

# WHAT'S IN YOUR CALVING TOOLKIT?



REGARDLESS OF WHETHER PRODUCERS ARE READY FOR THE CALVING SEASON, CALVES ARE BEING BORN. BEING PREPARED IS ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO ENSURE THAT THE SEASON GOES SMOOTHLY.

HERE ARE A FEW THINGS EVERY PRODUCER'S CALVING TOOLKIT SHOULD CONTAIN

## **1. Veterinarian's phone number**

Call if you are not sure about the calving.

## **2. Long plastic gloves**

These should be worn when examining the cow to protect you and the cow. If these are not available, be sure to wash your hands and arms thoroughly, keeping all materials as clean as possible.

## **3. Pail of warm water.**

## **4. Disinfectant**

Udder wash diluted in warm water or a suitable iodine preparation can be used to wash the plastic gloves and cow's vulva.

## **5. Clean towels and paper towels.**

## **6. Lubricant**

Use a veterinary lubricant or a light mineral oil or Vaseline or Crisco oil.

## **7. Calving chains plus two handles**

Put one loop above the dewclaw and the other below the dewclaw. Use one chain for each leg. Put the large link on top of the foot, so the pull is on the topside.

## **8. Tags, notebook and pencil**

## **9. Special Equipment**

A calving jack and calf snare – be familiar with and know how to use these pieces of equipment before calving starts.

## **10. String or dental floss**

This would be used to tie off a bleeding navel cord.

## **11. To stimulate breathing have**

- a) cold water to put on the calf's head
- b) clean straw to put in nostril. Do not put your fingers in the calf's mouth – use a clean paper towel or apply pressure with your hand from the eyes on down to the nostrils to clear the nasal cavity of mucus.

## **12. Colostrum**

Have a supply of fresh, frozen or commercial colostrum available for calves: from thin cows, cows with large teats, twins, premature calves, from difficult or cesarean deliveries and/or uterine prolapses.

## **13. Nipple bottle or esophageal feeder**

Ensure that the calf gets colostrums. Try the nipple bottle first but make sure that at least 4 litres of colostrums are given to the calf within 6 hours after birth.

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