

CALVING EASE

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The Right Temperature Water

There are lots of “right” temperatures for water when working with calves. The problem is getting the desired temperature when we want it. What are some of the solutions to this problem?

Enough Hot Water

Getting cold enough water is seldom a problem. Hot water in adequate quantities is often a problem. Many of us share a water heater with the dairy milk house. That means working around the wash cycle for the milking equipment. In other places the problem is a water heater that’s too small or has too long a recovery time.

Whenever possible the best solution is a water heater dedicated to the calf enterprise. Thirty-gallon heaters are almost always too small. Sixty and eighty gallon heaters or those with rapid recovery provide a much more dependable supply when it is needed.

Blending Hot and Cold Water

A few farms have a mixer fixture that even permits a hose to be connected to it. Some of us have come up with arrangements that achieve the same goals but with quite different means. Ideally, we ought to be able to easily blend hot and cold water to get the temperature needed. Also, it’s very convenient to be able to direct this water into either a wash sink or through a hose to fill buckets, tanks and tubs.

The sketch below is a composite of arrangements observed on several farms here in Western New York. Note that the shutoff's are simple ball-type valves that only require a 90° turn to go from full off to full on. I've seen the assembly made of either copper tubing or galvanized iron pipe. If it was properly supported maybe plastic pipe would work.

CALF FEEDER'S TIP

Many of us are now using butane heated dehorers. But, have you noticed that they don't seem to work as well in winter weather as they did last summer? Here are two tips. First, when not using the dehorner between calves put it into some kind of container. Sam uses a 10-quart metal pail. Pam likes a coffee tin. This keeps it out of the wind and helps maintain a high tip temperature. The second tip is to keep the fuel container warm. That way refueling is quick and easy. Pam uses a coffee can filled with hot water with a plastic lid. A hole in the lid holds the fuel container in just the right position to keep it warm.

If you know of someone that doesn't currently receive **Calving Ease** but would like to, tell them to **WRITE** to **Calving Ease**, 11047 River Road, Pavilion, NY 14525 or to **CALL** either 585-591-2660 (Attica Vet Assoc. office) or 585-343-8128 (Offhaus Farms Office) or **FAX** (585-591-2898) or **e-mail** sleadley@frontiernet.net or pams91@2ki.net . A limited number of back issues may be accessed on the Internet at www.calfnotes.com and clicking on the link, Calving Ease. PLEASE NOTE THE NEW WEB SITE ADDRESS FOR CALF NOTES.