

Welcome to our latest Calf-Link. As the weather warms up and the days lengthen, many calves are now happily bouncing around out on the grass. However we are still seeing new cases of scours coming in, sometimes in these older calves. Dealing with scouring calves is an expensive, emotional and time consuming job so we have put some pointers together to help you get through the episode relatively unscathed.



Treating Scouring Calves

1) Diagnose

If the scour is due to nutritional vs infectious causes:

Nutritional: caused by a change in feeding routine or environmental factors; the calves remain bright and well, with normal temperatures (38-38.5°); the scour resolves when feeding routine is set.

Infectious: caused by viruses, bacteria & protozoa; the calves usually run a fever, rapidly become dehydrated and sick unwell and may die. Poo samples are required to establish the cause and correct treatment for the scouring.

2) Treat:

- Isolate sick calves to a sick pen with different air-space. Use solid partitions between pens.
- Extra biosecurity to reduce spread of disease: Foot bath, new gumboots & overalls, gloves! Spray pens daily.
- Collect faecal samples (at least 3) to bring to us for diagnosis. Specific causes (eg rotavirus, crypto) have targeted therapies to speed recovery, it is important to use the ones that will work!
- Bacteria can invade the damaged intestine wall, so in some cases antibiotics may be needed.
- Keep feeding colostrum or milk! (Calves need the energy and nutrient value this provides.) Colostrum also has antibodies that are able to neutralise infectious organisms in the gut.
- Supplement milk feeds with electrolytes (salts and sugars) to combat dehydration.
- Recommended electrolytes:
 - **Mild scours** - Enerlect;
 - **Moderate** (scouring but still drinking) - Revive;
 - **Severe cases** - Diarrest.
- Have ad-lib (as much as they like, whenever they like) electrolytes available in pens. Ensure all calves also have access to clean fresh water at all times.
- Tube calves that won't drink—keeping up the fluids is vital
- For valuable calves, we are able to give intravenous fluids that can dramatically improve severely dehydrated calves.
- Anti-inflammatories can be of huge benefit in getting the calf back to drinking sooner.

Feeding scouring calves:

- 2 L milk in morning
- 2 L electrolytes at noon
- 2 L milk in afternoon
- 2 L electrolytes in evening (severe scours)
- Ad-lib electrolytes overnight

Top Tips!

Have you tried:

Adding sodium bentonite clay into your calf rearing regime? It is a dietary supplement that can help reduce the effect and prevalence of scours as well as help wean calves onto eating meal.

Ask your Clutha vet or our retail staff about adding sodium bentonite to your calf diet. Available for only \$17.90 for a 25kg bag- Give it a go!

This year's competition is for your top calf rearing tips and pearls of wisdom. To go into the draw to win the chilly bin below, message 027 5500 505 with your tip and the reference "Calfink" and be in to win!

Remember to check out our facebook page - facebook@cluthavets.co.nz

