

Sample Prep On-Farm & Handling Large Herds in the DHIA Lab



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With assistance from Ed Vink, & Rick Bealer

Large Herd Testing

- It's not Rocket Science... But it is a Science!
- It's not Fine Art... But there is an art to making it all happen correctly
- It's not a Ballet... But choreography is definitely involved



Who, What, Where, & How?

Kings County DHIA - Central San Joaquin Valley, California
Currently processing about 157,000 samples/month
Ed Vink, Manager 124 herds 13 Testers
1,274 Cows - Average herd size
2 Herds under 100 Cows, 12 over 3,000

Southern Counties DHIA - Southern San Joaquin Valley and Chino Basin in Southern California - 2 Labs
Currently processing about 262,000 samples/month
Rick Bealer, Manager 138 herds 20 Testers
1,903 Cows - Average herd size
1 Herd under 100 Cows, 27 over 3,000

Reality Check

- Larger herds are not just coming someday, they're here!
- DHIA Testing and Lab Services are extremely important to the large herd management.



- Large herds can be Like a 1,000 lb. Gorilla.

Reality Check

- Testing Very Large Herds Can Present Certain Challenges!
 - Turnaround push on large herds can change turnaround for smaller herds
 - Disrupts the schedule because of extra Testers and meters needed
 - Smaller herds are "re-arranged"
 - "Us versus Them" mentality
 - Technology & Efficiency
 - you pay encourages both



Reality Check

- Testing Very Large Herds Can Present Certain Challenges!
 - Labs may need additional instruments
 - Contract suggested with large herds
 - Extra vials & rack investment
 - Instrument wear & service increases
 - Personnel issues



Reality Check

- Testing Very Large Herds Can Present Certain Challenges
 - Large herds are accustomed to discounts
 - DHIA Membership all pay the same
 - Getting large herds really boosts revenue
 - Losing large herds really affects revenue
 - Instrument & fixed costs
 - Extra lab personnel
 - Tester income

It is possible to tame the beast!



Preparation is the Key



- It all begins with the Monthly Testing Schedule
 - Foundation of the Lab's Schedule
 - Communication is critical element
 - Herds
 - Testers
 - Lab Personnel
 - Data Entry
- No Surprises!



Testing Schedule

MAY 2008						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24

Tester's Schedule

15 16

M-F

W. Lang

J-Dias + Paul

Elmarches

Paulo Brm.

V-F

Starts the Gears In Motion

Preparation is the Key



- Tester's & Meters
- Bottles & Racks
 - Have at least 2x what is needed on hand and ready to go on any day according to the Tester's schedule
- Sample Handling
 - Reading the Meters
 - Volume & Preservative
- Data Entry



Preparation is the Key



- How long are you going to have to run in order to get it all done?
 - Start earlier that day - Finish everything that day!
 - Pickup some of the samples before the herd finishes to get the lab started - Turnaround of samples and data is critical
 - The instruments must run every minute for maximum efficiency from start to finish



What Else?

- Accommodate breaks, hourly check samples, lunches, and overtime!?



help
ee -

What Else?

- Have a Master Herd Sheet
 - Herdcode, Test-day, times, etc.
 - Trays or samples numbered and logged on Herd Sheet
 - Corrections and special notes



Caps in Empty bottles - Missed

Bottles turned upside down - Too Fresh,
Hospital, Skipped or Not Tested



What Else?

- Keep log-in, herd paperwork, data merging, and sending files outside of Lab functions
- Feed the instruments!



Open yet isolated
from distraction

Use Fax for needed
corrections



What Else?

- Maintain steady pace
- Pay attention to the details
 - workstation cleanliness
 - sample care & agitation
 - proper sample tempering



What Else?

- Chemical inventory fresh and ready.
- System maintenance, weekly calibration, and Sample Unknowns scheduled with the big herds in mind.
- Hourly Check Samples ready & handy.



What Else?

- Priority set as "first in, first out" because every member herd deserves great service
 - » 300 cows or 3,300 cows



What Else?

- Washing and care of bottles and lids critical for the next day's herds



Summary

- Planning is Critical
- Commitment to Lab & Field Inventory, Personnel, Training
- Maintain a Continuous Flow of Samples to the Instrument(s)
- Maximize Technology
- Work Smarter, Not Harder