



# ***Corynebacterium bovis*:**

## **A Practical Summary for Controlling Mastitis**

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*Corynebacterium bovis* is a contagious, Gram-positive mastitis-causing pathogen. *C. bovis* will typically produce little to no growth on blood agar after 24 hours of culture, but it will show creamy, gray, or white nonhemolytic colonies at 48 hours. *C. bovis* is mildly pathogenic and will usually cause only a mild increase in somatic cell count and a slight reduction in milk production. Information in this publication was summarized from the National Mastitis Council's Laboratory Handbook on Bovine Mastitis (Hogan et al. 1999).

### **Where are these organisms found?**

*C. bovis* will colonize the teat canal; thus, the teat canal as well as the infected udders will act as reservoirs for infection.

### **How does *C. bovis* spread to the mammary gland?**

This pathogen is contagious and will therefore spread from cow to cow at milking.

### **How can you prevent and control mastitis caused by *C. bovis*?**

Proper milking procedures, including the use of effective post-milking teat disinfectants, will help to reduce the number of new infections. After unit detachment, the application of a proven post-milking teat disinfectant should be applied with coverage over at least two-thirds of the teat barrel. The exception to this are post-dips with the active ingredient linear dodecylbenzene sulfonic acid, which are not effective

against *C. bovis*. Dry cow therapy is very effective in eliminating this pathogen.

### **When are *C. bovis* mastitis infections most likely to occur?**

New infections can occur at any time during lactation. Prevalence of *C. bovis* is very low in herds utilizing an efficacious post-dip.

### **How likely are *C. bovis*-infected quarters to be cured?**

Dry cow therapy is very effective in eliminating *C. bovis*. Antibiotic therapy during lactation is not recommended. It is recommended to consult your herd veterinarian prior to starting any treatment.

### **Quick Notes**

- *C. bovis* is a contagious pathogen that colonizes the teat canal.
- Effective post-milking disinfectants will dramatically reduce the *C. bovis* infection rate.
- Dry cow therapy is very effective in eliminating *C. bovis*.

### **References**

Hogan, J. S., R. N. Gonzalez, R. J. Harmon, S. C. Nickerson, S. P. Oliver, J. W. Pankey, and K. L. Smith. (1999). *Laboratory Handbook on Bovine Mastitis*. Madison, WI: National Mastitis Council.

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