



The
**Co-operative
Difference**



Reducing the risk of inhibitory substance downgrades

Many treatments are used on-farm to take care of your herd and practice good husbandry. Treatments like teat spray and antibiotics (which we call inhibitory substances) inhibit the growth of bacteria in milk. If inhibitory substances enter the Co-operative's milk supply, they affect the quality of the products we make and could impact market access.

What to do if you think your milk may contain an inhibitory substance

- The first step is to secure your vat with an approved vat lock to prevent accidental collection.
- Then call the Farm Source Service Centre on 0800 65 65 68 to organise a milk test prior to collection.
- If your milk has already been collected call 0800 65 65 68 immediately.





Factors that lead to inhibitory substances entering milk

- Treated cows not run in a separate herd, and/or treated cows not milked last following the inlet tap to the milk silo being changed to dump
- Use of test buckets or quarter milkers while the vat is still connected
- Incorrect use of veterinary medicines
- Insufficient/incorrect withholding times
- Accidental milking of cows within withholding period
- Not clearly identifying cows under treatment
- Insufficient training and information for staff or relief milkers

To prevent inhibitory substance downgrades

- Use **M.R.S.T. Mark** the cow, **Record** the cow, **Separate** the cow and then **Treat** the cow
- Have a documented system of how treated cows are managed
- Train your staff so they are fully aware of all systems and processes involved in treating cows
- Keep treated animals separate from the milking herd and milk them last after you have disconnected the milk line from the vat
- Use all animal treatments and chemicals as per the label
- Follow all withholding times. We recommend that you add 24 hours onto all withholding times to be safe
- Always hot wash the milking plant after the treated cows have been milked
- Keep all animal treatments in a locked cabinet
- Keep precise and permanent records of all treatments
- Check all treatments before you use them to be sure you're giving the correct treatment to the correct animal. The wrong treatment can severely affect the withholding and effectiveness of the treatment

End of the season

Inhibitory substance downgrades are common at the end of the season because cows treated with Dry Cow Therapy (DCT) are often milked accidentally. To avoid downgrades during this time:

- Always follow the advice given by your veterinarian
- Follow the label instructions of the DCT treatment
- Treat cows with DCT after milking has finished and the delivery line has been disconnected, i.e. milk all the cows and then run them back through the dairy for treatment. Treatment should occur as soon as possible after milking
- Do not treat dry quarters with DCT
- Clearly mark DCT cows in a separate mob before treatment. This mark should be sufficient to identify the cow as treated for at least two weeks
- Record all details of treatments (date, cow ID, treatment type)
- If practical remove all DCT treated cows from the milking platform as soon as possible

Training available

PrimaryITO offers a Milk Quality Programme that aims to improve on-farm skills, knowledge and procedures to reduce the risk of downgrades, while increasing the profitability of your dairy operation. This course has been developed in conjunction with Fonterra.

To arrange training for yourself and your team, contact PrimaryITO on 0800 691 111 or visit the Primary ITO [website](#).

We're here to help

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We have a M.R.S.T Poster available. Please call 0800 65 65 68.

