

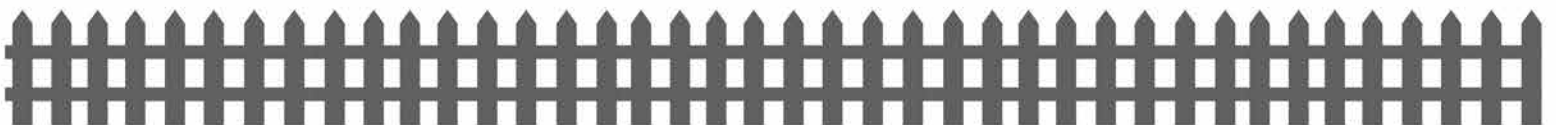
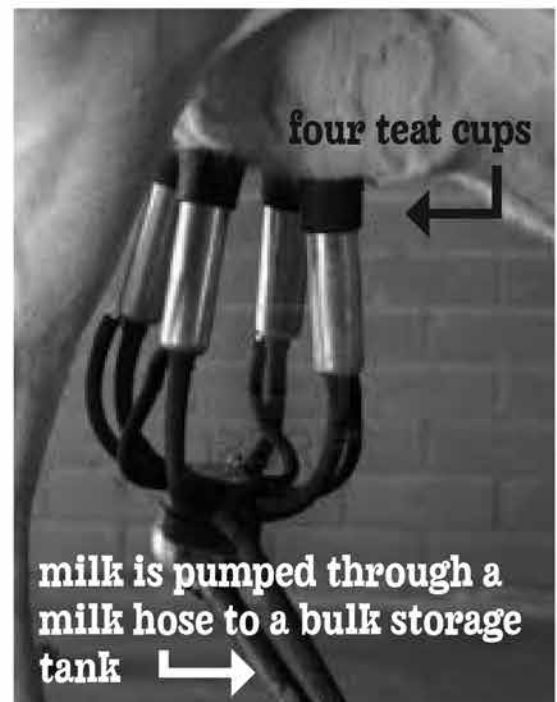
Milking Time

A line of cows walk the familiar route from their stalls to the milking parlour. They do this more than once every day, so they know the way. The cows wait together in the sorting area for their turn in the milking parlour. After each group is milked they return to the loafing barn to wait for the rest of the herd.

Please's mother follows her group into the parlour and takes her place in the neat row of cows, each one facing the same way. She patiently chews her cud, waiting her turn. She's comfortable in the warm parlour with the familiar sounds of music playing and the hum of the milking machine. She can't see the farmer, but she trusts the farmer and is relaxed as he greets her with a friendly word and a pat. The cows are on a raised platform so that the farmer doesn't have to bend down to milk them. The cows have an important job to do and the farmer's job is to keep them calm. If something upsets a cow before or during milking she won't give milk.

Please's mother gives a gentle kick as the farmer sprays cool disinfectant on her udder – that tickles! The farmer places a teat cup over each of the cow's cleaned teats. The gentle squeezing (like a vacuum) of the milking machine lets the cow know it's time to squeeze the muscles around her udder to let her milk down.

It only takes about five minutes to milk a cow – about as long as it takes to brush and floss your teeth.



Dairy farmers used to milk their cows by hand.



Today dairy farmers use special milking machines so that they can milk more cows at the same time. Milking machines also keep a record for the farmer of how much milk each cow gives.

A dairy farmer spends a lot of each day cleaning. Not only do the barns, stalls and milking parlour need to be cleaned, the milking equipment needs to be kept spotless. Even the cows need to be cleaned. Before and after each milking, the farmer cleans each cow's udder and teats so that no dirt or germs will get into the milk.



Drink up and Reuse It...

Let's use our milk cups to make jumping cows!

Materials: cleaned milk cups (2 per child or team), rubber bands, glue, scissors, construction paper and coloured pencils or markers.

First create your cow face. Cut out the shape (you can make your own or use ours as a guide) and using coloured paper or pencils, give your cow spots, eyes, nose and a mouth. Using scissors, an adult can punch 4 small holes in one of the cups near the rim. Tie 2 pieces of rubber band through the holes, forming an "x" across the cup. Turn the cup over and glue your cow's face to the cup.

Make your cow jump. Place the cow cup with the rubber bands over the bottom of another cup. Holding the bottom cup steady, grasp the sides of your cow cup, push down hard then let go. Can your cow jump over the moon? Set up a bucket, or circle on the floor and have a contest trying to fly your cows into or over the target.



Milking parlour - a special area on the farm where the cows are milked

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