

Tips for real winter

February 2021:

Extra winter tip!

A heating element in the VMS area is important.

And make sure that cleaning is minimal or eliminated at night, so milk the separation cows in the evening, then clean them, and again in the morning, under your supervision.

We do need to achieve cleaning three times a day.

Frequent milkings, perhaps lower the milking permit, and preferably no cleaning during the coldest hours.

While we appreciate the ample air circulation in the VMS area on a summer day, we are certainly not so happy during (hard) frost.

December 2014:

Disinfection and teat condition.

Now that the weather is getting colder, pay extra attention to teat condition.

Cows don't like being milked when they have sensitive and chapped/rough teats, especially in cold weather.

Both the milking technique and the spraying have a major impact on this, which creates additional problems in cold or damp weather.

Check that the teats are properly contacted and that your disinfectant also contains sufficient "skin care" spray.

Correct pre-treatment and milking are also important, of course.

February 2012:

Winter Precaution, Technician's Tip:

The frost has really started now. Last year we also had a few severe frosts with strong winds. That night, I (the technician) sat on the couch all night advising the farmers on how to get the VMS working again. Because when does it go wrong? The two hoses from the fixed line to the flushing machine (under the inverted bucket) freeze, and once the farmer has everything working again, the stiff oil doesn't move.

Advice: Make sure all separate milking cows are milked by 9:00 PM and don't receive another milking permit before 8:00 AM, and that no main cleaning is scheduled during this time. With this preparation, the VMS will run smoothly and be least affected by frost.

December 2010:

Freeze Risks

It's winter again, are you ready?

The VMS should ideally be in a room that never drops below +4 degrees Celsius!

The compressor is also a risky freezer, but it's often already in a warmer room.

A small heater towards the VMS and/or warm air from the engine room will certainly help.

And an (insulating) plate or sheet above the VMS towards the barn helps keep the warmer air inside.

Such a plate or sheet should be easy to remove or open when winter is over, especially if it gets very warm in the summer.

An occasional drop of antifreeze on the clean sponge also helps.

And of course: watch out for open windows, doors, and possible drafts!