

## Rules for clean hand-milking

*Milking cows by hand can be as hygienic and satisfactory as milking machines and is often more gentle to the udder. However, precautions must be taken to get the healthiest milk. If the correct milking procedures are followed, the cows can give more milk and if you are selling your milk, there will always be a ready buyer.*

### Tips on how to get the cleanest milk when milking by hand

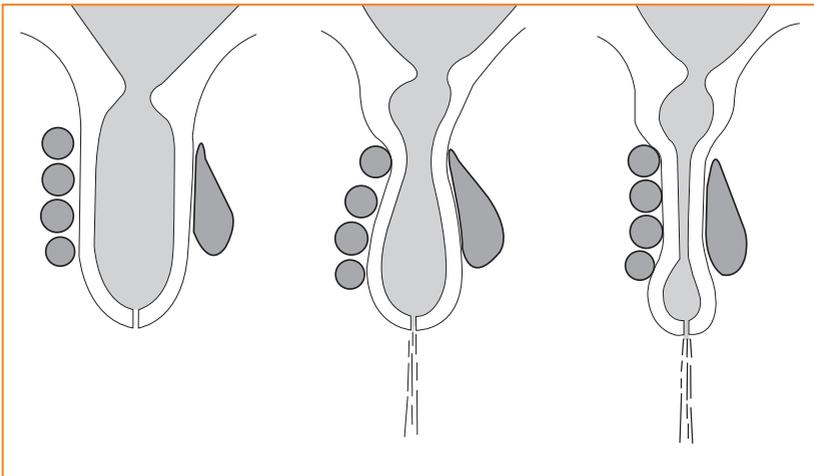
- 1** The persons milking the cows should be clean, healthy and free of infectious diseases.
- 2** Keep the cows free of dirt. Prevent their hindquarters from becoming matted with manure and mud.
- 3** Groom the cows regularly to remove loose hair and dirt because these can fall into the pail during milking.
- 4** Detect and treat all cows showing signs of udder infection.



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- 5** Tie the cow's hind legs so that the tail does not swish around.
- 6** Do not use a cloth to clean the udder and teats because it is unhygienic and can cause problems such as mastitis.
- 7** Wash your hands before milking. Your hands should be moist but not dripping wet.
- 8** Do not dip your hands into the milk because this can spread diseases.
- 9** Pour the milk into a container through a fine metal gauze strainer or muslin. Tie the muslin so that dirt cannot bypass it.
- 10** Keep the milk refrigerated or in a cool place after milking.



**This diagram shows the action of the hand and how milk is drawn out of the teats during milking**

## Follow these rules on the correct procedures of milking by hand

- ✓ Milking should be done at regular times, if possible by the same person and at intervals of 12 hours.
- ✓ Avoid noise in the dairy because it will have a negative influence on the release of milk.
- ✓ Get proper training in the correct procedures and have patience with the cows.
- ✓ Milk cows with dry hands and never use milk to lubricate the cow's teats. Use a milking salve if needed.
- ✓ Always test the first milk to come out for mastitis (ask your agricultural extension officer how to do this).
- ✓ Wash dirty udders and teats by hand under running water. If they are clean, massage the udders for about 1 minute.
- ✓ Complete milking in 5 to 7 minutes because the cow will stop giving milk after that.
- ✓ After milking, if the cow's calf does not suckle, use a teat dip to prevent mastitis.
- ✓ Supervise the milking process and maintain the same routine in every milking. This will get the cows used to the process and will also reduce stress, which will result in a successful dairy operation.

Adapted from "Ten golden rules for milking by hand" and "Simple rules for clean milk" in *Land*, July and January 1997

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