

Adams Advanced Nutrition, Inc.

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A Most Important Nutrient - II

A most commonly unrecognized problem related to water nutrition and the management of young calves is the positioning of the water and feed (starter or grower) buckets in individual calf pens.

Trial work at the University of Missouri (Kertz, Andhil, et al) performed during weeks 5-8 of life after early weaning (4 weeks) indicates that when Holstein calves were offered free-choice drinking water and calf grower in two buckets in very close proximity (side-by-side) with no partition ate less feed than when a partition physically separated the water and the feeding buckets. Water and feed were continuously offered, except when the buckets were removed for cleaning. Side-by-side buckets are common on many dairy farms and calf rearing operations. This trial showed that placing a divider between the water and feed buckets increased water intake by 33%, feed intake by 13%, and body weight gain by 18%, compared to calves offered feed and water in a side-by-side arrangement. Cross contamination of feed and water also occurred, resulting in both water and feed quality issues that were not conducive to maximizing free-choice intake.

Separation of the feed and water buckets with a simple divider or partition eliminates contamination. Other ways to help prevent contamination of feed with water (and vice versa) could include placement of the buckets at opposite ends of the calf pen or by mounting the two buckets on opposite sides of the calf hutch. Mounting the buckets far enough apart or with a divider between them so that cross-contamination can not occur is highly recommended. Also, complete replacement of starter or grower feed with fresh feed each day will help maintain the highest quality ration to help maximize growth.

In summary... offer fresh, free-choice (continuously available) drinking water in a separate bucket from feed or milk replacer for young calves beginning at day 1 of life, and until they are moved to group pens. Dry feed consumption will increase and average daily gains can be improved by as much as 61% compared with not providing free-choice drinking water. In colder environments, this may be a challenge. Providing warm drinking water following feeding milk replacer, using bucket heaters, or frequently (e.g., 3 or 4 times per day) checking and providing water will be required to maximize the potential benefits of increased drinking water intake on feed intake and overall growth. Last of all, timely and proper sanitation of both water and feed buckets (and milk replacer buckets or bottles) is important for optimal calf growth.

(edited from Michigan Dairy Review, D.K. Beete, 2005)

**GROW YOUR FUTURE HERD
WITH THE RENAISSANCE
CALF PROGRAM & PRODUCTS!**



Comparing This Year's Silage...

Every year presents its own unique challenges when balancing rations. It is helpful to know what you're dealing with and how it may behave in the rumen. How will this year's silages digest? What are the potential concerns and merits of this year's harvest? Renaissance leads the way when it comes to analysis and study of digestibility and its related impact on ration management and ultimate productivity.

It is very helpful to have corn silage analyzed for starch content, since this can vary widely depending on growing conditions. This has a dramatic effect on ration formulation. NDF digestibility is important for estimating energy content. Paying careful attention to more standard tests such as NDF, ADF, protein, mineral fractions, etc., is important too, since these impact nutrition and productivity. Fermentation analysis is another important tool that measures a forage's volatile fatty acid profile – lactic acid, acetic acid, ammonia level and pH... how well a crop has fermented, and how much stability to anticipate in that crop at feed-out time.

Success with corn silage comes down to three windows of opportunity: seed selection; growing season; and being able to harvest and ensile the crop properly. If you properly manage the controllable factors, there should be no big surprises at harvest time or feedout this coming winter.

Renaissance nutritionists use the information from these analyses to formulate rations that will maximize rumen microbial yield – the most important crop on your farm. *In vitro* tests have proved informative and helpful in predicting how forages react in the rumen – what kind of digestibility or energy value can be expected from the corn silage and other forages in a given year.

Ask me about forage analysis and digestibility. I can help you formulate a ration that can enhance microbial development and make the best use of this year's silage... at the best cost!

**RENAISSANCE ~
The Team for Results
All Year-Round!**

Interested in discussing topics in this newsletter, or want to do a better job feeding and managing your cows? Call me! My goal is to help you. That's Renaissance's commitment to you!

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**RENAISSANCE...
20 Years of Quality
Nutrition, Service
& Products!**



Start 'em right!



Renaissance can help you enhance your calf and heifer program, with products that can aid their overall growth and development. This includes an entire lineup of top-quality, carefully-formulated milk replacers, calf starters and a grower product. I can help you select the product(s) that will work best in your operation. A good start with calves will pay dividends when they mature and join your lactating herd. Make a difference today. Start with quality from Renaissance: milk replacers, starters and a grower ~ the Renaissance calf/heifer program! Call today. You'll appreciate the difference... and so will your calves.

**START 'EM RIGHT!
START 'EM FOR RESULTS!**

WHAT'S IT LIKE AROUND THE FARM?

Cows like a routine. They, like many of us, are creatures of habit, responding in a positive way when things remain the same day after day. This includes when (and what) cows are fed, when (and how) they are milked, and every other aspect of a typical day. It's also a good idea to review milking procedures regularly - from pre-milking to their return to the barn. Changes in schedules, procedures and rations need to be introduced in a gradual, deliberate way, reducing the potential of stress and lost productivity. Regardless of your herd size it is important to establish a schedule and consistent procedures. You might even write it down. This way when a new person begins working for you... or when you need to be away, someone else can step in and maintain the schedule. Your cows will respond positively to a consistent schedule. It can make a difference in their productivity and ultimately your profitability.

A POINT TO PONDER...

It's that time of year... back to school and the many activities of fall: local football games; parent-teacher conferences; increased church and community activities; and many more opportunities. These may all be good – but do they encroach on our personal and family time? With so many activities and opportunities, we seem to be pulled this way and that way. Take time to consider everything you and your family are involved in, and make sure you stay focused on the most important things... activities and opportunities that will encourage and uplift you and your family and friends day after day.



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*Fall is coming...
The harvest begins...*



*Managing for results...
Check it out!*

