



# Pahoia School Gala and Agricultural Day

## Calf Rearing Guide

**Calves must be born after 15 August, hand reared and in the child's care by 14 days old. Bull calves are NOT permitted as entries on Ag Day.**

Calves are best sourced from a local farmer. Buy a healthy calf that is at least 4 days old that has been well fed on colostrum. Look for small dry navels, pricked up ears, firm faeces, clear eyes, moist noses, shiny coats (breed dependent), firm teeth and playful movements. Colostrum can be purchased from a vet and can be kept frozen.

If a bull calf is chosen, he should be rung with a rubber ring within the first 3 weeks to become a steer, otherwise he may become aggressive as he reaches maturity. Ensure both testicles are down before releasing the ring when you ring the calf. Bull calves are not permitted for Ag Day.

### **Choosing a calf breed:**

**Dairy:** (Milking breed) e.g. Friesian, Jersey, Ayrshire or a cross. It must be a heifer (girl) for the dairy section.

**Beef:** Breeds of Hereford, Angus, Murray Grey, Simmental etc. or their crosses. A beef calf can be either a heifer (girl) or steer (boy).

**Exotic:** Breed of Charolais, Limousin, etc.

Take note of your calf's date of birth as it is required for the entry form. The calf **MUST** be hand reared and in the child's care within 14 days of its birth.

### **Supplies and Gear required:**

- 2-3 X 10 kg bags of Milk Powder.
- Calf teats are available that attach to a coke bottle, or alternatively a complete re-usable bottle and teat or calf feeder that hangs on a fence can be purchased.
- Pellets or meal (from 1 week)
- Halter and lead.
- Brush
- Drench
- Vaccine
- Cover

## Feeding

- Decide what milk powder you are going to use and don't change it. Mix the milk as per the instructions on the packet, be accurate and weigh the correct amount of powder.
- Feed a newly-arrived calf electrolytes only for the first 12 hours after arrival. This can help prevent stomach upsets from stress and change of milk feed (e.g. cows milk to milk powder).
- Various calf milk powders are available from farming outlet stores that will meet the needs of your calf. (PGG Wrightsons in Katikati or Farmlands in Te Puna).
- Choose a brand that contains an anti-coccidial and avoid the cheaper brands as they can potentially provide fewer nutrients, which will affect the growth of your calf. Mixing and feeding instructions are clearly written on the bag.
- Once your calf is drinking well, feed at the upper limits of the recommendation so it grows well. For best results, feed your calf twice a day until Ag Day.
- Supplement the milk with calf meal from a young age to encourage rumen development. Chaffage or hay can also be offered and ensure your calf has access to fresh, clean water every day.
- Allow it to graze on reasonably long grass everyday once it is over two weeks of age.

## Amounts to Feed

This is a guide only - please check the bag of milk powder for mixing instructions and feeding amounts.

Calf Milk	Body Weight	Approximate Amount
At least 4 litres colostrum during the first day (pref. during the first 6 hours) for all calves	30 kg	3.8 litres per day
Jersey: 2 litres 2 x per day	40 kg	4.2 litres per day
Friesian: 2-4 litres 2 x per day	50 kg	4.6 litres per day
	60 kg	5.0 litres per day

## Scours (diarrhoea)

### Prevention

- Ensure the calf has had 2 litres of colostrum within 6 hours of birth.
- Minimise stress and chilling during sale and transport.
- House in a dry, draught-free, hygienic shed.
- Avoid sudden changes in the type, quantity or temperature of milk or milk powder.
- After significant transport, feed only electrolytes for the first 12 hours.

### Treatment

The vast majority of calf scours are nutritional, viral or protozoal in origin and antibiotics are not needed. However, calves with blood in the scour, where there is severe

depression, or in scouring calves less than 5 days old, antibiotics may be needed and, a consultation with your vet will be required.

### Day One

- Stop feeding it milk and keep it off milk for 24 hours.
- Feed it two litres of electrolyte mix, three times daily and keep it hydrated. Electrolyte mix is available in small pack sizes from your local farm store or vet and are always good to have on hand when rearing an Ag Day animal.
- Keep it in a clean, dry, draught-free environment and keep warm (put a calf cover on if available).

### Day Two

- If calf is still scouring after 24 hours, alternate feeding electrolytes at one feed and milk at the next until scouring resolves, at which point stop electrolytes.
- **Do not mix milk and electrolytes together in one feed.**
- If your calf stops suckling, it is seriously ill - consult your vet immediately.

## **Vaccination and Drenching**

Your calf must be vaccinated for you to enter it in Ag Day.

Your calf should be vaccinated with a 5-in-1 vaccine at six weeks of age and then given a booster shot at 12 weeks. This vaccine prevents Pulpy kidney disease, tetanus, black disease, malignant oedema and blackleg. Get in touch with Te Puna or Katikati vets for discounted pricing.

Drench for worms from 6-8 weeks old, unless otherwise advised by your vet. Pour-ons (down back bone - from base of neck to top of tail) are the easiest method. Other options are oral or injected. If applying pour-on, it is best to sit the calf on its tail and apply from the brisket to the groin to avoid the risk of hair loss or coat damage.

## **Naval Infections**

This occurs in early days, infections can enter the umbilical cord when it has not dried. This will cause swollen joints and your calf will have trouble getting up and be listless. You can dip the cord in Iodine to prevent this. In severe cases the calf will need antibiotics. Keep your calf in a clean environment.

## **Lice Control**

Lice are a common problem. The pour-on drenches also control lice, but it is necessary to brush the lice eggs from the coat. Keep infected calves and gear away from other calves.

## **Housing Requirements**

A good clean, dry, and draught-free environment is required for optimum health. A bed of straw is ideal. A cover, even used only at night will assist your calf's growth as it will not be using energy to keep warm. The cover will also keep the coat shiny and clean.

## Daily Care

- Regular feeding (twice daily for best growth)
- Wash its face to remove any milk residue
- Walk it on a halter and lead and spend time with it
- Brush it at least once a day

## Ear Tag Requirements

- Your calf **MUST** be tagged with NAIT approved radio frequency identification device (RFID) tag.
- Newborn animals must be tagged with the NAIT approved tag within six months of birth, or before they are moved to a location with a different NAIT number, whichever is sooner.
- All calves must be TB tagged and have TB forms completed when leaving the home farm.

## De-horning

Certain cattle breeds will grow horns. These can be dealt with quite easily and inexpensively when the calf is young. A vet will come to your home and de-horn your calf using a hot electric torch to burn off the horn stubs. This is humane, quick and effective.

Alternatively there are de-horning pastes available from farming outlet stores or vets that need to be applied regularly over a period of time to remove the horn bud.

## Points to Remember

- Ensure long hair under its tail is kept clean (no dags).
- Do not clip or shave your calf (a clipped calf is disqualified as it is an animal welfare issue).
- Brush your calf often to get a nice shiny finish on the coat and remove loose hair.
- Ensure the halter is loosened regularly or removed so it is not too tight otherwise it will wear the hair off around its neck.

## Judging

- **Rearing** - and condition of the calf. The DOB of the calf and breed will be taken into account in assessing growth. An under-condition or unhealthy calf will be penalised. The judge is looking for a sleek and well-groomed appearance of coat and good skin condition.
- **Leading** - Your calf needs to walk through the course without dragging or pushing, elbowing, slapping or using the lead to slap, releasing the grip on the lead with the right hand or jerking the halter.
- **Type/Breed** - the calf will be judged for its purpose - either dairy or beef. No calf shall lose points if it has more than four teats - this is to apply only in child effort classes. However, this is not acceptable in dairy type classes.

## To Practice Leading

Your calf needs to get used to you so talk to it often even while leading. A halter and lead is required. Teach to lead before a feed, the calf must be on your right hand side, hold the lead

about 10-30 cm from the halter palm facing upwards and pass the lead across your body and also in your left hand with knuckles upwards, there should be 30-40 cm of tail end hanging straight from the left hand, no coils or loops around your hand as this is very dangerous if the calf runs off, you could be dragged. Start gradually, once a day and increase as the calf becomes more willing to walk alongside.

Tying the calf up for short periods and while grooming helps them get used to their halter. If your calf is stubborn and won't walk, push on the calf tail top and release as soon as it starts to walk. Patience is required but if you stick at it you will get results. Ask someone to help you. Set up a practice course at home. When competing you will be marked down if you jerk the halter, slap or push the calf with your body. The halter is your steering wheel, accelerator and brake so good habits from the beginning are important.

### **Tips for Success**

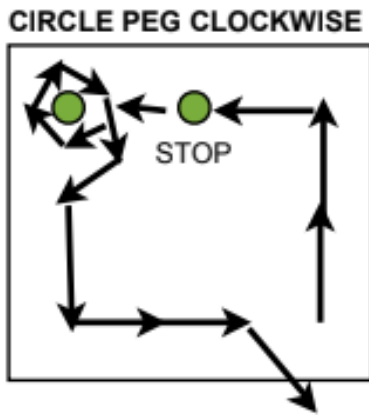
- You should always feed the calf (Mum and Dad can assist younger children if required).
- Give your calf a treat when leading. Use the pellets or they often like bread (save the crusts and stale bread). Even a hug, pat and a few kind words help.
- Spend LOTS of time with your calf so you build a bond with it.
- Set a course up at home and walk your calf daily.
- When leading, the right hand should grip the lead, palm upwards and be 15 cm from the halter. The left hand should grip the lead, knuckles upwards. Stand beside the left shoulder of the calf at all times. Try to keep the calf moving at a reasonable pace, but you should walk at the same pace as your calf.
- Don't forget to take it's food and water requirements for the day.
- Wash your calf on or before Ag Day and take a bucket, brushes, an old towel to clean it if it is dirty when you arrive.

### **After Ag Day**

The calf can be weaned at 10-12 weeks of age. This means stopping one feed a day for a few days then stop all milk feeds. Give hay and meal to help the weaning process and not to stress the calf too much.

IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS ABOUT THE HEALTH OF YOUR CALF, PLEASE CONTACT KATIKATI OR TE PUNA VETS. THEY ARE HAPPY TO GIVE ADVICE OVER THE PHONE ON WHETHER AN ANIMAL REQUIRES TREATMENT. DON'T LEAVE IT TOO LATE!

## Calf Leading



Enter the ring at bottom right, go straight up to the top around the peg and stop at the 'stop' sign.

Count to 3.

Move forward going around the next peg like a clock.

Then straight down and out.