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HOFGUT NEUMÜHLE

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Mr Hans-Jürgen Theis
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25.07.2008
HA/sch

Dear Mr Theis

Hereinafter, you receive a summary of our experience with the Kalle sponge cloth for the cleaning of the udder during milking.

Practical Test of the Kalle Udder Sponge Cloth

The cleaning of the teats before milking is usually done with fabric, fleece or paper cloths. For each animal, a new cloth has to be used to prevent the potential spreading of germs from one cow to another.
If reusable cloths should be used it is necessary to remove the dirt particles and milk traces that stick to the udder cloth by way of thorough cleaning. For this purpose, conventional washing machines may be used.
This means that the cloths used to clean the udder or teats are subject to considerable strain as they have to be machine washed twice a day. A reusable udder cleaning cloth should generally have the following features:

- It must have a good grip.
- It must have a good cleaning effect.
- It must be usable for long time, i.e. feature a high durability.

In the course of a series of practical test conducted at the Hofgut Neumühle, the Education and Research Centre for Dairy Farming, two different reusable cloths were concurrently used for daily work over a period of 150 days.
One half of the cloths were fleece cloths (80% viscose and 20% polypropylene) with a size of 37x34 cm (manufacturer's data). The other half were sponge cloths of the company Kalle GmbH made of renewable materials (70% cellulose and 30% cotton) with a size of 31.5x25.7 cm (manufacturer's data).
The udder cleaning cloths in the milking parlour were randomly used to clean the teats, i.e. we always used the cloth that was first (at the top) in the bucket.

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The cleaning of the teats was usually carried out after preliminary milking of the udder quarters. After each milking cycle, all cloths were washed together at a temperature of 60°C using a conventional washing machine. The cloths were used in spin-dry condition.

Findings:

At the beginning of the observations during practical use, both cloths lots became relatively stiff und had a “bad grip”. However, this stiffness evenly disappeared in both cloth types during their further use. The subjective user assessment and comparison of the cleaning effect of the fleece and sponge cloths revealed that sponge cloth had equal or tendentially even superior characteristics as concerns dirt absorption and cleaning effect. During practical use, the users had the impression that the sponge cloth was slightly more moist, which would explain the tendentially better cleaning effect.
After 300 washing cycles, i.e. 150 days of use, the fleece cloth had considerably shrinked compared to the sponge cloth. The fleece cloth’s loss in size of 24% ranged clearly higher than that of the sponge cloth with a loss in size of only 8%.

The size of the sponge cloth used for the practical test of 31.5x25.7 cm was deemed too small by the users. It would be advantageous if it had the size of the fleece cloth.

Because of the compostability of the raw materials cellulose and cotton the disposal of the used-up sponge cloths was done in an environmentally friendly way as they were simply put on the manure heap.

Yours sincerely