Mid Valley
Large Animal Service

MILK SAMPLE COLLECTION

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1. Label the tube & prepare to sample

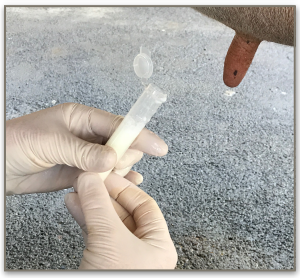
Affix filled out milk sample stickers or put cow's number and affected quarter if appropriate. Workers should be wearing clean gloves, udders should be free of shavings, manure, or debris, and the parlor should be clean.

2. Clean teats

Milk samples are ideally collected after milking, in which the teats have been thoroughly cleaned and prepped prior to machine attachment. After machine removal, use a gauze square damp with alcohol to clean each teat end vigorously. Use a new gauze square for each teat. First clean the front teats, then the back, closest to you. This prevents arms or hands brushing against already clean teat ends, which can cause sample contamination.

3. Forestrip

Each teat should be stripped one to two times before collection, noting any signs of mastitis, like flakes, clots, or painful quarters. If performing collection prior to milking, this step is especially important to clear the teat cistern of high cell count milk.



4. Sample collection

After forestripping, hold the sample tube at a 45 degree angle under the teat end, being careful not to touch the tube to the teat. Sample teats from back to front (the opposite order in which you cleaned them), taking one to two strips per teat for composite samples, or one to three strips per teat for mastitis samples. Do not overfill tubes, as during the freezing process they can break open and become contaminated.

5. Post dip & sample storage

If sampling after milking, post dip each teat according to the dairy's milking procedure, fully covering the teat end. Double check that each sample is labeled and immediately place milk samples in the freezer in an upright position to prevent leakage.