

Troubleshooting Cleaning Problems in Milking Systems

The two main sources of bacteria in raw milk are organisms transported from the environment into the milking system and mastitis organisms from within the udder. If the milking system and milk handling equipment are not properly cleaned and sanitized, bacteria deposited may multiply and become a major source of raw milk contamination. Cleaning of milk handling equipment is accomplished by a combination of chemical, thermal and physical processes. A cleaning failure can result from a failure in any one of these processes. Bacterial growth may occur during milking and can be a significant concern as milking time increases.

This troubleshooting guide is designed to help dairy producers and service personnel identify sources of microbial contamination and resolve high bacteria count problems in raw milk. The methods presented in this guide deal primarily with the diagnosis of problems relating to pre-milking cow hygiene and milking equipment sanitation. Methods for diagnosis and treatment of mastitis problems are covered in greater detail in other NMC publications.

When elevated bacterial counts are encountered, some or all of the procedures outlined in this guide may be used. The process begins with simple routine testing. The information gained from interpretation of initial results can be used to proceed in a logical fashion toward more complex and comprehensive testing.

The guidelines include one series of recording forms that can be used as an aid in diagnosis and problem solving. Additional forms can also be purchased separately.

The cost for the booklet is \$12.95 for members (\$15.95 for non-members) plus shipping and handling. Additional forms (in packages of 25) cost \$9.95 per package (\$11.95 for non-members).

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