



Date Drafted: _____

Date Revised: _____

Calving/Newborn Calf Care Protocol

Dairy Facility Name

Names of person(s) trained and authorized to assist in calving and provide care to newborn calves:

Herd Veterinarian name & phone: _____

Calving/newborn calf care steps:

1. Move cows/heifers to individual calving pens when they are close to calving.
2. After placing the cow in the calving pen, monitor her to ensure the delivery is progressing and that the calf position is normal.

Some rules of thumb on when to interfere in a calving include:

Heifers: should deliver 60-90 minutes after beginning active labor or the feet show.

Cows: should deliver 30-60 minutes after beginning active labor or the feet show.

General: If after several hours a cow is uneasy, getting up and down and straining very little (or straining and no part of the calf is showing) then the cow should be examined.

3. If assistance to the dam is needed, seek assistance from one of the trained people listed above.
4. Dip the calf's navel with 7% tincture of iodine immediately after birth. Iodine teat dip is not an acceptable substitute for 7% iodine. A long navel cord should be trimmed to 3 or 4 inches in length before dipping. A bleeding cord should be dipped and then tied with surgical suture material.

5. Do not leave area before the cow is up and cleaning the calf. Monitor the calf for signs of weakness. Particularly in cold weather, monitor the calf to see if it is becoming chilled. If the calf is shivering or its rectal temperature drops below 101°F then additional manual drying and heating is necessary.

Cows: If the cow has not risen within approximately 30 minutes she may have experienced some nerve damage during calving. Contact a trained employee to make decisions about treatment of downer cows.

Calves: After birth, all calves should get up and nurse within one hour. If this is not occurring, it indicates this calf is weak and may require special care to survive.

6. Both heifer calves and bull calves are to receive one gallon of first-milking colostrum within 1-3 hours following birth. If the calf will not drink the colostrum by bottle nursing, then an esophageal feeder must be used (also called “bagging” or “tubing” the calf. Only employees trained in the use of an esophageal feeder should use one, since it is easy to mistakenly place the tube into the windpipe. Clean the esophageal feeder with soap and hot water after every use.
7. Check to be sure that the cow has access to appropriate feed and water.
8. Remove calf from cow within ½ hour of birth unless using a calf box or other device to prevent nursing and adult manure contamination of the calf. All calves need to be moved to a clean and dry environment.
9. After each calving, clean the calving pen thoroughly and re-bed with fresh bedding.