



Farm Information Sheet

Drying Off Cows



***DRYING OFF SIGNIFICANTLY
REDUCES CLINICAL MASTITIS AND
SOMATIC CELL COUNTS.***

- Optimum dry period is 50-70 days

PREPARATION

- Cows must be fit, not fat – ideal condition score = 3
- Consider reducing high yielders of >20 litres/day by lowering the plane of nutrition one week before drying off

AT DRYING OFF

- Compare cow's lactation with herd mates
- Trim overgrown claws
- Plan other control measures, e.g. vaccinations and fly control

WHICH THERAPY?

Some dry cow therapies are active for different lengths of time and work against different bacteria.

- **Check which bacteria are present by regularly taking milk samples from high cell count cows and clinical cases**
- **Always ask your veterinary surgeon for advice**

ADMINISTERING DRY COW THERAPY

Antibiotic therapy cures major pathogen infection and prevents new infections during the dry period.

Follow the therapy carefully for all cows.

It is essential to -

- Use gloves
- Clean and dry heavily contaminated teats
- Use proprietary pre-dip, leave 30 seconds, then dry the teats
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect teats by scrubbing with cotton wool soaked in surgical spirit. Then repeat
- Administer antibiotic gently, partially inserting the tube
- Dry teats in proprietary teat dip
- Record in medicine book
- Separate and mark treated cows to prevent milk contamination
- Keep treated cows in loafing area for 30 minutes to allow the teat canal to close