When to test for antibiotic residue contamination

Keeping antibiotics out of the milk supply is essential to ensure product safety, protect against bacteria resistance, and maintain consumer confidence.

There are three essential residue-testing check points:
1. Individual cows before they are returned to the milking line
2. The bulk tank after every milking
3. The bulk tank just before pickup

Before treated cows return to the milking line.
Testing is essential because antibiotic withhold times can vary, for example:
• Older cows retain antibiotics longer than younger cows and many times longer than the stated withhold times.
• If a cow is treated “extra label,” the cow typically retains antibiotic drugs longer than the label withhold time.

After every milking.
• Testing this frequently saves money, because you can catch mistakes early before dumping good milk on top of bad milk.
• The earlier you detect residue contamination, the less milk you’ll dump and the lower the financial impact.

Just before pickup.
This is the most critical point of all because it’s the last chance to catch contamination before the milk is shipped.

Regular residue testing ensures your milk is antibiotic-residue free before the truck leaves the farm.

For more information, contact your IDEXX representative.