

Milk Replacer

- Purchase a high quality milk replacer. The milk replacer should contain a milk-based protein and not a soybean based protein because soybean protein is hard to digest.
- Calves should be fed twice a day. Follow the directions on the milk replacer bag. Feed fresh milk at each feeding. Calves should be on milk for at least 4 to 6 weeks.
- Feed milk at 100 degrees or about the temperature of very warm tap water

Example:

- A calf weighing 80 pounds needs 6.4 pounds (3.2 quarts) of milk per day. (1.6 quarts per feeding).
- A calf weighing 100 pounds needs 8 pounds (4 quarts) of milk per day. (2 quarts per feeding).
- A calf weighing 120 pounds needs 9.6 pounds of milk (4.8 quarts) of milk per day. (2.4 quarts per feeding).

Calf Starter

- Begin feeding a calf starter at the about 7 to 10 days of age plus a handful of quality hay. Remember to change feed every feeding to prevent it from becoming stale.
- Try to encourage the calf to eat some calf starter after it has finished with its milk. Calves should have access to fresh water during the day when they begin to eat feed. Calves do not like finely ground and dusty feeds. Feed should be coarsely ground, cracked, rolled or flaked.
- Calves can be weaned at 4 to 6 weeks of age or when they are eating 1.5 to 2 pounds of calf starter per day. Keep feeding starter up to 3 to 4 months of age plus free choice of hay. The calf can then be put on a grower ration of corn, oats, and protein.

Housing

- Keep your calf in a pen (4x6') until weaned. Calves do best in their own hutch or pen. Two or more calves housed in the same pen are not a good idea because of sucking problems.
- Thoroughly clean and bed pens often with fresh straw or bedding.
- Fresh air is important in preventing health problems, but try to prevent drafts on the calf.
- Place feed boxes and water buckets so that the top is about 20 inches from the floor. Water should be placed at the front of the pen near the feed.

Health

- Check your calf before and during each feeding for any health problems. Some signs of illness are drinking slower than normal and diarrhea.
- Calves can pass diseases by sucking on each other. To prevent the spread of bacterial infections, wash and sanitize buckets, bottles, and nipples after each feeding. Keep the calf equipment clean, just like the dishes you eat from.
- For your safety, calves should be dehorned. Dehorn calves when the horn button can be felt. The electric dehorner or dehorning paste are possible methods. Check with your vet for help with dehorning.