

Homestead Dairy Plan

FAQs

Testing Questions:

- **I want to get my milk tested to make sure it's okay for my family to drink, what do I need to do?**
 - Please go to www.udderhealth.com/Services/Homestead services and fill out the intake form. You will be contacted by a UHS associate and introduced to the Homestead program. This program includes everything you need for initially sampling your cow(s) or goat(s) and sending them into the lab
- **I just bought a dairy cow. What should I get her tested for to make sure she's healthy?**
 - We highly recommend a Standard Milk Culture + Mycoplasma check for animals that were purchased from a dairy herd, an auction or have not been tested before
- **I want to start selling raw milk, what test do I need?**
 - The sale of raw milk is not legal in every state and the regulations are different by state. You will need to check with your state to determine the exact regulations. Our standard recommendation is a Standard Plate Count (SPC) and Total Coliform count (TC) on finished product.
- **Is there a kit I can get?**
 - We offer an introductory kit that includes consultation, sampling materials and instructions needed to collect samples but there is not an on-farm kit available
- **How much does the testing cost?**
 - Our Homestead Intro kit is \$60. The Standard Plate Count (SPC) and Total Coliform (TC) test is \$50. Standard Milk Culture + Mycoplasma is \$10.
- **I just got my results back for SPC and TC tests. What do these numbers mean and what should they be?**
 - Our team can help interpret you with results interpretation but we recommend an SPC count of <5,000 cfu/ml and a TC count of <10 cfu/ml
- **I just got my results back from a mastitis culture. What is ____ (bacterial organism name)___? Is it safe to drink that?**
 - Our team will help you in interpreting your results and determine if your milk is safe to drink.
- **Why is there any bacteria in my milk?**
 - It is normal for there to be very low numbers of certain bacteria present in the milk sample. These bacteria live in the environment and on the teat skin of the cow and can easily be brushed into the sample. Our team will help with interpreting these results and determining if the milk is safe to drink or not
- **What is SCC?**
 - SCC stands for Somatic Cell Count and they are leukocytes or white blood cells that fight infections. SCC has been used for decades as an indicator of mastitis. A

healthy cow should have an SCC of <200,000 cells/ml. Goats have a higher SCC naturally. A healthy SCC in a goat may range from 400,000-600,000 cells/ml.

- **What about growth hormones and antibiotics?**
 - *The use of growth hormones in commercial dairy cows in the United States was declared virtually eradicated in 2017 by Dairy Herd Management magazine and this is true. Due to extreme unpopularity with consumers, nearly all milk processors have banned the use of rBST in dairy cows. Any growth hormones or antibiotics that a dairy cow might have been exposed to earlier in her life, do not remain in her system permanently.*
- **I don't want to treat my cow with antibiotics because then my kids and I will drink it**
 - *Intramammary antibiotics come with instructions on withhold times. Usually it is 72 hours and during that time the milk should be discarded*