1. PURPOSE

Calves’ ability to absorb immunity factors from colostrum starts to decrease soon after birth. As a result, producers need to ensure calves receive adequate colostrum as soon as possible to maintain their health, growth and vigor.

2. RESPONSIBILITY

All permanent, casual and student staff.

3. MATERIAL

3.1 Pail
3.2 Refractometer
3.3 Colostrum Quality Readings sheet
3.4 Colostrum bag
3.5 Funnel
3.6 Jug
3.7 Thermometer

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 Harvest Colostrum (Maximum 10Litres) in a milking pail as per corresponding SOP;
   - DC-609: Milking Pail Cows in a Tie Stall or
   - DC-610: Milking Pail Cows in a Box Stall.

4.2 Transport the pail to the lab/necropsy room.

4.3 Test the colostrum quality by placing a small drop of the colostrum on the refractometer.
   - Good quality colostrum (≥22 BRIX)
   - Below grade colostrum (< 22BRIX)

   **NOTE**
   STAPH or Leucosis Positive colostrum: measuring more than 22brix should be:
   - Labelled “STAPH” or Leucosis Positive on the bag
   - Used only for bull calves, beef breeds, or crossbreeds.

4.4 Record results on the Colostrum Quality Readings Record (Appendix DC-A-5A: Colostrum Quality Reading Record)

4.5 Identify colostrum bag with:
   - Dam name
   - Calf number
   - Date collected
   - Quality (% Brix)

   4.5.1 Fill the colostrum bag using a jug and funnel, Do not overfill the bag because it will expand!
   4.5.2 Seal and immediately store the bag in the walk-in freezer. Stored colostrum has a shelf life of 12 months.
   4.5.3 Wash all materials used with Della-Clean Extra (“Bulk Tank soap”)

4.6 THAWING COLOSTRUM: For feeding instructions, Refer to SOP DC-505: Calf Feeding

   4.6.1 Remove from freezer. Thaw the oldest one first. Thaw the colostrum bag in a bucket of hot water (1-1.5 hours). Establish that the colostrum is in liquid form by feeling the bag. However, it will not be at the adequate temperature to feed the calf.
4.6.2 When completely thawed, transfer colostrum from the bag to the nipple bottle.
4.6.3 Take the temperature of the colostrum using a cooking thermometer.
4.6.4 Feed the calf when the temperature reaches 98-100°F
4.6.5 If below adequate temperature:
   4.6.5.1 Continue to warm the colostrum by placing the bottle in a small pail of hot water.
   4.6.5.2 Take temperature every 5 minutes to avoid overheating.
   4.6.5.3 If overheated, remove the bottle from water and test temperature frequently until it reaches the adequate temperature (98-100°F)

Document Status and Revision History

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