



Issue 5, 2018

Welcome back to Calf-Link! In this issue our focus is on Bobby calves – often lower on our list of priorities over spring, but it is still vitally important that we do them well.

We have an obligation and responsibility to look after the welfare of all of the animals within our care - bobbies are no less important than any other group of animals on the farm. While the calves themselves will benefit from our TLC, it is also important to consistently improve the public perception of our industry. It can be all too easy for tourists or animal rights groups to take a photo which shows a less savoury side of dairy farming in a poor light. Photos of bobby calves like the ones in this newsletter are unlikely to lead to dramatic negative headlines and viral internet stories!

Bobby Calves

- Treat all calves, (replacements and bobbies), the same way to ensure their welfare and reduce the likelihood of disease.
- Bobbies need colostrum too! (4L within the first 24hrs).
- Ensure bobbies are moved to a sheltered, draft-free calf shed as soon as practical after birth.
- Housing needs to be dry with comfortable, clean bedding & a fresh water source.
- Transport of bobby calves to processing should pose minimal risk of spreading disease. However, ensure there is as little cross over as possible between the truck/drivers and the inside of your calf sheds to reduce the risk of transmitting viruses, bacteria and Mycoplasma.bovis.



Top Tips!

- Remember to keep checking the calves water supply is clean!
- If you have several new calves to tube feed, use a marker spray so you know who has been fed

Fit for transport Tick all 8 to leave the gate



- 4 days old
- Ears up and eyes bright
- Correct eartag
- Dry navel
- No scours
- Firm, worn hooves
- Standing and walking
- Full tummy – no antibiotic milk

Don't forget to enter this year's competition for your top calf rearing tips and pearls of wisdom. Each week we will publish a pertinent pointer and all contributors will go into the draw to win a fantastic chilly bin packed with goodies. Message 027 5500 505 with your tip and the reference "Calfink" and be in to win!