Good milking practice II – Preparing for milking

Being a nutritious animal product, milk quality and quantity is determined by the methods of milking, feeding and animal health.

Mastitis is the infection of milk producing gland, the udder. Bacteria invades the teat via the teat end canals and cause infection. Mastitis is a fight between bacteria invading udder and cow fighting infection.

Milking preparation

As it is important not to take contagious mastitis bacteria from cow to cow by hands or cloth, milkers should wash and dry hands before milking and wash and dry hands between cows. Wear gloves that are easily cleaned.

Similarly health of milker is of considerable importance as he should be healthy, clean with short finger nails and clean cloths. These should pay full attention to the milking task and should not smoke, spit or cough while miking.

The cow should be quickly milked completely and always preferably by same person. Good hand hygiene and avoiding avoiding dry and sharp skin of the teats and hands is important. Use of udder save on hands and teats keep skin heath with low bacteria count.

Additionally, udder should be cleaned before miking to remove the dirt that may contaminate the milk. This may also stimulate cow to let down her milk. Either use pre-dip or four corners of dump cloth to clean the quarters of the udder and these should not returned to bucket. Dry cloth or paper should be used to dry teats before milking in order to avoid drops on teat which may end up in the milk hence causing mastitis and

reducing its shelf life.

Finally, there should be two colour coordinated or labelled cloths for each cow of which one for washing and other for drying. Two cloths are needed for each milking they should be washed and dried between milking.