

How to Use a Misco BRIX Digital Refractometer to Determine Colostrum Quality

1. COLLECT COLOSTRUM SAMPLE

- Only a few drops of colostrum is needed
- Fresh, refrigerated or thawed colostrum may be used

2. CALIBRATING REFRACTOMETER

- Do once daily before use
- Press GO button to turn on
- Press MENU button to “Set Zero?” then press “GO”
- When window states: “Apply water, Press GO”, flip open lid, place 1 - 2 drops of distilled water on the eye of the well (be sure to cover completely), close lid and press GO
- Window should now read “BRIX 0.0”

3. TEST COLOSTRUM SAMPLE

- Press MENU until you get to “Brix [GO] to set”
- Open lid & wipe off water with Kim-Wipe
- Place 1 - 2 drops of colostrum on well
- Close lid and press GO for BRIX reading
- NOTE: Clean well between samples using distilled water and a Kim-Wipe. When finished, rinse the well with distilled water and dry. Use Kim-wipes to prevent scratching the glass.

4. RESULTS

- > 22% High Quality Colostrum (Green) - Feed newborns 1st and 2nd feedings
- 18% - 22% Moderate Quality Colostrum (Yellow) - Can be used for 2nd and 3rd feeding
- < 18% Low Quality Colostrum (Red) - Mix with transition milk, feed to calves 2+ days old

5. GOALS

- > 22%

6. ACTION PLAN IF LOW ANTIBODIES

- Add a colostrum supplement to 18% - 22% colostrum to boost over 22% or if low quantity
 - NOTE: Beware of boosting too high; follow manufacturer directions; consult veterinarian
- Use a colostrum replacer if colostrum is <18% or very low quantity
- Freeze or refrigerate > 22% colostrum and feed for 1st and 2nd feedings
- Consult your ANIMART veterinarian to review your colostrum collection and storage procedures and to review your Dry Cow and Heifer Management Programs to boost the level of antibodies in your herd's colostrum

For more information, contact:

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*How to instructions for Misco models #PA201 & #PA202X

