

# Steuben County 4-H Started Calf Project

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ 4-H Club \_\_\_\_\_

## SELECTION OF CALF

Purchase of select only healthy, strong calves. If possible, calves that have colostrum for the first 12 days after birth are the best. Larger calves are usually the most desirable. Calves weighing 90 pounds or more at birth are suggested.

## MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

I. Housing- Calves are required clean, dry well ventilated, but draft-free stalls. Optimum temperatures are 50 degrees to 70 degrees F, but calves can withstand widely divergent temperatures if they are dry and protected from drafts. Good sanitation is very important. Manure and wet bedding should be removed daily.

II. Feeding- Proper feeding should be geared to avoid digestive upsets; to provide needed energy, protein, minerals, and vitamins; and to get them weaned and on dry feed as soon as possible.

A. Milk or Milk Replacer- Milk is nature's best food for the calf, as its dry matter is high energy, protein, calcium, and other minerals. Milk replacer may be used rather than milk because of convenience and cost. Be sure the calf drinks. A few guidelines to follow when feeding a milk replacer are:

1. It is recommended an all-milk product milk replacer be used.
2. Mix and feed according to manufacturer's directions.
3. Measure ingredients carefully and make changes gradually.

B. Calf Starter and Hay- should be offered to the calf from the first few weeks on and kept fresh. Starters should contain 16-20% protein and 6-8% crude fiber. Hay should be of good quality and not fed to the extent it limits grain consumption.

C. Water should be available free choice from the time the calf is started on milk or milk replacer. A small amount should be provided at first, so the calf doesn't drink too much.

D. Weaning- A good rule of thumb is to wean the calf from milk when it consumes 1-1 ½ pounds of grain per day on a regular basis (previous 4 days). The consumption of starter will increase more after weaning. Depending on how well the calf develops, it may be 4-8 weeks of age when it is weaned.

III. Diseases- Despite good management and sanitation programs, calves may get sick due to stress of handling, transporting, and the new environment. Any setback due to disease can mean the difference between profit and loss. Calves should be observed carefully at each feeding for any signs of disease or abnormally.

Two diseases that are most often problems with young calves are scours and pneumonia. Scours cause severe diarrhea, gaunt appearance, rough hair coat, and dehydration. Pneumonia is characterized by coughs, rapid respiration and a fever. Early detection, diagnosis and treatment of a disease is critically important in recovery.

### JUDGING CRITERIA

Calves should be healthy. Large-boned with a deep body, and thrifty, but not fat.

### Recommendations for the Steuben County 4-H Started Calf Program

#### General Information

- \* Provide calves with clean dry pens
- \* Use a pail or nipple bottle for feeding milk. Clean Equipment thoroughly after each use.
- \* Supply plenty of fresh feed and water to calves at all times.
- \* Use a high quality milk replacer that provides 20-22% crude protein and 15-20% fat. Always feed milk replacer two times a day. **First and second feeding:** Feed ¼ lb of milk replacer powder mixed well in two quarts of warm water. **Third feeding:** Feed 1/3 lb of milk replacer powder mixed in quarts of warm water. **Fourth feeding through weaning:** Feed 1 lb of milk replacer powder mixed well in two quarts of warm water. Calves should be weaned between four and six weeks of age.

#### Grain Feeding

- \* First grain mix should be a highly palatable 16% or 18% Protein Calf Starter.
- \* For the fastest rate of gain, limit hay intake to a maximum of 1-2 lbs per head per day. We **recommend feeding grain only**, however, it must be fed properly and available at all times. If no hay is fed, the starter should contain 8-10% crude fiber.

Calf Weight	Protein Level	Expected Grain Intake (lbs / hd / day)	Expected Average Daily Gain
100-150	18%	3.0	1.25
150-250	16%	7.0	2.80
250-350	15%	9.5	3.00
350-450	14%	12.0	3.10

4-H STARTED CALF RECORD SHEET

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

4-H Club \_\_\_\_\_

Years in 4-H \_\_\_\_\_ Years in Project \_\_\_\_\_

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I have reviewed this record and believe it to be correct.

Signature of Member \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/ Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Rate of Gain Worksheet – All 4-H'ers to complete.

*By using this story problem, fill in the blanks below.*

Don's calf weighed 146 pounds at the spring weigh – in. Don took his calf home and fed it for 73 days then exhibited it at the county fair. At the fair, John's calf weighed 365 pounds. John used 810 pounds of feed at a total cost of \$160.00 to feed his calf the 73 days.

Final weight of animal \_\_\_\_\_

Initial weight of animal \_\_\_\_\_

Total weight gain \_\_\_\_\_

Number of day fed \_\_\_\_\_

Average daily gain \_\_\_\_\_

Total pounds feed fed \_\_\_\_\_

Pounds feed per pound again \_\_\_\_\_

Total feed cost \_\_\_\_\_

Feed cost per pound gain \_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR PROJECT

1. What breed of Started Calf are you exhibiting and what did you look for in selecting it?

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2. Calves require clean, dry, and \_\_\_\_\_, but draft- free stalls.

3. Did you have any health problems? Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_. What did you do to prevent or treat disease? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What percentage crude protein does a high quality milk replacer provide? \_\_\_\_\_

5. A good rule of thumb is to wean a calf from milk when it consumes \_\_\_\_\_ pounds of grain per day.

6. How did you provide salt and minerals to your animals? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. How did you gain knowledge of this project? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Water should be available \_\_\_\_\_ from the time the calf is started on milk.

9. List at least three things you have learned in your project this year.

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

10. How do you plan to improve this project next year? (Include practices such as feeding, management. etc.)

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