

MILK QUALITY

Waupun Veterinary Services, LLC - Your Progressive Dairy Partner since 1958

Bedding Quality has Impact on Milk Quality

Bedding quality has a huge impact on milk quality. Teat end exposure of bacteria is the primary cause of mastitis. Clean bedding reduces teat end exposure and the probability of mastitis. WVS has a bedding lab that can evaluate and compare different forms of bedding for cattle.

The WVS Bedding Lab ran over 500 samples in the year 2023. All bedding, sand, or solids is not created equal. The lab can help to determine how good your bedding is. Using bedding cultures can help benchmark a farm's bedding program over time. It can identify bottlenecks and track change and progress.

Dr. Monty and Dr. Nick were recently on a podcast called, "The Dairy Signal," for the Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin.

Monty and Nick discussed solids vs. sand bedding. The podcast has good information on bedding and also talks about the WVS Bedding Lab. You can listen to the podcast by visiting,

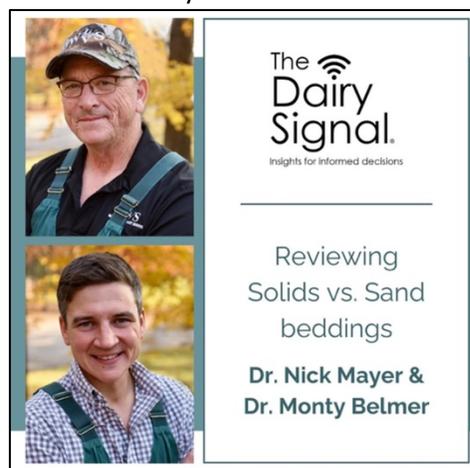
<https://mediasiteconnect.com/site/pdpw-dairy-signal/watch/cb64b49b-5aba-4908-4f44-08dc1b6a966f>

The purpose of bedding cultures is to determine the total bacterial numbers in the sample, the number of harmful bacteria present in the bedding sample, the dry

matter of the bedding sample, and the amount of organic matter in the bedding sample.

To submit samples, 10-12 samples should be collected from the back 2 feet of several stalls per pen and placed in a clean pail. The sample should be thoroughly mixed, and two cups should be put into a Ziplock bag. The sample should be immediately put on ice or placed in a freezer before shipping to the lab.

Visit www.waupunvet.com, click on "lab" and you will find the submission form for the bedding lab. Bedding cultures are set up on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.



Listen to Dr. Monty and Dr. Nick discuss beddings on the podcast "The Dairy Signal."

Target Goals for Bedding Cultures

	<u>Sand Bedding</u>	<u>Organic Bedding</u>
Dry matter	95-96%	33-50%
Organic matter	1-2%	
Gram negatives	< 5,000 cfu/gram	< 10,000 cfu/gram
Coliforms	< 5,000 cfu/gram	< 5,000 cfu/gram
Klebsiella	< 5,000 cfu/gram	< 5,000 cfu/gram
Strep	< 5,000 cfu/gram	< 10,000 cfu/gram

Bedding cultures can help evaluate the sand from different pits. They can also help evaluate how good your separator is working and how well the bedding is being stored. Routine bedding cultures should be a regular part of your milk quality program.



Bedding, Milk Quality

Clean bedding is of utmost importance on the farm. The WVS Bedding Lab can evaluate your bedding and compare different types of inorganic and organic bedding. The process to evaluate the bedding in the lab includes several different steps depending upon the type of sample. At left lab technician Jenny Edmunds is plating samples. On right she is weighing out a sample. For more information, contact the clinic.



Revisiting the Importance of Tail Trimming

Several months ago we had an article in the newsletter about tail trimming. Tail switch trimming may seem like a boring subject but it can have a huge impact on cow cleanliness. Most of us agree that tail docking is better but unfortunately milk processors will not allow this.

Pictured at right are two cows, one with a trimmed tail and one without. This shows the difference in cleanliness. Properly trimmed tails lead to cleaner cows.

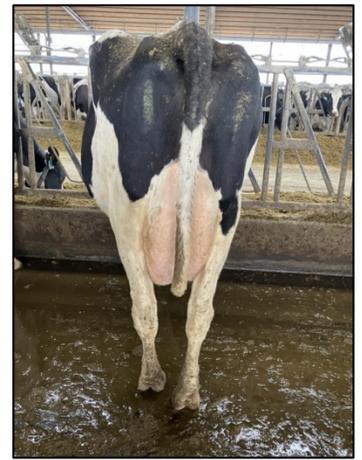
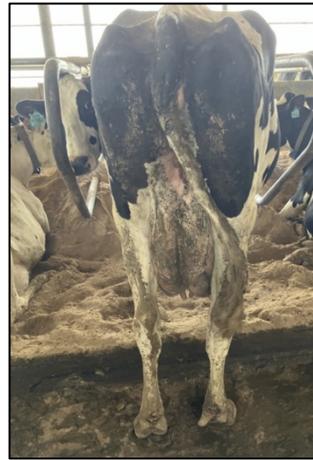
The bottom right diagram is a review of how to properly trim a tail.

Devices used for trimming tails are:

1. Scissors
2. Livestock shears
3. Tailwell 2 tail trimmer-cordless drill attachment. (Sand seems to wreck these.)
4. Cattle clippers – cordless or corded.

Cows in a clean environment will produce clean milk. Trimming the tail hair will provide cleaner cows and a cleaner environment for the milkers.

For more information about the milk quality services WVS offers, please contact the office to schedule an appointment with one of our doctors. You can also visit, www.waupunvet.com to read more milk quality newsletters.



How to Properly Trim a Cow's Tail

The cow's tail. Before starting the tail trimming process, it is important to recognize the location of the end of the tailbone (base of the tail) to avoid injuries. Once there is familiarity with the base of the tail, you can continue with the tail trough (**Figure 2**).

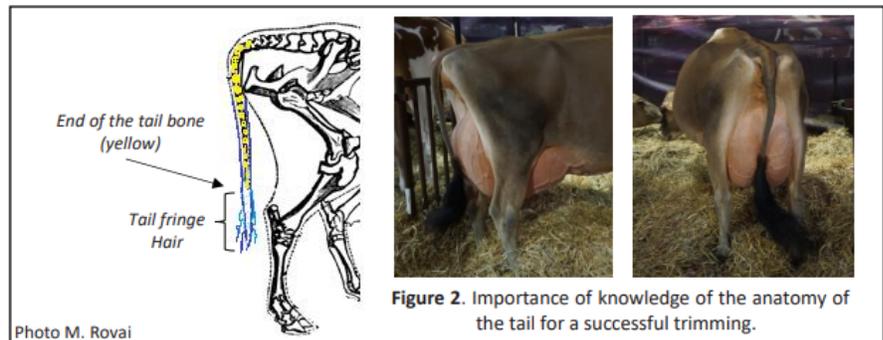


Photo M. Rovai

Figure 2. Importance of knowledge of the anatomy of the tail for a successful trimming.

The presence of a dirty tail can also compromise the milking process. It is not rare to observe that cows with long hair and accumulated manure in their tail fringe slow down the milking routine (**Figure 3**). Milkers will need to avert the tail to reach teats for pre-dipping, stripping, wipe off, and units attachment. Sometimes, they will even hold the tail to have full gland access. Due to a dirty tail, these interruptions may interfere with the lag time needed for milk ejection and proper udder cleaning. In addition, the target when treating the cow for mastitis or at dry-off is to remove organic matter, especially manure, from the teat end to assure that proper teat end cleaning will not jeopardize the treatment of any existing mammary and/or prevention of new infections.