

# **Voluntary Guidelines for Sealing Raw Milk Tankers**

The International Dairy Foods Association and the National Milk Producers Federation have developed milk tanker sealing guidelines to ensure dairy products are protected and to prevent safe milk from being unnecessarily destroyed. These voluntary guidelines are provided as general advice. Individual companies may choose to modify these guidelines to increase the level of security according to their specific needs and circumstances.

The proposal detailed below is a series of procedures designed to reduce the risk of deliberate contamination of raw milk during the various steps employed in the collection and delivery of raw milk to the processing plant. The ultimate goal is to have all openings on milk tankers sealed at all times, except when the tanker is being loaded, unloaded, washed, or is in the immediate control of the driver. Seals should be numbered and recorded to provide a chain of custody for each delivery of milk.

## **General Guidelines**

1. After a milk tanker is unloaded and washed, the wash station/plant seals all potential points of access to the interior of the tank with an appropriate sealing device such as a plastic tie or wire with a pressed metal seal. Each seal should have an identification number for traceability purposes. Access points that require sealing include inlet/outlet valves, manhole cover, vent tube, CIP connections, and any other point at which one could access the inside of the tank.
2. After washing of the tanker and installation of seals, each seal is inspected and its number is recorded in an appropriate place. For example, numbers may be recorded on the wash tag, on the manifest, or on a log specifically carried by the driver for this purpose. The instrument used to record seal numbers will be referred to in this document as the "seal record."
3. If wash tags are used as the seal record, they should be printed with unique identifiers (company logo, plant I.D. number, etc.). Wash tags should be accounted for and kept in a secure place by receiving personnel as required by the PMO.
4. When the driver is preparing to leave on his collection route, he checks to verify that the numbers on the seals correspond to the numbers that were entered in the seal record. If the numbers match, the driver writes his initials on the seal record.
5. If at any time the driver finds that a seal has been broken without his knowledge or that a seal is missing, he should immediately notify the plant or cooperative.
6. When the tanker arrives at the first farm pickup, the driver checks all seals to be sure that none are broken. The driver then breaks and removes the seals on the rear door and the outlet valve. The numbers on the broken seals are recorded.

7. Any time the tanker is not under direct supervision of the driver, all openings on the tanker are secured with a seal or lock.
8. At the last farm pickup the driver attaches a numbered seal to the inlet/outlet valve, the rear door, or any other point of access that has been opened. The seal numbers are recorded in the seal record. A padlock may be used instead of a seal to secure the rear door.
9. When the tanker arrives at the receiving plant, authorized receiving personnel compares the numbers on all seals to the numbers in the seal record. It is recommended that the receiving plant maintain a seal verification log.
10. If the seal numbers match, the milk is unloaded.
11. If any seals do not correspond to the seal verification entries, or if any seal is inexplicably broken, the receiving plant does not unload the milk until a further investigation reveals the cause.
12. If a tanker delivers milk to a receiving plant more than once a day and is not washed until the last load is delivered, the procedure outlined above is utilized each time the tanker exits the plant. At the end of the day, after the plant has unloaded and washed the tanker, those points of access listed above are sealed, with the seal numbers entered on the seal record. The cycle for the tanker begins again the following day or the next scheduled use.