

Footbathing To Prevent Dairy Cow Lameness



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Will Footbathing Help My Herd?

- Footbathing can increase and decrease lameness
- Understand the type and causes of lameness
- Footbathing helps prevent infectious causes – digital dermatitis, foul and slurry heel
- Footbathing is not the most effective treatment



Will Footbathing Help My Herd?

- Footbathing is not a substitute for poor hygiene
- Reduce the contact between feet and slurry
 - Adequate beds and feed space
 - Wide passageways
 - Good ventilation and drainage
 - No slurry waves or standing slurry



Footbathing – how?

- Good cow flow
- Clean
- Depth 10-15cm for every cow
- At least two dunks per foot
- Changed every 100-300 cows
- Pre-cleaning better than pre-wash bath
- No hopping or jumping



Footbathing – who and how often?

- All groups including drys and heifers when infection prevalent
- Frequency set based on risk and prevalence
- Four times a week if more than 5% have infectious lesions



Footbathing – what with?

- Not antibiotics!
- Formalin 5%
- Copper sulphate 5% or 3% acidified
- Gluteraldehyde and organic acids



Footbathing Summary

- Understand the herd lameness problem and target appropriate prevention measures with veterinary advice
- Footbaths help to prevent infectious causes lameness – treatment should be targeted directly at the individual cow
- Footbaths are not a solution for poor hygiene
- The siting and design must ensure good cow flow and adequate coverage by a clean, effective solution
- Use the right product, at the right concentration, right depth, right frequency and right replacement rate