

# Footbaths for the Prevention and Control of Digital Dermatitis

Information Document



Each case of digital dermatitis costs around \$170  
Better implement interventions quickly!

**170\$**

## Digital dermatitis ....

It is a highly contagious disease that is difficult to control.

Digital dermatitis is a contagious disease caused by bacteria called treponemes.

The use of footbaths is a sound strategy to control this disease in your herd although it is not a magic bullet!

## FOR A PREVALENCE OF AROUND 20%

WE SUGGEST A FOOTBATH FREQUENCY OF:  
**4 TIMES PER WEEK**

Examples: 2 times per day for 2 days / 1 time per day for 4 days, etc.



If the prevalence of digital dermatitis is **HIGHER THAN 20%** and/or if the cleanliness score of feet and leg is high (Score of **3** and **4**)



If the prevalence of digital dermatitis is **LESS THAN 10%**

Score **1**



The feet and legs are clean, with little or no manure on the feet

Score **2**



The feet and legs are slightly dirty, with some manure on the lower legs

Score **3**



The feet and legs are dirty, with plaques of manure on the feet extending up to the hocks

Score **4**



The feet and legs are very dirty, with a lot of dried layers of manure on the feet and higher than the hocks

Photo credit: From the Cow Cleanliness Assessment sheet. Canadian Bovine Mastitis Research Network. September 2010.



Footbaths are **NOT TREATMENTS**, they are a preventive measure. Your veterinarian and your hoof trimmer will help you to choose the appropriate products for treating the active lesions and for establishing a prevention protocol using footbaths

Here are the basic principles you need to follow to improve your chances of achieving better control of digital dermatitis in your herd

### The protocol

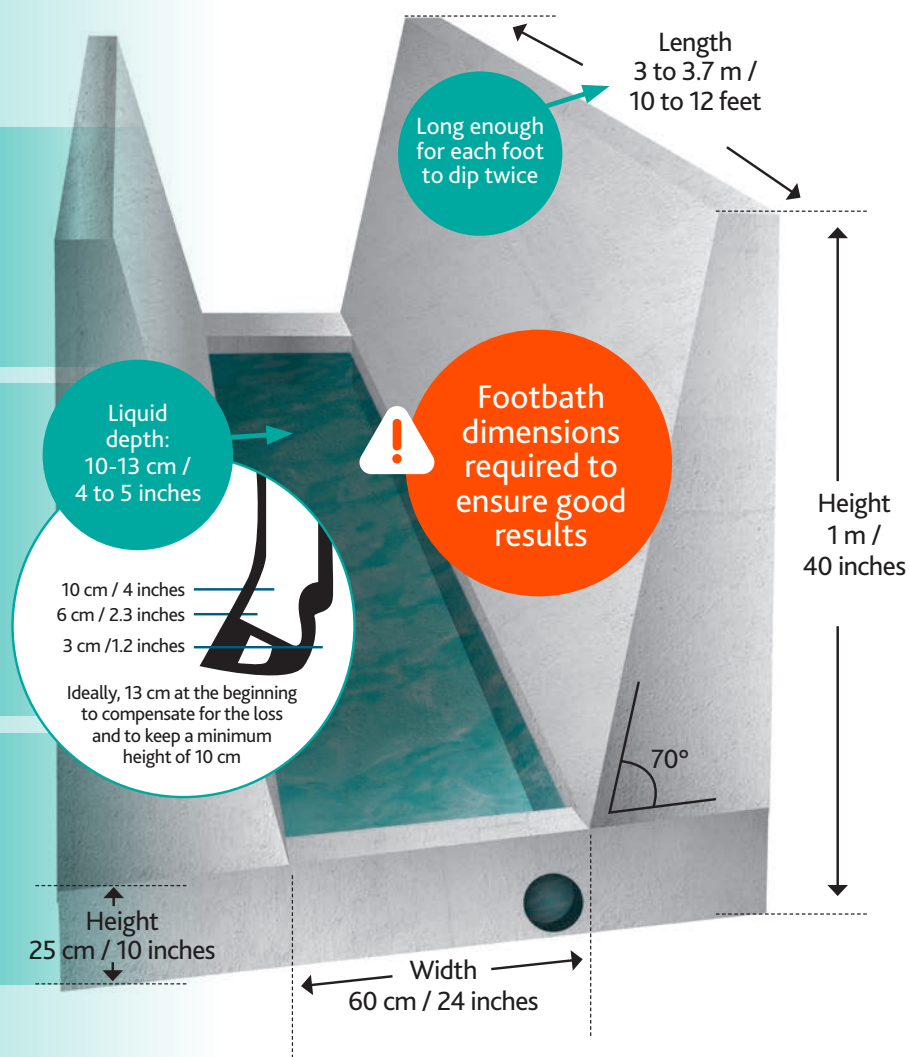
- Establish a prevention protocol in cooperation with your veterinarian and your hoof trimmer
- Reassess your protocol regularly and do not forget to include the dry cows and the heifers!

### We replace the footbath solution

- At every 150 to 200 passages or according to the manufacturer recommendations if available
- Every day if the maximum number of passages is not reached during a single sequence
- The footbath is cleaned between changes because it can be a source of contagion
- Make sure there is a source of water and a drain in the surrounding area

### The footbath is placed

- Far from the exit of the milking parlour or robot
- Careful not to slow down cows' flow or obstruct the exit of the cows from the robot
- In an alleyway at the end of the rows of stalls or of the barn



### We fill up the footbath with

- 5% copper sulfate
- 3% acidified copper sulfate (pH 4)
- 5-10% zinc sulfate
- 1% thymol
- 2-5% formalin

### Calculation of the concentration

Footbath volume:

$$\text{Length (cm)} \times \text{Width (cm)} \times \text{Depth of liquid (cm)} = X \text{ cm}^3 / 1000 = X \text{ litres}$$

*E.g.: 310 cm X 60 cm X 11 cm = 208,010 cm<sup>3</sup> = 208 L*

**Amount to be added to a 200 L footbath according to the concentration of the product:**

Solid ingredient at X%:

- 3% = 6 kg
- 5% = 10 kg
- 10% = 20 kg

Liquid ingredient at X%:

- 1% = 2 litres
- 2% = 4 litres
- 5% = 10 litres



For approved commercial footbath products, the instructions from the claim label must be followed thoroughly