

# Calf early weaning protocol.

A complete feeding program for early weaning of calves.



## Pre weaning

Calves need to be trained to eat. Educating while cow and calves are still together is critical for success.

The delivery of ProTect Wean C is best done in raised troughing. Elevated troughs bring feed up to a similar level as the cows udder. Providing feed that is elevated helps to successfully transition weaned calves.

- Elevation reduces feed waste and spoilage. Ideally the diet provided during the training period is the same feed the calves will receive once weaned. This diet has a high nutritional value so minimising waste is essential.
- Repeat the feeding process 4-5 times in the days leading up to weaning. As little as 500gms/cow/calf unit per day will be sufficient to imprint. Ideally 80-90% of calves will be trying to feed at the troughs with the cow prior to weaning.
- Water- if calves are being transitioned from dams to troughs, make sure they are exposed to the trough while still on the cow.
- Dehydration has a profoundly negative effect on early weaned calves. Efforts to engage calves with water troughs are paramount.

## Day of weaning

Controlling the space available to calves, immediately post weaning and maintaining their close proximity to feed and water, is critical. Smaller confined areas with shelter to reduce the impact of poor weather are preferred. Reducing the impact of wind helps to maintain calves intake and minimise energy loss.

Calves should be at least 100 kilograms in live-weight at weaning.

It's important to seek advice from your animal nutritionist to ensure animals are not suffering from nutritional stress or health issues.

## Diet

The ProTect Wean C feed pellet is designed to be fed with a roughage source. Ensure animals have access to a quality fibre source such as cereal, or legume hay.

Do not feed ProTect Wean C at 100% of the diet, fibre is required. Induct animals carefully onto feed. Increase intake of ProWean C by following the protocol to minimise risk of digestive upset.

## Animal health treatments

Vaccinating for clostridial disease is critical. (5 in 1 or 7 in 1). Young calves in a tough season may have struggled to obtain adequate antibodies provided through the cows' milk in the early stages of lactation. Supporting the immune system of calves is critical to minimise their risk of respiratory disease, pink eye, and nasal discharge. An injection of vitamin A, D and E can help maximise calves immunity.

The use of vitamin B12 injections can help with increasing appetite and energy utilisation.

## Important management

- Access to trough space is critical - all calves must have access to troughing at the same time.
- Clean water troughs daily.
- Inspect feeders daily to ensure feed is not fouled.
- Remove shy feeders and maintain their feeding.

- Continually assess faecal score.
- Take the time to hold calves on feed during the early days of weaning. Effective imprinting leads to a successful weaning program.
- Split calves into groups on weight first and sex second. Once calves are all feeding well, mobs can be boxed.
- Always maintain high quality palatable hay, watch for spoiling and replace hay if it becomes unpalatable.
- Once terminal intake has been achieved maintain a consistent quantity of feed delivered.



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## Weaner feeding program.



10 Days pre-weaning	Day of Weaning	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5 & 6
<p>FEED COWS AND CALVES IN Paddock WITH TROUGHS TO IMPRINT CALVES WITH FEED INFRASTRUCTURE.</p> <p>DO THIS DAILY TO IMPRINT FEEDING BEHAVIOUR</p> <p>SUPPLY "HARD FEED" PREFERABLY THE SAME FEED THAT THEY WILL SEE POST WEANING</p>	<p>DRAFT COWS AND CALVES, PROCESS CALVES WITH ANIMAL HEALTH TREATMENTS AND SPLIT INTO TIGHT WEIGHT RANGES.</p> <p>IDEALLY HAVE NO MORE THAN 40KG WEIGHT VARIATION ACROSS THAT MOB.</p> <p>PROVIDE ACCESS TO ADLIB STRAW/CEREAL HAY</p> <p>PROVIDE ACCESS TO COOL CLEAN WATER</p>	<p>PROVIDE ACCESS TO ADLIB PALATABLE HAY</p> <p>PROVIDE ACCESS TO COOL CLEAN WATER</p>	<p>PROVIDE ACCESS TO ADLIB PALATABLE HAY</p> <p>PROVIDE ACCESS TO COOL CLEAN WATER</p>	<p>PROVIDE ACCESS TO ADLIB PALATABLE HAY</p> <p>PROVIDE ACCESS TO COOL CLEAN WATER</p>	<p>PROVIDE ACCESS TO ADLIB PALATABLE HAY</p> <p>PROVIDE ACCESS TO COOL CLEAN WATER</p>	<p>PROVIDE ACCESS TO ADLIB PALATABLE HAY</p> <p>PROVIDE ACCESS TO COOL CLEAN WATER</p>
		<p><b>AM</b></p> <p>Feed</p> <p><b>250gm/hd</b></p> <p>of diet</p>	<p><b>AM</b></p> <p>Feed</p> <p><b>375gm/hd</b></p> <p>of diet</p>	<p><b>AM</b></p> <p>Feed</p> <p><b>500gm/hd</b></p> <p>of diet</p>	<p><b>AM</b></p> <p>Feed</p> <p><b>625gm/hd</b></p> <p>of diet</p>	<p><b>AM</b></p> <p>Feed</p> <p><b>750gm/hd</b></p> <p>of diet</p>
		<p><b>PM</b></p> <p>If AM diet consumed, feed</p> <p><b>250gm/hd</b></p> <p>of diet</p>	<p><b>PM</b></p> <p>If AM diet consumed, feed</p> <p><b>375gm/hd</b></p> <p>of diet</p>	<p><b>PM</b></p> <p>If AM diet consumed, feed</p> <p><b>500gm/hd</b></p> <p>of diet</p>	<p><b>PM</b></p> <p>If AM diet consumed, feed</p> <p><b>625gm/hd</b></p> <p>of diet</p>	<p><b>PM</b></p> <p>If AM diet consumed, feed</p> <p><b>750gm/hd</b></p> <p>of diet</p>
		<p><b>Day 7 - Day 21</b></p> <p>Maintain feeding at this level until calves reach 120KG</p>	<p>If Transitioning calves to feedlot, follow ProTect C Wean to ProTect C Transition Protocol.</p> <p>If Transitioning calves to paddock, maintain feeding regime at diminishing rates for 7 days.</p>			<p>ProAgni® ProTect C FEED RATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pulse 25%</li> <li>• Cereal grains 70%</li> <li>• ProTect C 5%</li> </ul>

**FEED**  
**500gm COW/CALF**  
**UNIT**  
**3-4 times across this**  
**period, using the**  
**ProTect C Wean.**

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