



Quality Watch

By Gary Trimmer

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Effective and Efficient Use of Cleaners and Sanitizers

Over the past six months, the price of cleaners and sanitizers has increased significantly. Both of our suppliers, A & L Laboratories, Inc. and Ecolab, have incurred significant price increases for raw materials used to manufacture cleaners, sanitizers and teat dips. Ingredients used in their products, such as glycerin, phosphoric acid and phosphates, have doubled or more in price over the previous six months. In 2007, iodine prices also increased significantly.

With the increased costs, it makes sense to use these products as efficiently as possible, yet it is critical to maintain proper concentrations of cleaners and sanitizers in

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wash solutions to ensure all equipment is cleaned properly. While it may be tempting to reduce the amount of cleaners used, that's not an option, because it would result in cleaning problems and reduced milk quality.

MMPA Member Representatives are trained to test your water to determine chemical concentrations to ensure you are using the correct amounts of cleaner and sanitizer for your particular set-up and water type. For instance, hard water generally requires a greater amount of cleaner than soft water does. With a simple test, your Member Representative can determine the amount of cleaners and sanitizers needed to effectively clean your milking equipment. In addition, they can determine the proper water volume and temperature. I would encourage you to contact your MMPA Member Representative, A & L Laboratories, Inc. representative or Ecolab representative, to make sure you are using the proper amount of cleaners and sanitizers.

Milk Shipments South

Maintaining clean milking equipment is especially important now that MMPA is preparing to market milk to Florida and other

southern states. To ensure the milk reaches these far away markets in saleable condition, we ask all farms to check bulk tank cooling to make sure the tanks are cooled to 35 degrees. When adjusting bulk milk thermostats, it is important to make sure the milk does not freeze as this can cause quality problems.

Last year, we met our goal of zero rejected loads for temperature or poor quality on milk shipments to southern markets. We want to be sure we reach that goal again, and every MMPA producer plays a part in making that possible. Marketing milk to the southern U.S. dairy plants generates additional income for MMPA members. Those additional sales also reduce the amount of milk that must be processed at MMPA's Ovid and Constantine plants, which are at capacity most days of the month.