

Weekly Article

Proper Cow Nutrition = Healthy Calves

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Hello, my Name is Richard Purdin with OSU Extension, Ag and Natural Resource Educator and Community Development Educator for Adams County. I hope to better inform local producers and the public of the latest news in the world of agriculture. The last couple of mornings have given producers some natural concrete. This was nice for feeding livestock, moving hay, and hauling manure. I took advantage of some of the solid ground this weekend to set some fence post. To my surprise the soil was on the loose and dry side 12"-18" below the soil surface. For many beef cattle producers the day-to-day chores of the winter can be grueling not only for them but their livestock too. Winter weather can have a direct effect on livestock health and for cow calf producers this is also the time of year that cattle maintenance levels are much high due to spring calving season being just around the corner. The way cows are maintained right now can have a direct effect on the health of newborn calves this spring. Here are some factors that need to be considered before calving season begins.

- Maintain cow body weight. During the winter, cows can lose weight easily. 80% of fetal growth occurs 4-6 weeks before calving. In this time cows are also producing colostrum. Good cow nutrition = vitamin rich colostrum= healthy calves.
- Cattle with low body weights will most likely deliver calves with low body weights. When cows start lactating it becomes harder to maintain body weight. Feeding your cows proper mineral and protein supplement will allow cows to stay healthy and strong while raising their calf. This will also have a direct effect on weaning weights and rebreeding.
- Assist cows during difficult births as soon as possible. It is critical to get calves on the grown, up, and nursing as soon as possible.
- Always have extra Colostrum on hand, research shows that the healthiest calves are up within 30 minutes of birth and consume colostrum within 1 hour of birth. Calves should have access to at least 2 quarts of colostrum within 6 hours of birth. Poor mother cow nutrition can lead to poor quality colostrum, this can cause selenium and copper deficiencies in young calves.
- Have a clean birthing environment. Mud can carry many pathogens and diseases that can be a threat to a young calf's immune system. Keeping cows in a clean dry pasture or birthing barn/pen can help keep calves healthy from the start to finish.

Some other details to go over:

- The OSU Extension Office will be closed to the public and OSU Extension staff will be teleworking from home starting December 21st, 2020 to January 15th, 2021. If you need assistance you can still contact us at (937) 544-2339
- 2021 Fertilizer/Pesticide Private Applicators in person course is planned for March 9th at the Cherry Fork Community Center (gym) 5:00pm – 9:00pm. If you need recertified, you should get an invitation in the mail. (due to covid19 date is tentative and susceptible to change)
- February 15th, 22nd, and March 1st OSU will be hosting a three-part workshop on Farm Succession Planning. This workshop will be offered virtually 6:30pm to 8:30pm. The course fee is \$40 per farm family. The deadline to register is February 10th go to go.osu.edu/farmsuccession to register.
- For producer who still have not yet elected a 2021 crop safety net program Agriculture Risk Coverage or Price Loss Coverage webinars will be January 13th from 1:00 to 3:00 pm and February 25th 9:00 -11:00am. Go to <http://go.osu.edu/arcplc2021>. The deadline to sign up for this program will be March 15th, 2021.
- January 4th General CRP signup begins, and CRP Grasslands signup will begin March 15th, 2021 and conclude April 23rd, 2021. Contact the Farm Service Agency for assistance in signing up for these programs.
- OSU Extension Beef Team announces the 2021 Ohio State Extension virtual Beef School beginning January 18th, 2021. There will be 6 evenings starting at 6pm and ending at 8pm via webinar, go to https://osu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_N_CtcKYwQB2l60Afug10aA to register.
- OSU Specialty crops team will be presenting a seasonal High Tunnel and Season Extension school beginning January 12th, there will be 6 1-hour webinar training covering 12 different topics related to using seasonal high tunnels to extend the growing season on vegetable and other specialty crops. Register at: <https://go.osu.edu/high-tunnel-school-21>