

CALVES AND WATER

Be sure calves have plenty of water to drink in hot weather. Calves less than two weeks old may only drink one pint or less daily.

Water goes into the rumen. It mixes with grain and supports fermentation. This fermentation of grain stimulates the development of the rumen lining. It is fair to say that water is important to promote efficient growth and maintain strong resistance to disease.

A calf's need for water goes up as the air temperature increases. Expect normal water consumption up to about 70 degrees.

Temperatures in the high 70's and low 80's will cause calves to drink about 1/3 more water than usual if water is available.

Expect water consumption to double when temperatures hit the high 80's and low 90's.

Some producers for their oldest calves have collected a number of used 5-gallon pails to use as water pails. Often when calves are weaned their water consumption will at least double. These big pails provide enough reserve capacity so that twice-daily water feeding is unnecessary for the oldest calves.

Sam Leadley, Calf & Heifer Management Specialist

sleadley@yahoo.com www.atticacows.com

For Calves with Sam blog go to dairycalfcare.blogspot.com

© Attica Vet. Assoc. 2017 All Rights Reserved.