

“Ask the Vet/Ask the Nutritionist”

“Based on your experience, what practices do you see successful calf raisers implementing on their farms?”

Our best calf raisers excel because they all focus on their colostrum, bedding and sanitation programs. Although each of these management topics can be an entire article in and of themselves, below are some QUICK TIPS for calf raisers:

1. Colostrum Management

- a. Test all colostrum with a digital Brix refractometer prior to feeding. Only feed colostrum that has a Brix reading of 23% or greater (23% Brix = 50 grams of IgG/quart).
- b. Deliver a minimum of 200 grams of IgG within 4 hours of birth if using a colostrum replacement supplement.
- c. Monitor colostrum programs with routine monthly testing of total protein samples, with a goal of protein values 5.5 g/dL) or higher.

Dr. Ryan's Experience: We have a client that changed their heifer calf colostrum protocol from 4 quarts of 23% Brix to 4 quarts of 28%+ Brix colostrum delivered within 4 hours of birth. The previous protocol of 4 quarts of 23% Brix to heifer calves yielded an average total protein of 5.5 g/dL during monthly monitoring. The new 28% Brix protocol has increased monthly average total protein levels to 6.2 g/dL. Both increased weight gains and improved health has been noted over the previous colostrum program.

2. Straw Bedding

Read Kaylee Viney's article "The Importance of Calf Bedding", found in this newsletter. This article will present new research that shows a link between calf bedding and adult cow milk production.

3. Sanitation

- a. Use a chlorine dioxide sanitation product to disinfect calf feeding and housing equipment. Different concentrations of solution are necessary for varying applications.
 - Use 50 ppm for rinse water on feeding equipment, bottles, nipples, buckets, etc.
 - Use 100 ppm for sanitation of pens and environment in the barn when calves are present.
 - Use 500 ppm when breaking down pens/hutches and washing outside in a well ventilated area.
- b. Crystal Creek has recently added a new line of sanitation products that use chlorine dioxide technology which provide quick, effective disinfection against *Cryptosporidium*, *Coccidia*, *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, and numerous other common calf pathogens. Call to learn more about how this line of products can easily, and cost effectively, be added to your calf hygiene protocol.

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Please submit your animal health or nutrition questions in writing to:



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