

April 16, 2007

CALVING BARN PROTOCOL

1. Cows and heifers should be moved to individual calving pens when they are close to calving. They can be removed the next day if they have not calved.
2. The calving process should progress smoothly. **FIRST CALVINGS** are a slower process but please monitor that progress is being made and that the calf presentation is correct (both front legs and head presented together).
Addition: As soon as a first calf heifer is observed with feet presented, arm the heifer and check if she is fully dilated. If fully dilated, pull the calf.
3. If assistance is needed fill bucket with warm water and a small amount of Nolvasan. Two to three ounces of Nolvasan per gallon of water is sufficient for disinfecting. Place calving chains in bucket to sanitize. Use proper placement of chains on legs. If calf is in any incorrect position proceed only if you know what you are doing. It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that you know what you are doing and that you move quickly. If you are unsure of the procedure **PLEASE** find someone to assist you. If no one is available you can contact **STRALEY'S VET SERVICE (814-355-3243)**. When the calf has been delivered make sure that it is breathing. Rub briskly with some straw bedding or dry bath towels and make sure that all amniotic material is away from its facial area. Dip the navel with 7% iodine **IMMEDIATELY** after birth.
4. Allow the cow to rest before attempting to make her stand. Any animal that has had a difficult calving, a dead calf, or twins, should get 2cc oxytocin immediately after calving.
5. **DO NOT** leave area before the cow is up and cleaning the calf. Usually 5 to 10 minutes are enough time for them to catch their breath. If they lie down too long, possible nerve swelling will cause them to be unable to stand. If all goes well the cow should be standing and cleaning her newborn calf within 10 minutes after calving.
6. As soon as possible after birth administer one dose of Calfguard orally to the newborn calf. This must be given prior to feeding colostrum or nursing. Administer Ecolizer vaccine-given orally and TSV-2 pneu vaccine-given intranasally. Also record all birthing information in the calving notebook that is kept in the herdperson's office. This information is to include the following; date of birth, dam identification, sex of calf, time of birth, Calfguard administered, code for calving ease, and person performing these duties. **THIS MUST BE FILLED OUT. NO EXCEPTIONS!**

7. After the cow/heifer calves, place ½ pound of YMCP in 5 gallons of warm water and offer her 2 pails (total of 1 pound of YMCP). If the cow/heifer is still thirsty, offer her plain warm water until the cow/heifer is satisfied. IF an animal drinks none of the YMCP, give 200ml of a calcium propionate drench. IF an animal drinks one bucket of the YMCP, give 100ml of a calcium propionate drench. Record information on amount of YMCP, calcium propionate (if applicable) and the number of pails of plain warm water consumed.
8. Fresh cows should not receive any injections immediately after calving (i.e. Lasix). The person (currently Nadine Houck) in charge of treatments will evaluate animals and make recommendations accordingly. Exceptions to this would be circumstances when the animal is in distress and a specific treatment needs to be administered. (i.e. milk fever, the vet has been called because of a problem).

Note: the calving ease code used at the Dairy Center is as follows:

0	Abortion
1	No assistance
2	Minor assistance
3	Pull with chain (1 or 2 people)
4	Difficult pull – more than 2 people and/or a come-along (calf puller)
5	C-section

9. Check colostrum quality using the colostrometer. Float the colostrometer in the colostrum. Use the color code on the colostrometer to determine the acceptability of the colostrum: green is superior, yellow is acceptable and red indicates that the colostrum is unacceptable to feed. Within 2 hours after birth feed calf colostrum, try to get 1 gallon of colostrum in the calf during the first 6 hours. Record feeding amounts and colostrum quality into the calving record book.
10. Make sure that the cow has TMR and hay. If she is on a **RESEARCH DIET** make sure that she is being fed the correct feed and amount.
11. Allow calf to stay with dam until it is dry, moving to calf barn within 6 hours after birth.
12. Move cow to appropriate group.

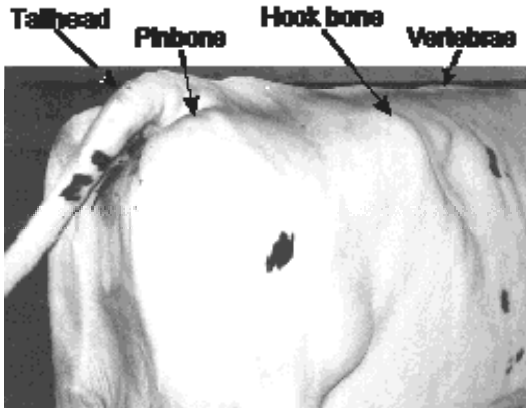
IF YOU ARE UNSURE OF THESE STEPS....PLEASE ASK SOMEONE!

Supplemental material on calvings:

Signs of calving:

- Distention of the teats and udder
- Ligaments on tail head area loosen (1-3d)

- Vulva becomes enlarged and flabby
- Cow shows uneasiness and irregular movements
- Calf moves into the pelvic girdle
- Act of calving - water bag/bladder appears, if normal, forefeet appear, water bag bursts, followed by muzzle resting on the forelegs



Assistance at calving

Proper obstetrical chains and handles (or clean nylon ropes) are very good for assisting with the birth of a calf. They are easy to apply or remove and, most importantly, they are easy to clean and disinfect. The use of dirty ropes or twine should be avoided.

Always apply a chain or rope to the leg with a loop above the fetlock (first joint) with a half hitch below the fetlock. Failure to do this may result in a broken limb on the calf which will not heal well even if put in a cast.

