

RAISING CALVES

A quick guide to raising your own calf

THE ESSENTIALS

FEEDING

- Calves can be fed by suckling the dam, and depending on the age, bottle or bucket fed milk. Newborn calves should always be fed colostrum
- Offer water, free-choice forage (grass or hay), and a calf starter according to calf age.
- Always maintain cleanliness of equipment to prevent sick calves.

HOUSING

- Calves can be housed individually, in groups, inside or outside.
- Make sure calves have at least 2 square meters of space.
- Keep housing clean, drained, and bedded.
- Maintain lighting, ventilation, and predator protection.

HEALTH

- Clean feeding, housing and overall hygienic management are essential to prevent health issues in calves.
- Keep track of calf temperature to monitor health.
- Develop a vaccination program with your veterinarian.



BIRTH TO WEANING

Raising a calf can be a great opportunity for youth and adults alike. Whether you are raising a calf for milk production, as a pet, or to utilize for meat, the practices are similar.

Calf management starts from birth and goes until weaning from milk. Feed colostrum to newborn calves as soon as possible. Good colostrum intake is vital for optimum health and survival of the calf. Every calf should be fed 1 gallon of colostrum (4 quarts) in a single feeding, preferably within 1 hour and no later than 2 hours from birth. Very small premature calves may be fed 3 quarts soon after birth and given a second colostrum feeding of 2 quarts 6-8 hours later.

Good record keeping is an important step to raising calves. Keeping records of milk/feed/water intake, health aspects like temperature & vaccinations, and weights, helps you make sure that your calf is thriving!

Age of calf	Milk kg/day	Concentrate (kg)	Roughage + clean water
1 to 4 days	Colostrum		
For the 1 st two weeks	2-3	Handful	Free choice
From 3 weeks to 8 weeks	3-4	0.2	Free choice
From 9 weeks to 10 weeks	3	0.25	Free choice
From 11 weeks to 12 weeks	2	0.5	Free choice
From 13 weeks to 16 weeks	1	0.5	Free choice
Wean the calf		2-3	Free choice

Source: HARC, 2016