



From the desk of Dr. Michelle Borek-Stine  
July 1st, 2016

Welcome July and Happy Independence Day. Over the past two months I have had ample opportunity to reflect on this newsletter. As I sit watching the American flag wave out my window, with my two beautiful blessings sleeping next to me, the fact that we live in a great country resonates in my mind. A country full of opportunity. Yet with that opportunity, there are significant struggles and obstacles along the way to fulfilling the American Dream. This month I want to discuss teamwork and togetherness as it will help you reach your farm and milk quality goals.

Reading the milk check last month was not exactly sunshine and rainbows. Especially with the heat coming on, any decrease in volume is only going to hurt the pocket that much more. A high P.I. or S.P.C. count can make it worse. Yes, sometimes you know why the counts were high, others you may not have a clue. This is where working with your team will take some of the stress off you, (that is very important) and may also reveal other possibilities. Learning is never over and no one knows it all. Who is on your team? You, employees or family, milk hauler, veterinarian, equipment servicer, Co-op field representative and DHIA tester are all included in helping you produce and sell your human food product. Use these people! Many are just a phone call away.

DHIA and your Co-op Representatives are valuable resources that you can learn from. They have witnessed many situations and often can find the source of the problem rather quickly. If you know you are having a problem call them right away, they will work with you. One bad day or one bad test does not define your product. I had the opportunity to work with Sarah Michalek, MMPA representative and Dr. Tom's daughter. Just a few hours with her and we solved one farm's high SPC problem. Just by knowing where to look, the entire farm team now can take steps to clean those hard to reach elbows that trap bacteria. Not seen as just the inspector, Sarah is a valued resource to her farms.

Contagious mastitis, Strept ag, Staph aureus, Prototheca are money pits. Do not get caught off guard. There are less expensive tests than culturing to stay on top of things. Use them on a regular basis --weekly, monthly or quarterly. Run specials on your tanks, screening for contagious bacteria. Screen all new animals or fresh animals with the California mastitis test (CMT). If she is positive, take a milk culture before sending her into the main herd. Cultures can be run at the clinic with results in less than 24 hours with certain bacteria. High somatic cell count cows in smaller tanks can cause your SCC count to skyrocket and you may lose your bonus. DHIA testing is very beneficial in monitoring your herd's mastitis and subclinical mastitis infection rate. It is best to run back to back

monthly tests for more accurate new infection rates. Cows above 250,000 and milk appears normal are considered subclinically infected. These animals are losing production daily. Identifying who, from what group and how much can increase your profitability greatly for a fraction of the cost of culturing all the animals.

Finally, milking procedure and equipment monitoring are ways to either catch problems as they occur or identify potential errors. Recently Thumb Vet Services has purchased 3 Vadia test units. Some of you may have been part of the MSU study. These units measure pulsation and vacuum on the milking unit at the level of the teat and claw. We have the capability of identifying issues right on the farm and at the cow level. In addition to running these units, it is my goal to evaluate milking procedure, teat ends, and make cow side corrections where necessary. With this information we can identify malfunctioning units and systems and work with your equipment servicer. We can make these routine visits like a herd health visit: a milking health visit. These visits can be done for any shift as well. The data created by the Vadia can be put into report form. From my experience, employees are excited to see their performance. It is simply another tool in our toolbox to encourage employee engagement and teamwork.

They say it takes a village to raise a child, my husband and I are so very blessed to be part of this village. Thank you to all who have thought of us, prayed for us and helped us. Courtney and Alice are very loved. That being said, please take care of yourselves as your health is the most important thing. Without it, you cannot take care of others or your beloved animals. God Bless You and God Bless America.

#### Drop Ship news!

Just a reminder to be thorough when ordering meds and supplies from drop ship. We can only order for you what we understand that you need. Manufacture and product description off of the package are helpful information to ensure we get to you what you want to receive. This is very important with supplies such as ear tags, tagging pliers, dosing guns, calf pullers etc. We make errors also and will gladly make right order errors of ours. Other returns will only receive credit if we are able to return the item to our supplier/s or use the item within the clinic.

Thanks for understanding!