Prevention of calf scours can be difficult. The absorption of the antibodies from good quality colostrum is the first line of defense and the foundation which other factors depend upon. Sanitation is the other means to prevent scours. Ideally, both strategies will be utilized together.

The only way to administer antibodies against these diseases is through the mouth and into the gut, where absorption takes place.

There are two ways to do this:
1. Vaccinate the cow against these pathogens so her colostrum is full of specific antibodies.
2. Use products containing these specific antibodies and administer directly to the calf.

Both methods are time dependent; the sooner they are administered, the more complete the absorption.

**Vaccines for Pregnant Cows**
There are several vaccines available for pregnant cows:
- Guardian™ by Merck
- ScourGuard 4 K/C™ by Pfizer
- Scour Bos™ by Novartis

There are differences in the vaccination schedule and pathogen combinations as well as differences in their slaughter withdrawal. It is very important to follow the vaccination schedule of the vaccine used to ensure that antibodies in colostrum are maximized.

There are many colostrum replacer choices if an operation decides not to use the cow’s colostrum. A good quality replacer will have IgG levels over 100 grams. It is vital that sufficient amounts be administered in the first twelve hours of life when the calf’s ability to absorb the antibodies is at its highest.
Calf Scours Prevention

Calf Vaccines & Scouring Aids

There are several products available, to be given directly to the calf, that supply antibodies against bacteria, viruses and toxins.

- **First Defense™** boluses by Immucel, offers protection against E. coli and coronavirus.
- **Calf Guard™** by Pfizer, a modified live vaccine given orally to newborns that helps control scours caused by Rota and Corona viruses.
- **Bovine Ecolizer + C20™** by Novartis, contains an antitoxin against Clostridium perfringens and an antiserum against E. coli that aids in the prevention of scours caused by those agents.
- **BoviCare™** by Mg Biologics, contains Cryptosporidium parvum egg derived proteins that are designed to meet enteric health needs and promote increased feed efficiency and weight gains.

The timing of administration for all products is critical. These products need to be given at least an hour prior to the first feeding to allow for adequate absorption. Once the first colostrum enters the digestive tract, it hinders the absorption of these products.

Key Areas to Inspect for Cleanliness

Good sanitation is the other key to preventing calf scours. Remember, a calf explores its environment with its tongue and the causative agents of scours are contracted orally.

Six critical areas/items to investigate:

1. **Calving pen (most critical)**
   - Clean and bed this area as frequently as possible.
   - Almost every animal on a farm will be in this area in the course of a year, therefore every pathogen on a farm will be concentrated in this area. Anything that comes in contact with a newborn calf should be sanitized thoroughly after every use.

2. **Colostrum milking buckets and hoses**
   - Sanitize thoroughly after every milking.
   - Change hoses regularly.

3. **Esophageal feeders**
   - Sanitize thoroughly after every use.

4. **Bottles and nipples**
   - Sanitize thoroughly after every use.
   - Use brushes specially designed to clean nipples.

5. **Feeding buckets**
   - Wash after every use.

6. **Hutches and individual calf pens**
   - Thoroughly sanitize and wash in between calves.

Heifers are the future of the business. Everything possible should be done to keep them healthy.

For more information contact:
Katie Kohn - Professional Services Manager
920.319.4341 l katief@animart.com

866.986.9404 animart.com