

Five Things You May Not Have Known About Mastitis

EXPERTS TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT ONE OF DAIRY'S MOST PROFIT-DRAINING CHALLENGES

Mastitis accounts for 26% of the total cost of all dairy cow diseases and has losses twice as high as those stemming from infertility or reproductive issues.¹ It was therefore the subject of a webinar hosted by Phibro Animal Health Corporation called “Dairy’s Most Profit-Draining Challenges: Mastitis.” During this free webinar, which is available for download on [Phibro Academy](#), dairy experts from the University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources and from Phibro Animal Health Corporation shared insights to help producers better identify, manage and treat this common disease.

Takeaways from Phibro’s “Dairy’s Most Profit-Draining Challenges: Mastitis” Webinar

1. Elevated somatic cell count (SCC) is an indication of mastitis risk.

A high SCC is associated with decreased milk production and poorer milk quality. It can also provide producers with an early warning that mammary gland inflammation, or mastitis, might be an issue. “Often, a dairy with a higher number of mastitis cases also has a high somatic cell count,” says Dr. Rodrigo Souza, Senior Technical Service Manager, Phibro Animal Health. “Producers should take this as a sign that they may not be controlling exposure to mastitis-causing pathogens and supporting a strong immune system.”

2. Management practices matter.

Proper milking procedures, regular maintenance and the use of clean milking equipment limit a cow’s exposure to contagious mastitis-causing pathogens. “It’s also important to keep good records, have effective treatment protocols in place and practice effective dry cow management,” says Dr. Souza. “It’s easy to get caught up in the daily routine, so it can be helpful to bring in external consultants to help spot potential environmental or procedural problems.

Sometimes, small changes can make a big difference in terms of mastitis prevention.”

3. A strong immune system provides a great defense.

Feeding OmniGen® nutritional specialty product has been proven to help improve immune function. Improved immune function can lead to reduced incidence of mastitis by supporting the immune response to mastitis-causing bacteria, thereby helping improve milk quality. Cows fed immune modulators like OmniGen have been shown to have a stronger immune response to mastitis and other diseases. “I recommend feeding OmniGen when a high somatic cell count is present because this high somatic cell count may indicate subclinical mastitis,” advises Dr. Souza. “Feeding OmniGen can really help in modulating the cow’s immune response and that immune response can help in reducing somatic cell count when that is a problem.”

4. Environmental factors and weather can also set the stage for mastitis.

“Cows don’t do very well with high humidity, and where we see high humidity levels, we tend to see more cases of mastitis,” says Dr. Souza. “On the flip side, high SCC and mastitis also tend to spike in periods of prolonged heat stress. Both

humidity and heat cause the cow to expend extra energy combatting these environmental extremes, leaving her less able to fight off external pathogens and infection.”

5. Mastitis is the dairy’ industry’s most costly disease, and it impacts a producer in many ways.

“Mastitis can cost a producer \$326 per cow per case of mastitis,”¹ warns Dr. Souza. “In addition

to this significant economic impact, it also decreases milk quality and product shelf life, increases the use of expensive antibiotic treatments and impacts cow health and animal welfare.”

To learn more about how you can help identify and manage mastitis, contact your local dairy advisor or visit www.theOmniGenDifference.com

¹ Nickerson et al., 2013. PAHC Reference OGO10413. Available upon request.