

Consequences of Feeding Free Choice Water to Pre-Weaned Heifer Calves

Improvement of free choice water over no water:

- **45 percent increase in grain intake in first four weeks.**
- **60 percent increase in weight gained in first four weeks.**

	Water Feeding	Method
	Free Choice	None
Number of calves	20	21
Calf starter grain intake (pounds) in first 4 weeks	25.8	17.8
Weight gain (pounds) in first 4 weeks	18.6	11.6
Water consumed (quarts) in first 4 weeks	47	None

Reference: Kurtz, A.F., L.F. Reutzler, and J.H. Mahoney, "ad libitum water intake by neonatal calves and its relationship to calf starter intake, weight gain, feces scores, and season." American Journal of Dairy Science 67:2964-2969.

Note that calves were very likely being fed only 1 pound of 20-20 milk replacer/day ration in the mid 1980's associated with very early calf starter grain consumption.

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