



## Calves Get Stressed Too

Stress is a real issue for calves. Factors like birth, weather, transportation, and routine management practices can significantly impact their health.

To help ensure they receive high-quality colostrum within the first 2 hours of life to gain critical protection against bacteria.



Protect calves from extreme cold and heat, as this can weaken their immune system and cause weight loss. It's best to wait 24 to 48 hours before transporting them.

Finally, handling calves calmly and gently is essential to reduce physical and psychological stress. Minimizing stress in calves strengthens their immunity and supports optimal growth.

To learn more about this topic scan the QR code or visit: <https://go.wisc.edu/BN25102>



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## Bedding Comfort

Calves spend most of their time lying down, so it's important to provide a clean, dry, and comfortable resting surface - especially in winter- to support their health and keep them warm.

Practice these knee tests to assess bedding quality:

**Test 1:** Kneel and rock. If it's uncomfortable, add bedding and retry.

**Test 2:** Drop onto the bedding. If uncomfortable, add more bedding and repeat.

**Test 3:** Check your knees. If damp, the bedding isn't absorbent enough; clean and add more bedding.



Effective bedding should soak up moisture, insulate, and allow nesting. The recommendation is 20–25 pounds per calf, plus 2–3 pounds daily as a top-up.

A key goal in cold weather is to achieve a good nesting score, it means the calf's legs are not visible when lying down, indicating sufficient bedding depth and warmth.

Consistently applying these tests on bedding ensures calves remain dry, insulated, and comfortable as cold weather will be upon us sooner than we think.

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## SAFETY FIRST

### Managing Stress

Stress is a normal part of life, but when it is not managed correctly, it can harm our health.

Stress and pressure are common in dairy farm jobs because of long working hours, unpredictable weather, and the fast-paced environment.

To cope with stress, practice these healthy habits:

- Eat and sleep well
- Exercise regularly
- Connect with others
- Practice gratitude
- Limit alcohol consumption

A calm, focused mind supports better decisions at work and in life

## Cultivating Team Spirit

In agriculture, people are the strength behind every farm, field, and family business. Success comes when we make intentional efforts to work as a team, respect each other, and lift each other up.



**Managers** and **supervisors** inspire teamwork when they:

- Share a clear vision, goals, and expectations
- Communicate openly and consistently
- Build trust through respect and kindness
- Celebrate both small and major achievements
- Encourage learning and growth of their teams

**Team members** strengthen teamwork when they:

- \* Bring a positive, solution focused attitude
- \* Show respect for everyone and their perspectives
- \* Adapt to challenges and change
- \* Take ownership for their actions
- \* Collaborate and support each other

Working as one build strong teams ready to embrace every challenge and seize every opportunity

## FUN FACT

### Nature's Recyclers

Cows' four-chamber stomach turn corn stalks and other fibrous plants into milk and meat, reducing waste and supporting sustainable food systems.



## ACROSS THE FENCE

### Parlor Communication Hub

A water-resistant board with a clear cover shares milking routines, milk quality data, and updates. Designed for wet areas, it keeps employees informed, supports teamwork, and ensures consistent operations in the milking parlor.

