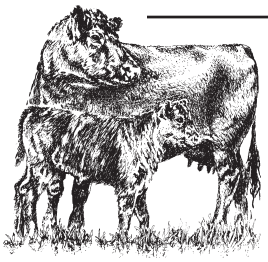

Western Beef Resource Committee

Cow-Calf Management Guide

Management Guide Section CL117

II. Calving Season—Calves

Management Objective—Manage calves for maximum livability and growth.

Colostrum milk—The first milk after a cow calves. It is high in antibodies and helps the calf build its immune system.

Disinfectant—A compound that has certain germ-killing properties.

Annual—Once each year.

Diagnosis—An analysis for the reason a specific happening occurs.

Points to Remember

- Calves should receive *colostrum milk* from the cow as soon as possible (30 minutes or less) after birth as this is important to its resistance to disease. **CL600, 644, 785, 788**
- In heavily used calving grounds, the navel of newborn calves should be treated with iodine. **CL648, 785, 788**
- Disinfection is important in controlling the accumulation and spread of disease-causing microorganisms. **CL602, 615**
- The proper choice of a *disinfectant* for a particular job is an important decision that involves the consideration of many factors. **CL602, 615**
- Develop an *annual* vaccination program with your veterinarian and maintain adequate records to ensure that the beef herd health program is continued year after year. **CL212, 605, 607, 654**
- Develop a plan or program for reducing newborn calf diseases. **CL212, 600, 605, 628, 648**
- In case of an outbreak of calfhood diseases, have an accurate *diagnosis* made as soon as possible so corrective measures and proper treatment can be started. **CL603, 628, 648, 649**

Weak calf syndrome—A group of symptoms that occur together that seem to be present in some young calf losses.

Bacteria—A group of typically one-celled microorganisms. Some produce diseases and some do not.

Viruses—A group of submicroscopic infective agents that can pass through a filter that will screen out bacteria.

- Research has shown the *weak calf syndrome* to be significantly associated with the amount of protein eaten during the last 60 days of pregnancy. **CL300, 650**

- Calf scours is a nonspecific term covering several noninfectious and infectious intestinal diseases that can produce diarrhea, emaciation, dehydration, weakness, prostration, and death. **CL601, 648, 649, 685**

- Calves scour for many reasons, such as stress, colostrum deficiency, Vitamin A deficiency, nutritional influences of the dam, milk, *bacteria*, and *viruses*. **CL648, 649**

- Since scours in young calves is frequently a combined viral and bacterial problem, the greatest losses usually occur during the last half of the calving season. **CL601, 648**

- In scours, the principal causes of death are usually dehydration and shock. **CL648**

- No drugs presently available have a significant effect as far as inactivating the viral agents. **CL607, 650**

- In respiratory diseases, antibiotics and sulphas are often used, but the reason is either to prevent or control the secondary bacterial infections that may develop in addition to the virus infection. **CL212, 607**

Good Management Practices

1. If possible, treat the navel of newborn calves with iodine. **CL648**

2. Be sure the calf nurses within the first 30 minutes as this has a bearing on its disease resistance ability. **CL600, 648**

3. Know the vital signs of a young calf and be alert to the signs of a sick calf—lowered head and ears, rapid breathing, scours, abnormal posture, standing or lying down, and an unusual position in relation to the rest of the herd. Early treatment is best. **CL610, 648**

4. Review procedure and have a fluid therapy program prepared for scouring calves, as dehydration and secondary disease problems are the big calf killers. **CL644, 645, 646, 648, 649**

5. In severe weather be prepared to protect calves with shelter. **CL601, 788, 790**

Plan Ahead

Prepare for processing calves.

- Review vaccination program for calves. Secure vaccine. **CL212, 602, 605, 654, 675, 678**

- Repair facilities to cause as little additional stress as possible on calves. **CL601, 790, 791, 792**

- Have alternate plans in case of severe weather because of stress to animals. **CL601, 760, 790**

- Avoid injection site lesions with proper techniques for vaccination and treatment. **CL212, 602**

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