

FATTY ACID PROFILE TESTING



Milk Quality Testing (MQT) Lab Services is now offering fatty acid profile milk testing. An increasing number of dairy farmers are using fatty acid profile testing to assess rumen health and herd management. Changes in fatty acid profiles will be visible prior to other milk test changes. Based on the fatty acid profile, the herd management team can review a host of variables such as stocking density, heat stress, as well as nutrition variables such as fat, fiber, forage types or feeding frequency that play a role in milk production and animal health.

What is it?

Included in the fatty acid profile test are three values that reflect fatty acids by the length of their carbon chains and impact on milk components:

- De novo: synthesized in the mammary gland and reflects rumen function, C4 to C14 fatty acids
- Mixed: synthesized in the mammary gland or from the diet, C16 fatty acids
- Preformed: preformed values come from the diet or the animal's body reserves, C15, C17 and C18 fatty acids

Why should it be tested?

Fatty acid profile changes can be noticed before milk production or fat tests begin to decrease. Adjustments on the farm can be made sooner to react to these changes earlier and save on potential losses. MQT recommends consulting with a nutritionist and/or veterinarian for help interpreting your farm's test results and making changes on your farm.