

MILKING FRESH COWS

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this SOP is to ensure consistent milking standards and to harvest colostrum from fresh cows. Fresh Cows are cows that have recently calved and whose milk is not acceptable for human consumption for the first few post-partum days.

2. RESPONSIBILITY

All permanent, casual and student staff

3. MATERIALS

- 3.1 Milker Action Sheet
- 3.2 Milk pail
- 3.3 Lid
- 3.4 Rubber seal and hose
- 3.5 Box stall milking equipment (if necessary)
- 3.6 Treatment book
- 3.7 Oxytocin (if necessary)

4. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 Fresh cows should be milked after other cows without leg bands have been milked. They may have clinical or subclinical infections that could be passed on to other cows. On the 7th milking post-partum, they are tested and only when the tests are negative, can the blue band and fresh card be removed.
- 4.2 Fresh cows must not be left unattended during the milking procedure.
- 4.3 The Fresh cows could be in a box stall or on the milk line.
- 4.4 Fresh cows are identified with blue leg bands and orange FRESH card labels overhead. Refer to [DC-A-4D: Leg Band Color Legend](#).

5. PROCEDURES

- 5.1 Read all instructions on the Milker Action sheet. There is a list of fresh cows and harvested colostrum.
- 5.2 Check the Close Up Dry (CUD) cows and cows in the box stall (or tie stalls if space is limited) for newborn calves. Identify the cow with a fresh card and blue leg bands when there has been a calving.
- 5.3 If there is a new calving, add it to the Fresh Cow section of the Milker Action Sheet indicating the Cow name and ID number.
- 5.4 Ensure that all FRESH cows are identified as you milk; Replace any missing cards or leg bands. Refer to [DC-A-4D: Leg Band Color Legend](#).
- 5.5 Refer to the milker action sheet for instruction by the Technician and Dairy Manager as to when a FRESH cow's milk can be milked into the bulk tank. Refer to [DC-A-4D: Leg Band Color Legend](#).
- 5.6 If the cow is in a box stall: Assess her stability.
 - 5.6.1 If she is even slightly unstable, DO NOT try removing her from the box stall.
 - 5.6.2 If she is 100% capable of leaving the box stall:

- 5.6.2.1 Sprinkle limestone "grit" on the floor of the box stall. Once she is in a tie stall, attach the chain to her collar.
- 5.6.2.2 If the animal is stressed, it may be necessary to tie the halter as to prevent her from backing up and pulling the milker off.
- 5.6.2.3 If the animal is kicking, it may be necessary to crank her tail up.
- 5.7 Prepare cows for milking as per SOP [DC-605: Preparing Cows for Milking](#).
- 5.8 Milk the cow as per the condition-appropriate [SOP DC-609: Milking Pail Cows](#) or [DC-610: Milking Pail Cow with a Box Stall Milker](#).
- 5.9 If the cow is not letting her milk down:
 - 5.9.1 Gently massage the udder and reapply the milker.
 - 5.9.2 In some cases, it may be necessary to use oxytocin. Consult with a technician for instructions.
 - 5.9.2.1 Wait approximately 2 minutes for the Oxytocin to take effect before reinstalling the milker. Wear gloves when handling the hormone.
 - 5.9.2.2 Record Oxytocin administration in the treatment Book.
- 5.10 For the first milking after calving:
 - 5.10.1 A cow MUST NOT be milked out completely. (8-10 litre max.).
 - 5.10.2 When the flow on the milking unit falls to 1-1.5 litres/minute, press the STOP button on the milking unit panel. DO NOT try pulling the milker off to remove it; you may cause damage to the teats.
- 5.11 Post-dip cow as per SOP [DC-606 Post-Milking Procedure](#).
- 5.12 Hang the milker on the milk cart and identify it with a paper towel to prevent sharing with other cows.
- 5.13 Return the cow to the box stall as soon as possible after milking.
- 5.14 If harvesting colostrum, refer to SOP [DC-501: Colostrum Management](#).
- 5.15 Wash equipment and Milk House as per SOP [DC-602 Milk House Post-Milking Wash](#).

Document Status and Revision History

DATE	STATUS
6-Dec-2017	Version 01: MAC FACC approved
13-Sept-2020	Version 02: Sections 4.4, 5.4, 5.5: added "Refer to DC-A-4D: Leg Band"
10-Aug-2023	Version 03: MAC FACC approved