
EFFECT OF CLEANLINESS AND HYGIENE ON OCCURENCE OF MASTITIS IN CROSSBRED COWS IN WEST BENGAL

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Abstract: In WB, mastitis in crossbred cows is a big and silent problem which leads to huge economic losses to farmers. Therefore, it is very essential to study effect of cleanliness and hygiene on occurrence of mastitis at its initial stage i.e subclinical mastitis (SCM). Present study was conducted at two adapted villages (Muratipur, Chandamari) of ERS, NDRI, Kalyani, Nadia dist, WB. A total of 155 milk samples were collected and analysed. The diagnosis of SCM were conducted by milk somatic cell count (SCC), milk pH and Modified California Mastitis Test (MCMT). The observations, information of milking management were collected by pretested questionnaire. Analysis of data revealed that \log_{10} SCC (cells / ml) were significantly ($P < 0.01$) higher in SCM cows (6.55 ± 0.05) as compared to no-SCM cows (4.05 ± 0.04). The $\text{SCC} \times 10^5$ (cells / ml) were found to be higher in SCM animals (30.91 ± 3.85) as compared to no-SCM animals (1.19 ± 0.98). The Range of Log SCC (cells / ml) greatly varied between SCM cows (5.11 to 7.38) and no-SCM cows (3.86 to 5.08). The MCMT grade was lowered in no- SCM animals (1.41 ± 0.15) as compared to SCM animals (3.56 ± 0.07). The milk pH were higher in SCM cows (6.93 ± 0.02) as compared to no- SCM cows (6.48 ± 0.03). The fat (%) content was estimated to be lower in SCM animal (3.90 ± 0.07) as compared to no-SCM animal (3.95 ± 0.15) whereas SNF (%) were higher in no- SCM cows (8.63 ± 0.08) as compared to SCM cows (8.40 ± 0.06). Analysis of observations on management practices (%) indicated that the washing of animal (4-11%) before milking and the washing of udder and teats (3-19%) before milking were higher in farmers having single cow but it was reduced when animal number were increasing. The practice of washing of hands before each milking varied between 25% to 32% of cases of farmer. The practice of washing of udder after milking was very little only in farmers (2%) having single animal and it was not found when animal number was increased. Important management practices like teat dipping and screening of udder for mastitis were never found in any cases at any farmer's house. The association between animal keeping pattern and hygiene status, cleanliness in animals, shed and milkers at farmer's house revealed that farmer having single cow, most of them (78.57%) maintaining good hygiene status, cleanliness but farmer having >3 cows, most of them (50%) maintaining poor hygiene status, cleanliness where as farmer having 2-3 cows most of them (54.55%) maintaining medium type hygiene status, cleanliness in their milking cows, housing of animal and milkers who were using their hand for milking everyday at farmer's house. The Chi-square test value found to be significant ($P < 0.05$). The study can be concluded that there is a significant association between animal keeping pattern and hygiene status, cleanliness at study area. So specific recommendation is that efforts should be made to increase cleanliness and hygiene status in all aspects of milking management to produce higher clean milk and to reduce incidence of sub-clinical mastitis to arrest mastitis occurrence and higher economic losses in WB region.

Keywords: Hygiene, Mastitis management, Jersey crossbred cow, WB

Introduction: At WB, there is an urgent need for commercial production of clean milk in present dairy. For this emphasis is to be given on housing environment, milch cows health status including udder conformation and udder health, milker's hygiene, milking practices, milking utensils, feed and feeding practices, pesticides, grazing land and milk storage system. Regardless of the contamination type, milk contaminated by micro-organisms above the accepted limit is considered hygienically unhealthy and useless for consumption. The prevention of contamination by micro-organisms is based on a regular control regarding the medical condition of mammary glands and the undertaking of corresponding hygienic measures which must follow up milk in all its production stages.

Materials and Methods: Present study was conducted at two adapted villages (Muratipur, Chandamari) of ERS, NDRI, Kalyani, Nadia dist, WB. A total of 155 milk samples were collected and analysed. One paged questionnaire was developed and tested for its suitability of data collection. Information regarding management practices, cleaning and hygiene status followed in changing scenario of village conditions by the farmers were determined by means of a questionnaire. Under different socio-economic conditions the questionnaires were filled after interviewing the farmer and then by personally recording the management conditions practiced under each household of Nadia dist of WB. All most all the cows were Jersey cross-bred. Repeated visits were made to follow up the each and every animals and rapport was

also build with dairy farmers. The quantitative and qualitative data were collected through interaction and discussion with farmers, key informants, housewives and secondary sources. To meet objectives of the study both primary and secondary observations were recorded meticulously. Collected data were classified under different categories for interpretation. Milk samples and data were collected at monthly intervals. The SCC, Fat, and SNF, pH and MCMT were determined for each milk samples of farmer's field animals. The Chi-square test (Snedecor and Cochran, 1994) was applied. The knowledge level of respondents regarding milking management was also assessed through knowledge index (Bhaskaran and Praveena, 1982).

Result and discussion: Analysis of data revealed that \log_{10} SCC (cells / ml) were significantly ($P < 0.01$) higher in SCM cows (6.55 ± 0.05) as compared to no-SCM cows (4.05 ± 0.04). The SCC $\times 10^5$ (cells / ml) were found to be higher in SCM animals (30.91 ± 3.85) as compared to no-SCM animals (1.19 ± 0.98). The Range of Log SCC (cells / ml) greatly varied between SCM cows (5.11 to 7.38) and on-SCM cows (3.86 to 5.08). All the developed countries are using milk somatic cell counts (SCC) as a marker to determine the IMI /mammary health and quality of milk (Dang *et al.*, 2007). Bhakat *et al.* (2016) found that the SCC $\times 10^5$ (cells/ml) were found to be higher in SCM animals as compared to no-SCM animals. The SCC method is also less expensive than microbiological culture (Schukken *et al.*, 2003). SCC are widely used as marker to determine the mammary health or IMI and quality of milk (Dohoo and Meek 1982 and Eberhart *et al.* 1982). Following management practices in animal housing should be followed to get clean milk commercially.

Shed as well as surroundings must be kept clean and dry, especially the floors, mangers and drains, swept every morning and evening, must be thoroughly scrubbed and washed every morning and dried. It is desirable to sprinkle 1-2% solution of phenyl or other disinfectants on the floor every day. This will prevent multiplication of flies, which are a serious source of infection. Moreover, the disinfection measures have a great role as a most significant form of medical sanitation which doubtlessly influences the hygienic quality of milk. Fresh water should be provided in the water trough as well as for cleaning and sanitation. Comfortable micro-climatic environment should prevail inside the dairy animal housing system. Good ventilation helps to keep the floor dry and enable to maintain hygienic housing system. Dung heaps, rubbish and filth should not be allowed to accumulate near the sheds / milking place.

A major part of milk produced at lower Gangetic area is used to prepare sweets and other dairy products. The quality dairy products with long duration

keeping quality can be made from fresh milk, but never from visibly clean but otherwise unsafe milk. Freshly and aseptically drawn milk from a healthy cow has a very few microorganisms, which may vary from few hundred to thousands. The milk products meant for export must meet world standards in respect of microbial count and pesticide residue. As per European Union Directive on hygiene, Grade 1 milk has a total bacterial count of < 30000 bacteria / ml and a somatic cell count of < 300000 cells / ml.

Milch cows health status including udder conformation and udder health : The MCMT grade was lowered in no- SCM animals (1.41 ± 0.15) as compared to SCM animals (3.56 ± 0.07). Following points should be kept in mind to get clean milk commercially.

Animals to be milked must be healthy and as clean as possible. Routine checking of animals for diseases like mastitis, diarrhoea, brucellosis and tuberculosis should be carried out. The udder requires special attention. It must be washed well, cleaned and wiped with a piece of clean wet cloth soaked in iodine solution (Ranocid 15 ppm i.e. 10 ml Ranocid-1416 in 10 litres of water) before each milking. Cows having regular udder shape i.e., proportional udder with regular teats is beneficial on clean milk production point of view as compared to the cows having pendulous udder shape with improper cleanliness. Cows with pendulous udders usually have higher somatic cell count and a more frequent mastitis occurrence. If any abnormality is observed in udder or in milk (blocked milk channel, blood in milk, curdled milk, tenderness in the udder, etc.) then proper veterinary help should be sought immediately. It is not advisable to sell or consume milk from animal suffering from TB and Mastitis, as these diseases can be communicated to humans through milk.

Milker's hygiene : The milk pH were higher in SCM cows (6.93 ± 0.02) as compared to no- SCM cows (6.48 ± 0.03). Following management practices should be followed to get clean milk commercially.

The milker should wash his hands thoroughly with clean water before milking. He should keep nails pared to prevent injuries to the animal. He should wear clean clothes and cover the head while milking. Persons with injury, skin and infectious diseases should not handle the milk.

Milking Practices : The fat (%) content was estimated to be lower in SCM animal (3.90 ± 0.07) as compared to no-SCM animal (3.95 ± 0.15). Following points regarding milking practices should be kept in mind to get clean milk commercially.

Before actual milking, milker should put first few drops of milk from each quarter on a strip cup to detect any abnormality in milk. This physical examination of milk helps to detect early stages of

mastitis as well as preventing poor quality milk to be mixed with bulk. It is beneficial to discard fore milk as it has more bacterial count. Animal should be milked completely with full hand method. Incomplete milking may leads to mastitis. Wet hand milking with oils, milk, etc. should be discouraged. Sneezing, coughing and blowing of the nose during milking are highly objectionable. Sweat dripping from the elbows should not find entry into the milking bucket during milking. Nervous animal should be milked carefully preferably inside the shed. So that milk let down will not be affected. Brooming should not be done in the shed and its surroundings at the time of milking, the dirt and dust may enter into the milk. After completion milking, milk should be strained through clean cloth, so that safety of milk can be increased. After milking, the teats are to be dipped into teat dip containing bactericidal solution with the aim to minimize the chances of infection. Animals should not be allowed to sit immediately after milking as the teat canal remains open for sometime. Animals should be in standing position preferably for 15-30 minutes after milking so that incidence of mastitis can be reduced.

Milking utensils: The SNF (%) were higher in no-SCM cows (8.63 ± 0.08) as compared to SCM cows (8.40 ± 0.06). Following management practices regarding milking utensils should be followed to get clean milk commercially.

Milking vessel with a dome shaped top and fitted with filter cloth is preferable. Open buckets are not hygienic to use. Dust and dirt may easily enter into the bucket. Milking utensils should be made of aluminium or galvanized iron. Plastic should not be used. Milking pails should be scrubbed thoroughly first in hot water containing some soda and scaled out in boiling water. Sanitizer (Ranocid-1416, 30 ppm i.e.. 20 ml of Ranocid in 10 litres of water) can also be used for such cleaning. After cleaning, they should be sun dried or turned upside down until needed again.

Animal Cleaning and feeding practices : Analysis of observations on management practices (%) indicated that the washing of animal (4-11%) before milking and the washing of udder and teats (3-19%) before milking were higher in farmers having single cow but it was reduced when animal number were increasing. Following points regarding animal feeding should be kept in mind to get hygienic milk commercially.

Dry and dusty hay or other similar foodstuffs should not be fed immediately prior to milking. Composition of feed influences the quality of milk. Therefore, balanced ration should be given to the animal. Feed or kitchen materials possessing off-flavours should not be kept near milking place, as milk is a powerful absorbent of odours. Vegetables such as cabbage, turnip tops and onions cause off-flavours in milk.

Such types of feed should not be given to the milch animal within a couple of hours before milking.

The practice of washing of hands before each milking varied between 25% to 32% of cases of farmer. The practice of washing of udder after milking was very little only in farmers (2%) having single animal and it was not found when animal number was increased. Important management practices like teat dipping and screening of udder for mastitis were never found in any cases at any farmer's house. Following points regarding pesticides should be kept in mind to get clean milk commercially.

All the pesticides are fat soluble. The use of deoiled ingredients in cattle feed mix would eliminate the risk of pesticide.

Grazing land for milking cows: The grazing land for milking cows should be protected against harmful weeds, polluted water, slush and unsanitary conditions. The association between animal keeping pattern and hygiene status, cleanliness in animals, shed and milkers at farmer's house revealed that farmer having single cow, most of them (78.57%) maintaining good hygiene status, cleanliness but farmer having >3 cows, most of them (50%) maintaining poor hygiene status, cleanliness where as farmer having 2-3 cows most of them (54.55%) maintaining medium type hygiene status, cleanliness in their milking cows, housing of animal and milkers who were using their hand for milking everyday at farmer's house. The Chi-square test value found to be significant ($P < 0.05$). It was found that milking places were having not proper drainage and disposal system for both dung, urine and all most all cases floor were of mud type and there was lack of drainage system.

Milk storage system : Bellow mentioned management practices for milk storage system should be followed to get clean milk commercially.

Milk discharged from udder of healthy cows has low bacterial count. The time immediately after milking and before bacterial multiplication is generally regarded as around 3 - 4 hours. In ideal milking system, milk is cooled immediately to 4°C after milking. In the villages ice may be used for this purpose.

It is well known that lower Gangetic region belong to the "milk shadow" zone in the country. It contributes only 11% of total milk of India with an asset of 34% of cattle and 11% of buffalo population of this country. Recent milk production in West Bengal is 4961 thousand tonnes in the year 2014-15. The present per capita availability of milk in West Bengal is 145 gm/day in the 2014-15 (DAHD web-site 2015). The per capita availability of milk may varies from person to person, growing children and pregnant women need more milk, but average milk requirement should be 290 gm/day/person which is just double of the

current per capita availability of milk in West Bengal. The per capita availability of milk in this region is much less than the national average. At lower Gangetic region small, marginal and landless dairy house holders rear 1 – 2 milch cows mainly on crop residues, agricultural by products and few on grazing land. As compared to the other regions of India, the dairy development at lower Gangetic region is not up to the mark.

Climate influence on milking animal: At lower Gangetic region, the effect of hot and humid climate is more pronounced than the hot and winter season. Dairy farmers do not pay much attention to animal keeping place / shelter /housing. This may be due to less resources, rational decision making ability and knowledge. The macro and micro-climate has profound effect on metabolic reactions, growth, milk production and reproduction of dairy animals. Therefore necessary modification of animal shelter for suitable management of macro and micro climate is required during different season round the year.

To cope up these constraints during Summer, Rainy and Winter some economic measures should be taken. During winter shed without having any wall is being covered by polythene sheet to protect the animal from cold stress. However materials like gunny bags, plastic sheet, bamboo mat, straw panels etc are also used. This type of shed having no wall are airy, allows air to pass through the shed and keeps floor dry as a result animal gets better comfort during summer. Selection of higher heat resistance materials for the roof and increased height of cowshed reduces the shed temperature and minimizes effect of summer on milk yield. Brick floor helps better cleaning and also safe for animal movement.

During morning and evening, when THI exceeded the critical value 72 indicating that the animals were in stress micro-environment in the animal keeping place / shelter /housing. The higher values of THI had a negative influence on milk production of cows in summer season. This can be minimized by providing thermally comfortable shelter with adequate ventilation, using mist blowers to wet the skin, providing cows with adequate drinking water supplies and changes in feed formulations thus maintain milk production. It is recommended to sprinkle 1-2% solution of phenyl or other disinfectants on the floor every day. This will prevent multiplication of flies, which are a serious source of infection. Moreover, the disinfection measures have a great role as a most significant form of medical sanitation which doubtlessly influences the hygienic quality of milk. Dung heaps, rubbish and filth should not be allowed to accumulate near the dairy animal housing / milking place.

Conclusion and Recommendation: The study can be concluded that there is a significant association between animal keeping pattern and hygiene status, cleanliness at study area. So specific recommendation is that efforts should be made to increase cleanliness and hygiene status in all aspects of milking management to produce higher clean milk and to reduce incidence of sub-clinical mastitis to arrest mastitis occurrence and higher economic losses in WB region.

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