

## NEWS RELEASE

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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EXTENSION

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### Winterize Your Calf Program

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Thanks to Irv Possin, Fond du Lac County UW-Extension Dairy Agent for the following article.

At this time of year, many homeowners have prepared their homes for cold weather by installing more insulation, adding storm windows and checking the furnace. It is time to give your calf housing a check-up as well.

#### **Bedding**

Young calves have more exposed body surface for their size than older animals and lose heat more rapidly. As temperatures fall below 60 degrees, newborn calves start to burn body stores to supply energy for maintenance. One way to cut heat loss is by having dry, clean bedding. If straw is used, it is important to have enough to allow the calf to nest. The nesting effect reduces airflow around the calf, decreasing heat loss. If sawdust or shavings are used, a calf blanket may be needed for calves less than one month old.

#### **Feeding**

The further temperatures drop below 60 degrees, the greater the amount of energy is needed to maintain the calf's core body temperature of 102 degrees. A common rule of thumb is to increase feeding by 1% for each degree below 60 degrees. Thus for an average daily temperature of 40 degrees, the feeding rate should go up by 20%. For example: We have a 20:20 milk replacer mixed according to bag instructions at 8 ounces per 2 quarts. If we have a 100-pound calf with a goal of gaining one pound per day, we need to feed 3 quarts for daily maintenance at 50 degrees plus an additional two quarts for one pound of gain totaling 5 quarts daily. At 30 degrees, we would need 6 quarts of milk replacer daily.

#### **Cool Colostrum Rapidly**

Make sure colostrum is cooled as rapidly as possible. Just because it is cold outside doesn't mean a pail of colostrum will cool down fast enough to slow coliform bacteria growth. Researchers have found that putting a three-gallon pail of colostrum at cow body temperature in a refrigerator only reduced the temperature to 70°F after four hours. A pail does not have enough exposure surface. The colostrum needs to be in two-quart size containers.

#### **Check Rinse and Wash Water Temperatures**

Feeding equipment sanitation is even more critical in the wintertime. It is always recommended to rinse equipment before washing with lukewarm water (100-115°F). Wash water temperature should start at 140°F and never drop below 120°F, even at the end of wash-up. Do not rely on your hands to measure water temperature – use a thermometer.

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## Dates of Interest

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Remember to register for the Manitowoc County Forage Council Forage Seminar and Annual Meeting, along with the Gaining the Competitive Edge Dairy Seminar. Details of the meetings follow:

**Manitowoc County Forage Council Forage Seminar and Annual Meeting**

Friday, January 13, 2006, 10:30 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.

Millhome Supper Club, Hwy. 57 and 32, Kiel

**Pre-registration is required.** The cost for the dinner and materials is \$15.00. Make checks payable to Manitowoc County Forage Council and send payment with your name and address to: Manitowoc County UW-Extension, Attn: Dawn, PO Box 1150, 4319 Expo Drive, Manitowoc, WI 54221-1150, or call the UW-Extension Office at 683-4168 by noon on **Friday, January 6<sup>th</sup>**.

**Gaining the Competitive Edge: A Dairy Seminar Series 2006**

Tuesday, January 17, 2006, 10:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Millhome Supper Club, Hwy. 57 and 32, Kiel

**Pre-registration is required.** The cost for the dinner and materials is \$20/person. Make checks payable to Manitowoc County Treasurer and send payment with your name and address to: Manitowoc County UW-Extension, Attn: Dawn, PO Box 1150, 4319 Expo Drive, Manitowoc, WI 54221-1150, or call the UW-Extension Office at 683-4168 by the registration deadline of **Wednesday, January 11<sup>th</sup>**.

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## Happy Holidays

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Finally, I would like to wish everyone involved in Manitowoc County agriculture, the staff at the Lakeshore Chronicle, and all of the readers of this fine paper a very happy holiday season.

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