

# Calf Risk Assessment Checklist

## 1. Calving Area

### Cleanliness of the calving area

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor  
(clean, dry, well-bedded, bedding changed regularly)

### Frequency of calving area observation

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor  
(heifers and cows are monitored, dystocia cases are assisted)

### Post delivery procedures

#### Prompt removal of calf from contaminated surroundings

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor  
(calving pen, dirty dam, adult cow manure, and air-borne pathogens)

#### Navel dipped with 7% tincture of iodine

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor  
(timing, tincture used, re-dipping as needed)

## 2. Colostrum management

### Colostrum feeding schedule delivers 200g IgG within 12 hours

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor  
(1<sup>st</sup> feeding ASAP, quantity is related to quality & timing)

### Colostrum quality is monitored regularly

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor  
(Colostrometer, Brix refractometer)

### Colostrum bacteria content is monitored regularly

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor  
(quantity & species of bacteria, coliform count < 5,000 cfu/ml)

### As needed, only colostrum from disease-free cows is fed

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor  
(discard Johne's, BVD, salmonella, mycoplasma)

### As needed, colostrum is chilled and stored properly to preserve quality

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor  
(clean, chilled, covered, bacteria count monitored regularly)

### Colostrum is warmed correctly and fed at calf's body temperature

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor  
(thawing frozen, warming, feeding temperatures monitored)

### Immunoglobulin (IgG) absorption is monitored regularly

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor  
(written records kept on Blood Serum Total Protein values of sampled calves)

### Colostrum supplements and or replacers are used properly

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor  
(manufacturer's mixing instructions followed, given ASAP after birth)

## 3. Housing environment

### Housing minimizes spread of pathogens from calf to calf

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor  
(individual pens or hutches, minimal contact, or small pen size – for more detailed recommendations see also Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council, Appendix 1 “Welfare of the artificially reared calf.” The link is [HERE](#) and the URL to put into your Internet browser is on the next page:

**Housing minimizes exposure to moisture and manure to keep calves hair coat clean and dry**

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor

(dry bedding, enough bedding, clean bedding, minimizes muck exposure)

**Housing minimizes exposure to airborne pathogens**

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor

(low ammonia levels, minimal exposure to adult cow air)

**Housing is free of drafts**

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor

(calves are not hunched up, hair coat on end, shivering)

**Housing minimizes passing pathogens from one generation to the next**

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor

(at least one week between calves, cleaned with minimum 70°C water)

**Good biosecurity practices are followed consistently**

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor

(clean clothes, boots, hands; sick calves separated, sick calves cared for last, wear gloves for sick calves)

#### 4. Nutrition

**Ad-lib clean water is provided for all calves all the time**

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor

**Feeding program provides adequate energy levels**

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor

(energy adjusted to deal with stresses of heat, cold, changing weather, sickness, and for developmental needs)

**As needed, milk feeding practices minimize bacterial exposure**

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor

(monitor bacteria levels)

**Equipment cleaning procedures minimize bacterial exposure**

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor

(feeding equip. scrubbed and allowed to dry between every feeding)

**Milk or milk replacer is prepared consistently every feeding**

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor

(consistent feeding temperature, consistent dry matter content)

**Calves are fed at the same time each day, youngest to oldest**

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 Poor