

BEST PRACTICE

4 Basic Components

What are the four in-shed essentials that can make or break an efficient, high quality milk harvesting process and save thousands of dollars a year in energy, labour and animal health costs?

LINERS

MILK FILTERS

TUBING

TEAT SPRAYING

Together, these basic components have much more impact on milking performance than most farmers realise.

LINERS are one of the single biggest factors influencing milk production. Old, worn or ill-fitting liners can waste energy, cause grades and damage cows. Yet over 50% of NZ dairy farmers don't change them frequently enough (on average, changing every 4,900 milkings), yet expecting them to last nearly twice their actual lifespan.

That's nearly double the liner's effective lifetime, which is **2,500 MILKINGS**. It's like expecting the average cow to milk well for 20 years!

After 2,500 milkings, bacteria count dramatically increases, and milking performance is lost. Re-tensioning does not alleviate this - in fact it can cause slower milk-out or even increased risk of splitting.

With bigger herds and fewer dairies, milk filters likewise are an increasingly important consideration. Milk filtration systems are under more pressure than they used to be and farmers may not realize they have a problem until sediment rates rise and milk quality falls.

Most filters are not re-usable, and even after careful washing their performance will be compromised, to the point where they can burst. That's why best practice is to fit **A NEW MILK FILTER BEFORE EVERY MILKING**.

Best practice for milk tubing includes **REPLACING TUBES THAT TOUCH MILK ONCE A YEAR**. That's because the inside surface of the milk tube is much more important – and vulnerable – than the outside. It deteriorates quicker than the outside because it is attacked by milk fat and cleaning chemicals, so by the time the outside is perished the inside is likely to be causing quality problems.

When it comes to teat spraying, best results come not only from maintaining an appropriate teat spray programme throughout the season, but also from ensuring good coverage of the teat. And with mastitis estimated to cost an average of \$4,000 per farm, per year, the potential gains of effective teat spraying make sound commercial sense.

Having the right equipment for teat spraying gives **BETTER COVERAGE FOR LESS CHEMICAL USAGE**, and lower operating costs as well as reduced risk of bacterial infection and resultant grades.

For more information talk to your local rural retailer or visit www.dairybestpractice.co.nz.