

Calves need two quarts of colostrum every 12 hours for the first 36 hours. Colostrum is most effective at one hour, but effectiveness slowly decreases and is of no benefit at 36 hr and later. Milk is still helpful, as it has antibodies that sit in the calf's stomach and fight off salmonella and other infections, but colostrum has the greatest protection.

First calf heifers:

Don't give as much milk as older cows. Also, milk contains antibodies that help protect against any illness that the heifer has been exposed to in her lifetime (there is not as much protection in younger cows as there is in older cows). Calves of all cows, but especially first calf heifers, need colostrums asap. Heifers may not give as much milk because they may be more stressed and on edge due to the newness of calving. They may not eat or drink as much.

Cows with big teats:

Problematic because the calf often cant talk hold of the teat because it is too big. In extreme cases of hot or cold, calves are often not as strong or willing to attempt to nurse. The calf may nurse for a while, but will quickly give up because it is too strenuous and difficult. Cows with big teats should be milked out to aide in reducing teat size.

Older cows:

Also a concern because they don't give as much milk. These cows may have more broken down udders. These cows may be in poorer body condition, which directly affects her milking ability. This iw another reason why it is so important that cows be in BCS 5 or 6 at calving- so they can support their body maintenance and adequately meet their lactation requirements.

May see sick calves in small pastured calving traps- like those suggested in last week's email. Important management decision to make => are you having more issues with calving problems? If so, implement calving pasture. If you have more problems with calf illness, don't implement calving trap, and make sure the cows/newborn calves are not in a closely confined area.