

Bulk milk testing for Johne's Disease detection

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Research conducted as part of the National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) Dairy 2007 Study has shown that testing bulk milk samples can detect the severity of Johne's disease on dairy farms. The newly developed AntelBio Bulk Milk assay was used in the study and has shown to be another option to evaluate Johne's infection of a herd.

Five-hundred and fifteen herds participated in the nation-wide study and surprisingly 31.3 percent of the bulk milk samples were found to be positive for the presence of the Johne's organism. While both shedding of the organism by an infected cow directly into her milk, and contamination during the milking process could account for the high results, the fact remains that extrapolating data from the 515 herds to all U.S. dairies pro-

vides a startling assessment of the nation's milk supply. If milk in nearly one-third of the bulk tanks across the country contains the Johne's organism, questions will undoubtedly be raised about the quality of the food supply, and the sufficiency of current voluntary programs.

Previously, Johne's testing methods have focused on individual animals or very small pools (3-5 samples). The current study using the AntelBio Bulk Milk assay investigated whether bulk tank testing could assess the level of infection on farms. Results indicate that analysis of bulk milk samples by both ELISA and DNA-based assays correlated closely to the severity of Johne's infection as estimated by environmental fecal analysis. So in fact bulk milk analysis can be another op-



tion for determining Johne's infection level.

While individual animal testing is still the preferred method for determining Johne's infection, the AntelBio Bulk Milk test can serve as an introductory step to determine severity in a herd. A positive test result spells trouble, and a corresponding need to 'step-up' Johne's control efforts to be sure Johne's won't get the best of the herd.

For more information about bulk milk testing for Johne's, other testing services or our latest research projects visit antelbio.com. ★

Call for candidates

Stockowners in districts 5, 6, 7 and 8 are needed to run for positions on the NorthStar Co-operative board of directors. In addition, candidates are needed from each district to serve on the resolutions and advisory committee.

All common stockowners are eligible and encouraged to run for any of the available positions. To be included in the election process, a candidate must express interest and submit a "letter of intent" form to the Cooperative by **November 1, 2008**.

For more information on the responsibilities of the positions and to submit your name as a candidate contact NorthStar at 1.800.631.3510.



"With Bio Cycle Plus in the feed, molds and mycotoxins are one less thing to worry about."

*"With 3,000 cows we go through a lot of feed from a lot of different fields, which means the specific type and quantity of molds and mycotoxins is ever changing. With Bio Cycle products in the feed, it **takes the variation out** that can occur when molds and mycotoxins are present, and **helps ensure the cows stay healthy**. We started using Bio Cycle in May of 2002 and have seen a **definite improvement in reproduction**. Services per conception have decreased and our current pregnancy rate is 21 percent. With Bio Cycle Plus in the feed, molds and mycotoxins are one less thing I have to worry about."*



Jason Mell
Van Der Geest Dairy
Merrill, Wisconsin

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