

MILKING AND MASTITIS MANAGEMENT

On-farm Coach – Session 3

SESSION 3: CUPS OFF (MUST DO)

Instructions:

Complete “Cups off” online module on Enlight.

Print this page for use during the third on-farm coaching session – use the below to as a guide for your coaching.

Preparing the dairy and bringing the cows in

- Supervise employee undertaking tasks from previous on-farm coaching sessions (as appropriate while also learning about cup removal).

How the cups work

- Talk employee through how milk is extracted from a cow and each of the important parts of a milking cluster and what they do, including:
 - The parts of the cups (shell and liners)
 - The claw bowl
 - The long milk tube
 - The claw air admission hole
 - The vacuum release button (if present)

Knowing when cups are ready to be removed

- Demonstrate how to tell if a cow has finished milking, including:
 - Looking for a collapsed/slack udder
 - Low flow in the claw bowl.
- Ask the employee to observe cows being milked and point out when they think the cups are ready to be removed based on the signs above.

Removing the cups

- Demonstrate correct cup removal technique including kinking of long milk tube. *
- Supervise employee removing cups from at least 20 cows. Provide feedback as required.
- Demonstrate what happens (flooding of the claw bowl) when you place a finger over the air admission hole.
- If Automatic Cup Removers (ACRs) are fitted, describe when it may be appropriate to override the system to remove cups and demonstrate this process.

Bringing it all together – cups off and post-milking teat disinfection

- Demonstrate combining correct cups off procedure with application of post-milking teat disinfection (and check coverage).
- Supervise combining correct cups off procedure with application of post-milking teat disinfection (and check coverage) on at least 5 cows.

*Do not use the vacuum release button as the disruption of air flow may cause mastitis.

SESSION 3: COACHING QUESTIONS (OPTIONAL)

The following are some suggested discussion points from the online module to have with your employee.

Questions	Suggested answers
What is the purpose of the air admission hole?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To assist with the smooth flow of milk away from the claw bowl• When the vacuum is cut off, the vacuum can dissipate, and the cups fall away easily
What happens if the air admission hole is blocked, and how do you fix it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Claw bowl fills up with milk (floods)• Cow continues to be milked but not as effectively• Cups do not fall away when vacuum is broken• Need to wipe clean the air admission hole or use a tool to clear it.
What is the purpose of the vacuum release button? Why can't it be used for breaking the vacuum to remove the cups?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To shut off the vacuum if a cow kicks her cups off• This stops contamination being sucked into the milk line• If you use the vacuum release button to remove cups a burst of air rushes in• This air is shot up towards the teat (called an impact) and can carry bacteria up through the teat canal into the udder• Impacts and using the vacuum release button is high risk for mastitis
Why do you need to wait until the cups fall away from the cow before taking the cups off?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not want to pull cups off the cow before vacuum broken fully• Air rushing into the cups at liner mouthpiece can also cause impacts• Also causes discomfort for the cow
How can you tell when a cow has finished milking?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observe collapsing of back quarters (wrinkled)• Low milk flow into the claw bowl
Why is it important for dairy staff to allow cows to calmly leave the dairy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Want the cows to leave quietly to avoid mud and manure flicking on to teats• We also want the cows to have a positive and predictable milking experience• A negative experience in the dairy can make cows nervous and affect milk let down

Starting to learn the next task – Cups On – should only occur when the employee is demonstrating skills in cups off and post-milking teat disinfection