

HILL FARM RESEARCH STATION

APRIL 24, 2008

FIELD DAY SUMMARY REPORT

COMMODITY: MASTITIS – Mycoplasma Mastitis Control Program

TITLE: Update on Mastitis Research at the Hill Farm Research Station

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TAKE HOME MESSAGE: Research is being conducted on the incidence and control of Mycoplasma mastitis in Louisiana. Mycoplasma mastitis was identified in Louisiana in 2002, because of this outbreak and the serious nature of this type of mastitis a mycoplasma mastitis control program was implemented and has reduced the incidence of this type of mastitis from 2% to .05%.

PROBLEM/TOPIC: Bovine mastitis caused by Mycoplasma species can be a highly contagious and devastating form of this disease that does not respond to therapy. Control is dependant on identification of problem herds and cows followed by sound management techniques to prevent further spread. Mycoplasma mastitis was first detected in Louisiana in September of 2002. As a result of this initial outbreak and because of the potential for serious economic loss associated with this type of mastitis, all the dairies in the state were screened for mycoplasma mastitis.

ACTION: Control of mycoplasma mastitis is dependant on identification of problem herds and cows followed by sound management techniques to prevent further spread. The statewide survey results prompted a rapid and unique response from several diverse groups within the state to address the problem. Research scientist and extension specialists from the LSU AgCenter lead meetings attended by dairy producers, dairy field men, the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, and the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF). Two meetings were held to educate dairy producers about this type of mastitis, and to discuss possible courses of action to deal with this type of mastitis. As a result of these meetings a program was designed with input from all groups involved to combat this threat. Monthly bulk milk samples are collected under the guidance of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. Upon receipt, samples are plated to mycoplasma agar and bovine blood agar. Blood agar results are given to dairy producers to help them identify and control mastitis problems other than mycoplasma. Initial results indicated an incidence of mycoplasma mastitis of approximately 2% in Louisiana dairy herds. Incidences of other major pathogens are Staph. aureus 20%, Strep. agalactiae 3-6%, Streptococcus spp. 30%, and Coliforms 15%. Recent results from 545 bulk tanks cultured revealed 3 bulk tanks positive for Mycoplasma species and a drop in the overall incidence of mycoplasma mastitis to 0.05%. The implementation of

an education, monitoring and control program combining monthly bulk tank culture with restrictions on sale of cattle from confirmed positive herds has reduced the incidence of this type of mastitis in Louisiana and heightened awareness and adoption of control measures.

IMPACT: The implementation of an education, monitoring and control program combining monthly bulk tank culture with restrictions on sale of cattle from confirmed positive herds has reduced the incidence of mycoplasma mastitis in Louisiana and heightened awareness and adoption of control measures. Information on other more common types of mastitis provided to dairy farmers as a result of this program help all dairy farmers with mastitis control. This unique program can serve as a model for control of mycoplasma mastitis in other states.