

“Flaming Udders”

Short hair on a cow's udder is easier to keep clean and dry than long hair. A clean, dry udder provides many benefits such as making it easier and quicker to prep cows, helps reduce somatic cell counts, reduces mastitis, and can help keep bacteria and coliform counts low. Udders with long hair make it harder to properly clean and dry the teats.

Many dairy producers have discovered it's faster and easier to singe off udder hairs than to try to clip and trim with clippers. Using a propane torch to singe off udder hair is quick for you and painless for the cow. When done right, you won't burn the cows' teats or udder.

Start by rubbing loose dirt, bedding and manure off the udder. Then slowly pass the flame six to eight inches below the udder. Wear a cotton or leather glove on one hand so you can wipe off the black singed hair or quickly tamp out any small flare ups.

Quickly pass the flame between the rear legs and along each side of the udder to singe the hair. Repeat as necessary. Make sure to do the udder singeing in an area where there are no flammable materials such as bedding, hay, or other dry easily ignited materials.

We recommend that you purchase a commercial flamer. However, it is possible to build such devices from a hand-held propane torch, a rubber hose, a regulator, and a metal neck and tip. Flatten the tip and make sure to shut the air holes in such a way that it creates a cool, yellow flame rather than a hot, blue flame.

For safety and convenience, we encourage you to purchase a commercial udder singeing unit. Commercial units come with a long hose and a burner that's wide enough to cover the entire floor of the udder.



Films to help you learn how to properly singe udders are available for a small fee on VHS, CD-ROM and free from the World's Best Milk Quality Web Site:

www.uwex.edu/milkquality.

For more information call toll free: **866.867.6455 - 866.TOP.MILK**