

Attica Veterinary Associates

October 2020



October Brings Fall Weather & Calf Challenges

October is always a month of contrasts - cool mornings and warm sunny afternoons. Unless you start work at 4:30 or 5AM, many may not notice how cool it gets at night. Calves often bounce around in the noontday warmth but may have to work to keep warm at night. We often don't notice them shivering at 4AM when the air temp is 40°F and they are trying to maintain a 102°F temperature.

- Nutritional Challenges – At the beginning of October, about ten percent more energy is needed to maintain the same growth as in the summer. By the end of the month, feeding twenty percent more energy will just keep us even with our June-August growth rates.
- Feeding Whole Milk – For every quart of whole milk we fed for the summer, ten percent more to maintain growth rates means an extra three ounces per feeding. Most calf raised just add an extra pint per feeding. An extra twenty percent would add six ounces per quart. Adding an extra quart per feeding will accomplish this extra volume.
- Feeding Milk Replacer – Farms that use milk replacer have two options. One is to feed extra volume, as a person would do with feeding whole milk. Start adding an extra pint per feed at the beginning of October and work up to an extra quart by the end of the month. Alternatively, the same volume may be fed, thereby requiring an increase in powder concentration per quart. A ten percent increase means using a rounded cup of milk replacer when measuring by volume. The additional powder is even easier to calculate for farms who use a scale to weigh milk replacer. If summer feeding means mixing milk replacer using 8oz of powder to make 2 quarts of mix, then a twenty percent increase in energy means using 10oz to make 2 quarts of mix.
- Feed Clean & Wholesome Milk – If we increase feeding rates, then to ensure good calf health we must be sure to feed clean, wholesome milk or milk replacer. Using a sterile sample bottle, fill it half full of whatever you are feeding calves. Freeze the sample and give it to your vet or bring it to the clinic. Get the facts – is it clean and wholesome? If the sample has a high bacteria count, please consult with your veterinarian to discuss feeding and cleaning protocols for improved calf health.

Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) Tidbits :

- A veterinarian must visit a client at least once per year to maintain a veterinary-client-patient relationship (VCPR)
- Records of the written VFD must be kept for 2 years by the veterinarian, the mill, **and** the client – so be sure you have a place you keep them organized.
- For groups of animals with similar age, weight range, etc managed at multiple premises – only one VFD is necessary as long as the veterinarian has a VCPR with the animals (they are housed where we can visit all of them at least annually, not out of state). The feed must be supplied by a single mill.
- If there are refusals at one site with a VFD, they can be distributed to another group as long as the group is similar in age and weight range. If the group to which the refusals will be distributed is different in age, weight, etc, a separate VFD is necessary.
- When ordering please be sure to have ready the weight of the animals and numbers in each group, it is imperative for us so we can ensure you the proper assistance in a timely manner.

If you plan on ordering or picking up a feed additive, please plan ahead in ordering so that we can provide the VFD paperwork in a timely manner. If you have questions please be sure to speak with your veterinarian or give us a call!

Fall Vaccine Handling Tips

Avoid exposing all vaccines to sunlight. This includes windowsills, edges of feedbunks and especially the dash of pickup trucks.

Keep vaccines clean. Use new sterile syringes and needles to mix MLV vaccines. Or, a new sterile double-ended blood needle works well as a way to transfer diluent to the vacuum bottle.

Mix just prior to use. Is vaccinating heifers or cows is going to take several hours? Buy ten or twenty dose bottles and mix vaccine as it is needed. Going to vaccinate both before and after lunch? Wait until the animals are caught up and ready to vaccinate. Then, mix the vaccine as you use it. Break for lunch when you run out of mixed vaccine. Mix up more when you come back from lunch. Even an hour or two delay between mixing and injecting is robbing you of potential profit-making immunity.

Always remember the epinephrine. Allergic reactions to vaccines, while not common, do happen. Epinephrine is smart cheap insurance.

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