

Calf Milk Replacer Feeding Guidelines

Milk Replacer

Milk Replacer is a consistent quality feed to meet the growth and development targets of the young calf. Feed at routine regular intervals to avoid gorging and upsetting digestion of the feed. As a general rule, calves need to drink 10% of their bodyweight, e.g. a calf of 40kg needs 4L per day.

The optimal drinking temperature of the calf milk replacer is 39°C. To prepare the milk, dissolve the powder in two-thirds of the amount of water at 55-60°C. Then add the remaining water at room temperature until the optimum drinking temperature is reached. Note: 1 kg of milk powder in 7L water gives 8L milk

Calf Management Practices

There are many other factors to consider when feeding Milk Replacer and it is also important to pay attention to the following calf management practises:

Feed Ingredients: Use high quality ingredients which are palatable and of suitable texture and particle size to stimulate rumen function.

Concentrates: Introduce from Day 3 onwards. Give in small amounts and no more than is consumed in a 12 hour period and change the feed regularly. Target 1kg/head/day pre weaning with calves ready to be weaned when they eat >1.5 kg of concentrate per day. Offer calf starter feed from 3-5 days to 4 months and change to a growing ration post weaning to achieve daily intakes of 2.5-3.0 kg head/day.

Equipment: All feed equipment must be clean to avoid unnecessary cross contamination of unwanted pathogens.

Water: Clean fresh water should be available at all times.

Hygiene: Clean all materials that come in contact with the milk thoroughly.

Stress: Good management and environmental conditions avoids unnecessary stress. Avoid sudden changes to feed and group calves to size ensuring all have adequate feeding space.

Observe: Regularly check the colour and solidity of the calves' dung.

Adequate Roughage and Water: Ensure that the calves have enough fresh roughage, preferably top quality straw, from the age of 2 weeks. Ensure that fresh drinking water is at their disposal at all times. Insufficient water slows rumen development and reduces feed conversion rates. Dry feed intake is stimulated by adequate water intake.

Feeding Guidelines

Our feeding schedule is a good guideline, but it is important to note that some calves might need special attention. The amount of milk should be adjusted to the needs of the calf.

TABLE: Vitalac Milk Replacer Bucket Feeding (Twice a day feeding)

| AGE | CONCENTRATION g/L | L/FEEDING | FEEDINGS/DAY |
|-----------|------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Day 0-3 | Colostrum In abundance | | |
| Day 4-7 | 100 | 2.0 | 2 |
| Day 8-14 | 125 | 2.0 | 2 |
| Day 15-21 | 125 | 2.5 | 2 |
| Day 22-49 | 125 | 3.0 | 2 |
| Day 50-56 | 125 | 2.5 | 2 |
| Day 57-63 | 125 | 2.0 | 2 |
| Day 64-70 | 125 | 1.5 | 2 |

TABLE: Vitalac Milk Replacer Automatic Feeding (Twice-a-day feeding)

| PERIOD - AGE | NO. OF DAYS | CONCENTRATION g/L | START PERIOD (L/DAY) | END PERIOD (L/DAY) |
|--------------|-------------|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Day 0-3 | 3 | Colostrum In abundance | | |
| Day 4-22 | 17 | 125 | 3.0 | 6.0 |
| Day 22-49 | 28 | 125 | 6.0 | 6.0 |
| Day 49-63 | 14 | 125 | 6.0 | 2.0 |
| Day 63-70 | 7 | 125 | 2.0 | 0 |

Agritech recommend twice-a-day feeding. However, our Vitalac Blue Milk Replacer is ideally suited for once-a-day feeding, due to the higher level of concentrates. However Vitalac Blue can also be used for twice-a-day feeding. Please see our guidelines below when feeding Vitalac Blue in a once-a-day system.

TABLE: Vitalac Blue Milk Replacer Bucket Feeding (Once-a-day feeding)

| AGE | CONCENTRATION g/L | L/FEEDING | FEEDINGS/DAY |
|-----------|------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Day 0-3 | Colostrum In abundance | | |
| Day 4-7 | 100 | 2.0 | 2 |
| Day 8-14 | 125 | 2.0 | 2 |
| Day 15-28 | 125 | 2.5 | 2 |
| Day 29-49 | 200 | 3.0 | 1 |
| Day 50-70 | 200 | 1.5 | 1 |

***Use this feeding schedule as a guideline**