

Profit from hygiene on the dairy farm

Milk and milk products are well recognised as highly nutritious and quality foods. Milk is used daily in most homes, offices and eating establishments worldwide. At one time in the UK all young children were supplied with 1/3 pint of fresh milk every morning and this had to be drunk! Today, in a very different part of the world, the Chinese population is now being encouraged to drink liquid milk. Substantial investment has been made in dairy farms and the milk processing infrastructure. Various flavours are added to liquid milk to further encourage consumption and to make it an attractive 'in-drink'.



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The objective of this article is to examine the pressures that are demanding ever higher standards of hygiene on dairy farms in order to achieve greater milk quality. Hygiene and mastitis control procedures that will enable today's dairy farmers to meet these challenges need to be explored.

Food chain

Dairy farmers are now firmly part of the milk and milk products food chain. This chain no longer exists solely within a country or continent – it is becoming increasingly global. A Dairy Report from the International Farm Comparison Network (IFCN) states that Asian farmers have the potential to compete internationally once the quality of milk and dairy products can be improved cost effectively. Singapore Rabobank International has recently voiced the possibility of India dislodging Europe as the key exporter of dairy products in the next few years.

The global competition and increasing pressure from food legislation, dairies and supermarkets are making extra demands on hygienic milk production in order to ensure consistently high standards of milk and milk products. A major challenge to dairy farm hygiene is the building up of larger and larger herds. The unrestricted introduction of new animals into a herd puts more animals at risk from any single disease outbreak.

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