Agreste of Pernambuco is responsible for about 84% of the state's milk production. In order for milk production to be a profitable business, it is necessary, among other things, to care for the health of the cow, especially the udder, since the quality of the raw material used determines the efficiency of the industry and directly interferes with the quality of dairy products produced. The lack of hygiene at milking entails microbiological contamination of the udder and milk causing mastitis. Cow with mastitis has decreased milk production, altered composition and high somatic cell counts (SCC). On the other hand, cows with healthy udders produce milk with low SCC. Thus, SCC is an indicator of clinical and subclinical mastitis and, consequently, can be used as payment criterion for milk quality. Studies have shown that residues of antibiotics are more likely to be found in milk from herds with a higher incidence of mastitis. In order to define the Identity and Quality standard of refrigerated raw milk, the Normative Instruction 76 of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply (IN 76) establishes, among other parameters, the SCC limit of up to 500,000 CS / mL (somatic cells / mL). In order to evaluate the quality of the milk produced and the health of the animals' udders, a survey of the results of the CCS analysis of the cow's milk samples, in the years 2015 and 2016, of a dairy in the Agreste of Pernambuco was carried out, using as reference the value maximum of CCS defined by IN 76. The quarterly geometric mean of consecutive months was calculated. All the geometric means obtained during the period considered were above the maximum limit of SCC, with values varying between 925,733 CS / mL and 1,606,189 CS / mL. The results demonstrate a significant number of mastitis animals and indicate the need for milking and udder health of cows in order to obtain better quality raw materials that offer less health risk to the consumer and minimize losses in the production and processing caused by this reality.

Keywords: CCS, mastitis, milk quality, IN 76, milking hygiene