A Mastitis Treatment Protocol

Most dairy farms have established some kind of a protocol for dealing with mastitis, often in consultation with the herd veterinarian. These protocols vary widely; many incorporate treatments which have no basis in our current understanding of mastitis pathogens or drug therapy. Intrammary infusion of Pepto Bismol®, vinegar or Alka Seltzer® cannot be expected to provide a cure. Likewise, intramuscular ceftiofur will not kill intrammary pathogens since it doesn’t reach therapeutic concentrations in the mammary gland.

The first step in establishing a treatment protocol is to identify cows with clinical infections. This is most effectively done by foremilking. When an infected cow is identified, the severity of her infection should determine the subsequent course of action. The protocol outlined below suggests a logical sequence of steps which might be followed.