

Healthy calf rearing system checklist summary

This checklist aims to provide a structured approach to assess a calf rearing system. It is designed to be completed DAILY or WEEKLY. For a more comprehensive analysis please complete the full calf rearing system checklist.

Nutrition		Yes	No	Comments/actions required
Calves have access to clean, fresh water at all times				
Calves have access to good-quality starter feed at all times				
Ventilation				
Airy, pleasant smell when entering the calf shed				
Air speed at calf level (0.15m/s stale, 0.2m/s ideal, 0.3m/s means there is a draught)	m/s	N/A	N/A	
Humidity				
Relative humidity (Levels should be below 75%)	%	N/A	N/A	
Calf shed feels dry				
Gutters and drains working and clean				
Stocking density adequate (1.5m ² /calf for calves weighing less than 150kg)				
Calves housed with other calves of similar age				
Bedding				
Bedding is dry and clean (check by kneeling in bedding)				
Calves' legs covered by straw when laid down				
Temperature				
Temperature of calf shed (if below 15°C increase concentration of calf milk replacer) and consider use of calf jackets, blankets and heaters	°C	N/A	N/A	
No signs of heat stress (Sweating, panting, drinking excessively, rectal temperature above 39.4°C)				
Hygiene				
Calving area clean and well bedded				
Calving ropes cleaned, disinfected and well maintained				
Pens steam cleaned using an appropriate disinfectant after each calf				
Feeding equipment cleaned and disinfected between feeds				
Calf performance				
Average growth rate from birth (or purchase) to weaning	Kg/day	N/A	N/A	
Average growth rate post weaning	Kg/day	N/A	N/A	
Any signs of calf ill health (use table overleaf)				



Identify problems early

Identifying health problems early reduces the severity and duration of the disease and its spread to other calves. Use this protocol to help identify health problems:

- Use the chart below to check the health of calves twice a day
- Record and monitor these early signs of disease
- Treat if necessary following the advice of the vet
- Take preventative or corrective measures

RESPIRATORY

Signs of good health and vigour

- Bright • Playful • Curious
- Keen to drink milk



- Clear eyes and nose
- No cough

Normal temperature
(38–39°C or 100–102°F)



Look for early signs of disease

- Quiet • Slow to stand
- Still drinking milk



- Discharge from eyes and nose
- Cough on movement

High temperature
(>39.4°C or 103°F)



Late signs of disease

- Dull
- Reluctant to stand unaided
- Off milk

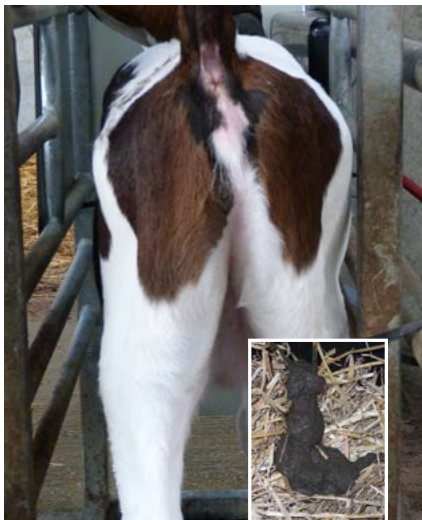


- Severe discharge with pus
- Frequent coughing/wheezing

High temperature
(>39.4°C or 103°F)



SCOURS



- Clean hindquarters
- Well formed faeces

Normal temperature
(38–39 °C or 100–102 °F)



- Dirty hindquarters
- Loose faeces

Variable temperature



- Wet hindquarters • Hair loss
- Dehydrated • Watery faeces

Variable temperature



(Based on information provided by Volac)