

NEWBORN CALF CARE**1. PURPOSE**

To provide proper health care to a newborn calf. This will give the calf the best start at a long, healthy, productive life.

2. RESPONSIBILITY

- 2.1 Trained and qualified personnel
- 2.2 Herd Manager

3. MATERIALS

- 3.1 Navel dip (iodine based)
- 3.2 Towels
- 3.3 Calf coat
- 3.4 Ear tags
- 3.5 First Defense and applicator
- 3.6 Treatment book
- 3.7 Weigh scale or weight tape
- 3.8 Colostrum
- 3.9 Gloves
- 3.10 MuSe® or equivalent (e.g., Dystocel, Selon-E)

4. PROCEDURE

- 4.1 Make sure the dam will allow you to get close to her calf.
- 4.2 HEALTH MONITORING:
 - 4.2.1 Breathing:
 - 4.2.1.1 Aspiration of amniotic fluid: If you suspect the calf has aspirated amniotic fluid,
 - Gently pull the calf up by the hind legs to allow the fluid to drain from the mouth and nose.
 - Clean the afterbirth from nose and mouth.
 - 4.2.1.2 Labored breathing: Massage the calf's abdomen with clean straw or towel.
 - 4.2.2 Lethargy:
 - 4.2.2.1 Pour a handful of clean water into its ear. The calf should react by shaking its head.
- 4.3 GROOMING:
 - 4.3.1 Allow the mother to clean off (licking) her calf.
 - 4.3.2 If the cow does not get up, drag the calf in front of her to clean her calf.
 - 4.3.3 If the cow is no longer interested in cleaning her calf and the calf is still wet, use clean towels to dry the calf. This is especially important on cold days.

4.4 TEMPERATURE:

* IMPORTANT

Newborn calves must be kept warm to conserve energy.

4.4.1 Cover the calf with a coat on cold days.

4.4.1.1 **NOTE:** You may need to replace the coat several hours later if it's wet on the inside.

4.4.1.2 If the calf continues to shiver, cover with blankets.

4.5 Once the cow is no longer tending to her calf:

4.5.1 Don gloves and spray the entire surface of the calf's navel with iodine-based navel dip.

4.6 Determine the gender of the animal:

4.6.1 Lift the calf's tail and check the genitalia.

4.6.2 Males have a scrotum containing testicles and a sheath containing a penis, located near the belly. It is possible to confuse the umbilical cord for a penis, so you should focus on locating the testicles.

4.6.3 Females have a vulva, located closer to the tail. The best way to tell if the calf is a female is to note the absence of testicles.

4.7 Tag the calf as per SOP [DC-503 Calf Identification](#). Note: bull and heifer and purebred beef calves have a different sequence of tag numbers.

4.8 Log the calving in the "Debut de lactation" section of the treatment log. Include the calf's tag number.

4.9 PURE-BRED HEIFER CALVES ONLY

4.9.1 Administer a First Defense bolus orally. Record in the treatment log.

4.9.2 Administer 1/2cc MuSe intramuscularly (IM). Record in the treatment log and in Heifer Calf vaccination record sheet (on the pin board in the dairy office).

4.10 FEEDING: Feed colostrum within 2 hours of birth if possible.

4.10.1 Prepare colostrum as per SOP [DC-501 Colostrum Management](#).

4.10.2 Refer to SOP [DC-505: Calf Care: Feeding](#).

4.10.3 Calves are most receptive to being bottle fed within the first few hours after birth. If the calf refuses to drink, then tube-feed as per SOP [DC-506 Tube Feeding a Calf](#).

4.10.4 Listen for any raspy breathing or coughing during feeding. Notify the herd manager or technician. Treatment may be required.

4.10.5 Calves born overnight, who are dry and active, may have already drunk colostrum from their mother. Offer colostrum. If they do not drink it, advise the herd manager or technician.

4.11 HOUSING:

4.11.1 Prepare a pen in the calf barn for the newborn, as per SOP [DC-209 Calf Pen Sanitation](#).

4.11.2 Don Latex gloves and spray the entire surface of the calf's navel with iodine-based navel dip as soon as possible following birth.

4.11.3 Transfer the calf to the calf barn by either carrying it in the calf cart or by picking up the calf and carrying manually.

4.11.4 Weigh the calf on the scale or with weight tape before placing it in the pen. Record the weight in the treatment log.

4.12 STILL BORN CALVES:

4.12.1 Tag with a bull calf tag and record.

4.12.2 Place the carcass in a bag and seal with duct tape.

4.12.3 Transfer to the black cart the walk-in freezer.

4.12.4 Record the calving in the “Debut de Lactation” section of the treatment log.

4.12.5 Record deaths for males, crossbreeds, beef breeds, multicultural female breeds the Agri-Traçabilité Québec (ATQ) online and in the farm ATQ binder in the dairy office.

Document Status and Revision History

DATE	STATUS
9-April-2019	Version 01: MacDonald Campus FACC approved
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