

## Homestead FAQs

### **What is SCC?**

SCC stands for Somatic Cell Count. We use an SCC test as an indicator of milk quality. Somatic cells are natural immune cells that are always present in milk and are mainly made up of white blood cells, which increase in response to the bacteria that cause mastitis. A healthy cow should have an SCC of <200,000 cells/ml, while healthy goats may have an SCC in the range of 400,000-1,000,000 cells/ml.

### **What is a Standard Plate Count (SPC)?**

Standard Plate Count (SPC) is a test that measures the overall bacterial quality of raw milk. We recommend an SPC count of <5,000 cfu/ml.

### **What is a Total Coliform (TC)?**

The TC test is associated with fecal contamination and environmental contamination. A high TC count is most often due to dirty animals, dirty equipment or animals with mastitis. We recommend a TC count of <10 cfu/ml.

### **What information does a Bulk Tank Component test give me?**

A bulk Tank component test gives you the percentage of protein, lactose, fat, and milk solids. Milk composition will vary depending on the species (cow, goat, sheep), breed (Holstein, Jersey,) stage in lactation and diet.

### **What does the UHS Homestead intro kit include?**

The UHS Homestead kit includes sampling materials, shipping materials, sample collection instructions, SPC, TC, Bulk Tank Component tests, and 30 minutes of results interpretation. We can provide additional consulting at a rate of \$30/ half hour to address other questions outside of results related to testing.

### **How often should I test my milk?**

Refer to your state regulations as each state is different for raw milk sales. We recommend as often as once a month or if any changes occur with milking procedures, equipment, new animals and mastitis issues.

### **Can I freeze my milk to ship?**

Yes. Freezing has little impact on bacteria counts and during the warmer months it is helpful so ensure that the milk arrives to the lab in proper condition. Don't keep your finished product frozen beyond 3-4 days before shipping and don't over fill the vials, this prevents the caps from detaching.

**My kit does not have a return shipping label, where can I get one?**

We've partnered with UPS to provide the lowest possible rates to our customers. Please go to our website, [www.udderhealth.com](http://www.udderhealth.com), hover over the "services" tab and choose shipping.

**My animal has mastitis. What are my treatment options?**

We recommend working with your veterinarian for treatment options and decisions. Sometimes further consulting is needed to explain what is causing the mastitis. Most intramammary antibiotics have instructions and withhold times. During that time the milk will need to be discarded.

**What testing should I do if I'm introducing a new animal to my herd?**

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.