



Collecting milk samples for bacteriology

Bacteriology is an essential part of understanding the causes of mastitis in your herd. Quarter samples are much more useful than whole cow samples. Correct (aseptic) sampling technique must be followed to get useful information from the results. Contaminated samples are difficult to interpret and a waste of your time and money!

Equipment required:

- Disposable gloves
- CMT paddle and fluid
- Cotton wool
- Surgical spirit
- Sterile, screw lid milk pots
- Waterproof marker

Method:

1. If the udder and teats are very dirty, wash *and dry* first.
2. Pre-dip with quick-acting disinfectant, leave for 20-30 seconds and dry wipe with clean paper towel.
3. Use the CMT kit to identify quarters to sample.
4. Thoroughly scrub the teat end with surgical spirit-soaked cotton wool and allow to dry.
5. Discard 4 or 5 squirts of milk.
6. Repeat steps 3 and 4 until the teat end is spotless and the cotton wool comes away clean.
7. Holding the pot as horizontally as possible, collect 2 or 3 squirts of milk. Do not try to fill the pot – 5ml is enough for testing.
8. Label with cow ID, quarter and date.