

Are you offering your calves ad lib water?

Trials carried out in UK by Volac showed that at even high levels of milk replacer feeding calves with ad lib water compared to those without water had 51% higher preweaned daily live weight gains at weaning. Note the 15kg (33 lbs.) difference in calf starter concentrate consumption between “no water” and “water” calves!

These trials also showed that regardless of milk feeding program calves with water sustained their growth advantage out to 11 weeks of age (19% greater liveweights with water vs. no water preweaning).

Their research findings appear below in the table:

Milk Replacer Fed	Low Powder (21.6kg	Concentration per calf)	High Powder (32.4kg	Concentration per calf)
Water available to weaning	No	Yes	No	Yes
Calf liveweight at start (kg)	52.7	45.8	56.3	50.1
DLWG to weaning (kg)	0.33	0.55	0.43	0.65
Calf starter concentrate, total fed to weaning (kg)	10.4	26.3	10.0	25.4
Calf liveweight at 11 wks (kg)	97.8	99.6	106.2	111.8

Key: DLWG = Daily live weight gain
1 kilogram (kg) = 2.2 pounds

Reference: accessed 2017 <http://www.volac.com/news/agriculture-news/news189/water-is-essential-for-all-forms-of-life> [no longer online].