



Hamlin Valley

Case Study #3

10/9/12

Introduction

Hamlin Valley Dairy is located in Strum, Wisconsin. It was founded in 1986 by 5 brothers Gary, Chad, David, Mark, and Eric Gullicksrud. The brothers initially started their herd with 100 cows milking in a double 8 herringbone and bedding on saw dust. As time progressed so did Hamlin Valley. They decided to expand their herd size until eventually they doubled in size. Once the brothers realized they had outgrown their current double 8 herringbone parlor, they decided it was time, in 2000, to upgrade to a double 20 parallel. Instead of tearing down their old double 8, they turned it into their fresh cow pen. They also decided to make a change from saw dust to recycled sand for the cows to bed on. After doubling the size of the dairy in just 12 years they decided it was time to grow the herd size yet again, and in 2010 they built their current parlor, a double 30 parallel.

In the last 2 years Hamlin Valley has yet again gone through some growing pains. They have grown their herd from 100 cows in 1986 to now 1900 cows in 2012, and milking them 3 times daily. With 1900 cows they found themselves without enough time to get through every milking in a consistent and timely manner, even after upgrading the parlor 2 times in 10 years. To help with their milking time the brothers decided in February, despite the disapproval from their vet and nutritionist, to install The FutureCow Teatscrubber.

Before The Teatscrubber

After building 3 different parlors, they had finally reached full capacity towards the end of 2011. Simply put, they had too many cows and not enough time to properly milk all of them. Not only were they over crowded with the amount of cows and the amount of workers trying to milk them all, but they also struggled with a high Somatic Cell Count and a high Standard Plate Count.

In their double 30 parallel they had 4 milkers and 1 pusher. The parlor prep routine consisted of three of the milkers doing an 8 cow prep and the end milker doing a 7 cow prep routine. Unfortunately, the milkers were still falling short with cow cleanliness and timeliness. Worker compliance was not the only issue Hamlin Valley had to deal with.

Before the install of The FutureCow Teatscrubber Hamlin Valley's average somatic cell count was running at around 300,000, and in the summer, it would be running between 320,000 to 350,000. The Standard Plate Count was running at a 10, and on average, their mastitis cases were roughly 5 cases a day.

They needed to improve their overall milk quality. Greg was introduced to the teatscrubber in January by John Seehafer. It struck his interest not only in a milk quality standpoint but in a labor efficiency, worker consistency, and time standpoint.

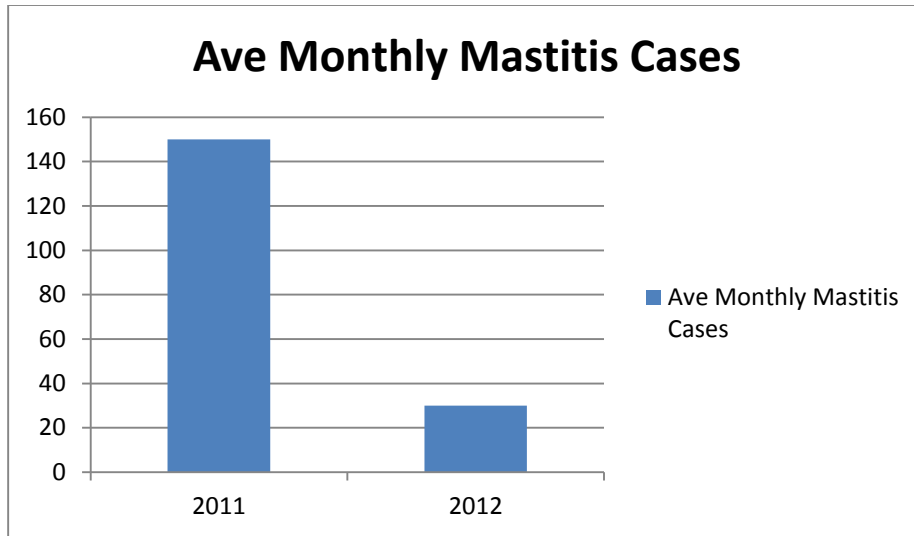
After Install

Seven months after the install of the The FutureCow Teatscrubber they have never had better results. The teatscrubbing system wasn't their only change; they also installed The FutureCow Timer. This helps keep workers stay on track in a timely manner, while still thoroughly cleaning every cow the same amount of time, every time. Not only do they now stay on track, the workers also clean more cows in the same amount of time, and with less people it took them then before. The milkers went from a 7 and 8 cow prep to a 10 cow prep.

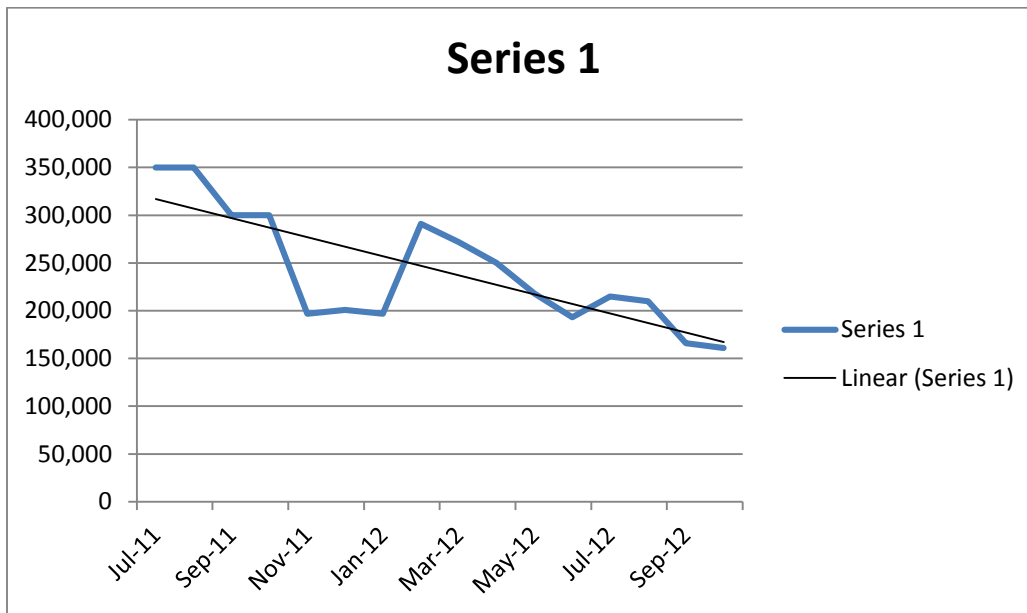
The main change was they went from 4 milkers and 1 pusher to 3 milkers and 1 pusher, eliminating 3 full positions. The sick cow pen has gone down thanks to lower mastitis cases, which in turn, means they are saving money on treatment. Their Somatic Cell Counts have gone down since the first few months of install. Their Plate Count has significantly gone down from their original 10. They no longer have to use expensive iodine pre and post dips since The FutureCow solution is included in their monthly maintenance upkeep, and eliminates predipping altogether. In a nutshell, their overall milk quality is better than it has ever been.

Results

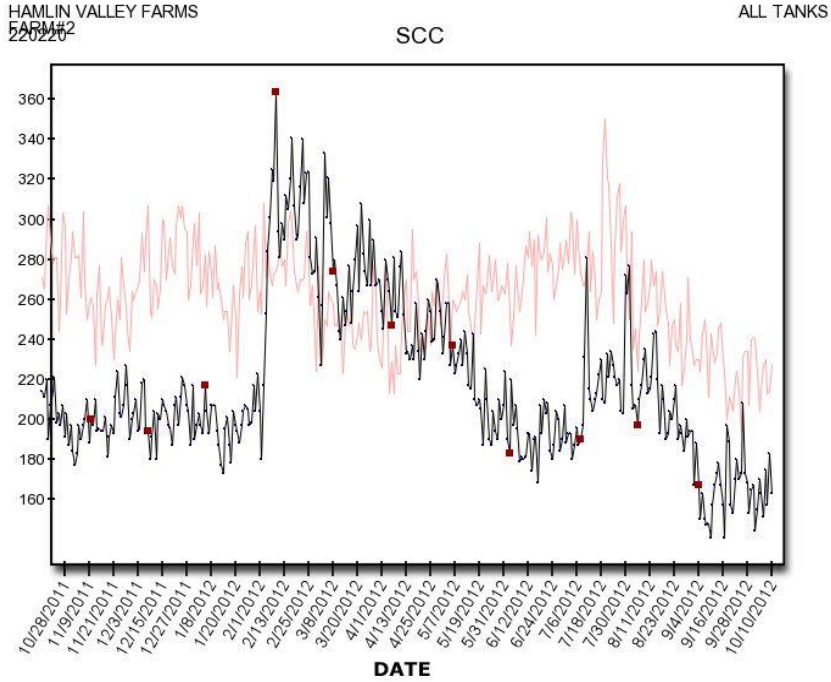
Before the FutureCow Teatscrubber, Hamlin Valley's average cases of mastitis per day ran at about 5 cases. Present day, their average cases per day are around 1. Not only is that a significantly less number of cows in the sick pen, but that is a significant monetary savings in Pirsue and Spectrum, treatment for the mastitis infected cows.



Also, their somatic cell count has not only lowered but has stayed consistent throughout the warmer months. Before, in the summer, it would spike up to 350,000 and then come back down to around 300,000 on average. This past summer, however, it was around 250,000 and continued to lower throughout the warmer months. In the cooler months they are looking forward to being below 200,000.

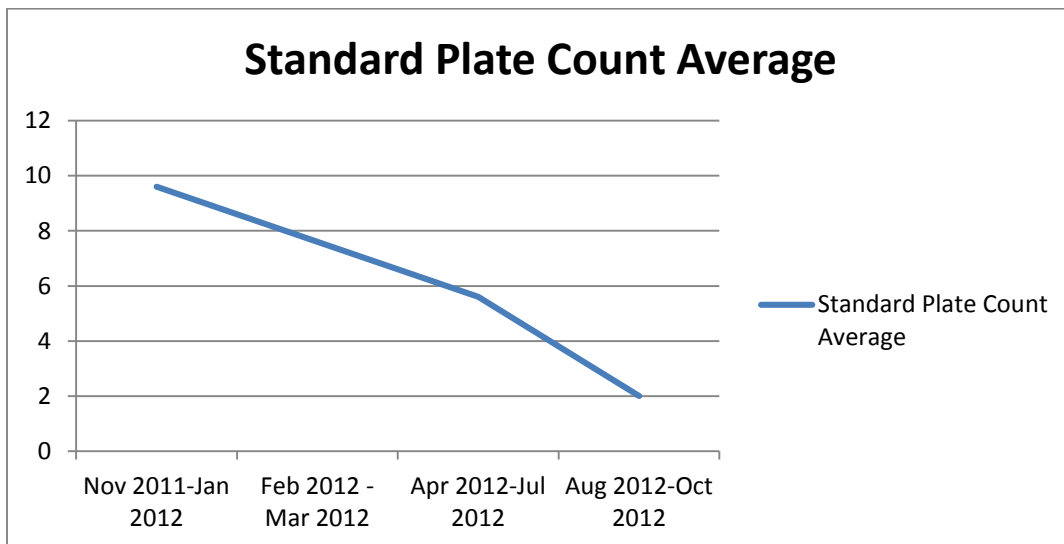


This chart shows average SCC from the months before the teatscrubber to present.



In red you will see SCC from the prior year and comparing it to the black which is the current year. The “year” means time broken down into 12 month increments.

The other major change is in their plate counts. The average standard plate count at Hamlin Valley was at a 10 before The FutureCow Teatscrubber and is now at a 1 average. That is a 90% decrease in bacteria found in their milk.



According To Hamlin Valley

According to Gary, the FutureCow teatscrubber results speak for themselves. You can't deny that the system works. In the beginning, because of our numbers, I was very skeptical. After the initial three months, the system made me a believer, and we will be putting a system in our fresh pen, as well.

Hamlin Valley's appeals to the system at first were labor savings, labor efficiency, consistency, and time saving. What they received in return was not only monetary savings of \$100,000/yr in taking away three full time positions, no more washer and dryers, no more towels, no more expensive iodine dips, but also, more consistent workers during every shift, and not only can they get through all their cows now, they also have down time in between shifts.

Those are just the initial things that they wanted from the system. The added bonus was their SCC went down and stayed down, their Standard Plate Count average has gone down, and their mastitis cases have gotten under control.

Gary said, "The hardest part before installing the system was getting his vet and nutritionist on board." After ignoring their concerns and installing the system anyway, they have come around to the idea, and I dare say, even like the system and its results. He would recommend the system to other dairy farmers. They can now look forward to a successful dairy they can happily pass down for generations to come.