



Composition of each milk pickup

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The plan to provide analysis for each milk pickup has been in the works for some time now with one goal in mind: providing you with quick access to key information. Since January 1, 2016, this plan has become a reality. You now have access to the composition of each milk pickup to help you better manage your farm. Here are a few guidelines to help you make the most of this crucial information, which is now at your disposal.

Milk composition and profitability

As you know, fat and protein levels have a direct impact on farm revenue. The genetic potential of your herd is a key factor in ensuring that your fat and protein contents meet your expectations. Check your Genetic Herd Inventory Report for more information. All herds enrolled in milk recording receive this report up to three times a year, essentially every time new bull proofs are released.

Feeding is another key factor that influences milk composition, and one that you can act on rapidly. Ration composition, feeding sequence and feed bunk management must all be well adjusted for optimal results. Because feeding is also a major component of production

Milk composition for VG Farm

DATE	FAT	PROTEIN	Urea (mg N/dL)
Estimated average	4.07	3.34	-
January 1	4.14	3.34	15.4
January 3	4.10	3.36	17.1
January 5	4.12	3.40	14.4
January 7	4.20	3.35	15.9
January 9	4.08	3.34	15.4
January 11	4.03	3.29	13.8
January 13	4.01	3.30	13.9
January 15	3.97	3.28	11.3
January 17	4.09	3.30	10.8
January 19	4.11	3.36	12.5
January 21	4.06	3.35	12.1
January 23	4.00	3.34	11.5
January 25	4.06	3.39	12.4

costs, considerable financial efforts are directed towards maintaining good fat and protein levels. Thanks to the milk analysis results for all tanks, you will now be able to see if the implemented changes have been effective.

Let's look at the results of QC Farm, presented in Table 1. It is clear that fat content did not get off to a very good start in January. Although we don't know what changes were made after January 11, we can see that the fat content increased by 0.55 kg/hL in only 12 days. With the price of fat around

\$10/kg, the milk shipped on January 23 was worth \$5.50/hL more than the milk shipped on January 11. However, maintaining this improvement might be a challenge as this herd's results seem to show a lack of stability.

Table 1 also shows that protein content is holding steady, slightly above the provincial average. Remember that fat and protein are synthesized independently, which means their levels vary independently from one another, depending on the nutrients available in the mammary gland.

Milk urea and waste

Nowadays, strict resource management is a must. Cutting just anywhere is certainly not the solution, but avoiding waste is. Cows need protein, even more so when they have a high protein test. It is important to meet your herd's needs at all times. Milk urea is an excellent indicator of wasted protein, and it seems that the people at VG Farm (Table 2) were well aware of that fact. Without knowing specifically what changes they implemented around January 10, we can observe that the herd certainly responded well, and the producers are without a doubt pleased with the improved results.

Herd somatic cell count under scrutiny

Somatic cell count (SCC) varies from

one bulk tank to another, and the range is even greater in herds with high SCC. Over the past few years, we've seen some surprising fluctuations in the weekly results, and we should expect to see more in the future. It is important to be vigilant and have the latest SCC report for individual cows close at hand to quickly identify the problem cow or cows. Judging from Table 3, WatchOut Farm is unlikely to be receiving quality premiums anytime soon.

Effective management requires accurate information

Good managers rely on both their intuition and their ability to make the best possible use of the information that is available to them. Analyses on every milk pickup will definitely shorten the reaction time when the situation calls for action. It will also be easier to evaluate the cows' response to any changes in herd management. Keeping track of feeding changes will now be even more important. Many producers are already keeping careful records, and this practice is most certainly encouraged. Having accurate information makes it easier to establish a connection between the results and a specific change. For example, knowing that a change in silage or the addition of a supplement was made around the middle of the month is not as helpful as knowing that the change occurred on the tenth of the month.

Bulk tank somatic cell count for WatchOut Farm

DATE	RESULT
January 24, 2016	323
January 22, 2016	326
January 20, 2016	531
January 18, 2016	419
January 16, 2016	302
January 14, 2016	256
January 12, 2016	313
January 10, 2016	283
January 8, 2016	453
January 4, 2016	312
January 2, 2016	281
December 27, 2015	309

Bulk tank fat and protein contents for QC Farm

DATE	FAT	PROTEIN
Estimated average	4.03	3.48
January 1	3.89	3.44
January 3	3.93	3.45
January 5	4.16	3.53
January 9	3.86	3.49
January 11	3.80	3.47
January 15	4.04	3.52
January 17	4.05	3.46
January 21	4.22	3.48
January 23	4.35	3.49