

Overview

- Early life calf nutrition has lasting effects on subsequent productive potential.
- Lifetime feed conversion efficiency highest during early calf-hood.
- Smooth transition from liquid to solid feed is key.

Feeding approach

- Good quality milk replacer (MR) and free access to palatable fresh concentrate.
- Care in reconstitution of MR critical.
- Concentrate important for rumen development.
- Wean gradually using a step wise reduction.
- Must be consuming at least 1 kg/day prior to weaning.

Growth performance

- 100 kg at 12 weeks.
- Input of ~30 kg of milk replacer and 125 kg concentrates.
- Higher performance possible from more intensive systems but may not be economically sustainable

Target live weights for bull calves sourced from the dairy herd , 1-15 wks

Age (weeks)	Target live weight (kg)			Live weight gain (kg/day)
	AA/Hereford	Holstein	Continental	
1 week (purchase)	45	48	50	
6 weeks (weaning)	70	73	75	0.7
12 weeks	100	102	105	0.7
15 weeks	117	119	122	0.8

Dawson (2006); Keane (2003)

