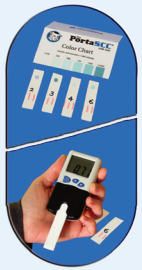
the PortaSCC® Quick Test

- **Results in 5 minutes**
- Best for testing a few samples at a time
- For use with color chart only



the PortaSCC® milk test

- **Results in 45 minutes**
- Ideal for testing large numbers of samples at once
- For use with a color chart **OR** digital reader (sold separately)
- High counts visible within minutes



Intended Use:
This test is intended solely for the estimation of somatic cell count in fresh milk within eight hours of milking. The test is not a laboratory reference method and should not be used as a diagnostic test.
Consult a veterinarian before starting any treatment.

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Milk Quality Management

Monitoring Somatic Cell Counts

On-Farm Testing Solutions

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The Role of Somatic cell count monitoring

Somatic cell counts are widely used to evaluate milk quality and as indicators of herd health. Intra-mammary infection (mastitis) is the major cause of elevated somatic cell counts in dairy cows. In order to assure quality milk supplies, producers are held to *maximum level standards* by milk processors and health officials for the milk in their bulk tanks.

These standards vary by country, but it is generally accepted that a SCC of 200,000 cells/mL or lower indicates high quality milk. Monitoring the somatic cell counts of individual cows at different points in the lactation cycle such as Freshening and Dry Off will improve herd health, increase milk production, and boost premiums given for quality milk. The following table shows useful guidelines for interpreting somatic cell test results in your individual cows.

Cell Count (cells/mL)	Interpretation of Results	Production Loss	Suggested Action Plan
100,000	Normal	2.5%	Monitor monthly
100,000 to 200,000	Possible weak udder infection	2.5% – 5%	Monitor monthly
200,000 to 500,000	Sub-clinical mastitis	5% – 7 %	Monitor weekly
500,000 to 1,000,000	Sub-clinical/ Clinical mastitis	8% – 10%	Retest within 3 days, culture and consult a veterinarian

Managing Fresh Cows

Every successful dairy has an effective fresh cow monitoring program because cows that freshen with a high SCC (>200,000/mL) appear to be more likely to experience clinical mastitis in early lactation. This rule applies to both fresh heifers and older cows. Cow-side testing is often the best way to check the animals or quarters during the 3 to 6 days after calving when somatic cell counts can be high. Early detection of mastitis may reduce the period of time bacteria is shed into the bulk tank and allows for rapid intervention including treatment, segregation, or culling.

Testing Clinical Cows

Abnormal conditions of the udder and milk are often signs of clinical mastitis. It is important for a dairy producer to find infections early to determine their cause and prevent spread of the microorganism involved. Once a test has shown a high SCC in a cow or quarter, a culture can be ordered and treatment recommended. The cow or quarter should be tested again to make sure that treatment was effective. Treatment of clinical mastitis is the most common reason for use of antibiotics on dairy farms.

Dry Cow Management

During the first two weeks of the dry period, the risk of new infection by contagious mastitis pathogens is greatest. Teat end exposure to environmental organisms is constant. 50% – 60% of all new infections during lactation are caused by environmental pathogen exposure during the dry period. Some producers treat all cows at dry off to control mastitis in their herd.

The following methods are often used in a Dry Cow Management Program:

- Dry treat all quarters
- Barrier dips/teat sealants
- Mastitis vaccination
- Nutritional supplements
- Separate dry cows from milking herd
- Maintain clean dry environment
- Test quarters at dry off and freshening

A low SCC post-calving usually indicates an effective dry cow management program.