

July 9, 2014

Dear Mark Rodgers,

With the recent completion of our final farm visit, we are now prepared to share the Bulk Tank Milk test results obtained during our artisan cheese mastitis and milk quality study! We would like to thank you for generously allowing us to visit your farm to conduct our research; with your participation, we are one step closer to understanding the relationship between the presence of *Staphylococcus aureus* and management practices.

In this packet you will find the bulk tank milk test results from our visit on June 3, 2014. For some of you, these individual results may be several months old; as this was a population survey, we wanted to collect and analyze all of the data before sharing the compiled results. It is important to keep in mind, a one-time sampling is not a reliable indicator for most bacterial tests, except for a positive test for *Staph aureus*. If we have indicated that we found *Staph aureus* in your bulk tank milk, it is probable that your herd is still positive for this pathogen, regardless of time that has passed since the sampling. For other milk quality tests we recommend that individual producers monitor milk quality trends. Therefore, several samples over a period of time would have been necessary to provide you with a more accurate description of milk quality in your herd.

Although the results of your bacterial tests may be dated, we provide them to help you better understand the tests that are commonly completed for bulk tank milk. We also include an interpretation of what these results can indicate. From our survey, we have found that many farmers do not know whom to turn to for bacteriological testing or interpreting results, and we are hoping that this report serves as an educational tool. **If you would like more time-sensitive diagnostic testing for your herd, we are happy to discuss further options with you.** We encourage you to share these results with your herd veterinarian, and with your permission we would be happy to provide them with a copy.

We have also enclosed information on some future research. First, in early August, we will be submitting a USDA Critical Needs Research and Extension proposal for a 2 year project. The aim of this grant is to fill some gaps in services and knowledge identified during our survey. For example, we hope to link cheese makers, milk producers and veterinarians to identify opportunities to increase farmers’ knowledge and their access to milk quality and diagnostic testing. Second, we are interested in researching potential *Staph aureus* sources on your farms, and we are specifically interested in the potential for spread of *Staph aureus* between cows and people. We hope you will be interested in participating in these additional studies. We will follow up later this month with more information.

Again, thank you for participating. Our goal is to support artisanal and farmstead cheese production through animal health and milk quality research. We hope that you find this summary useful, and we encourage you to contact us directly with any questions. John can be reached by phone at 802-656-1395, or by email at [john.barlow@uvm.edu](mailto:john.barlow@uvm.edu).

Sincerely,

Amanda Carmellini

Katrina Light

John Barlow