

COLOSTRUM SUPPLEMENTS

1. They are supplements.

- They are not colostrum replacers.
- They do not provide nutrition for newborn calves.

2. What do they supplement?

- They do add antibodies (or immunoglobulins).
- They do NOT add maternal immune cells.
- They do NOT add minerals and vitamins.
- They do NOT add energy.

3. How well do they supplement antibodies?

- They vary in immunoglobulin (Ig) content. Many contain only about 40 to 50 grams of Ig.
- Successful passive transfer can be achieved with poor quality colostrum when one dose of supplement is fed no later than four hours after birth. “Poor” quality is defined as 30 gms/liter, red on Colostrometer®.

This assumes that four quarts of colostrum have also been fed. Depending on the brand used, one dose of supplement may be one packet, tube or bolus of supplement.

- Very poor quality colostrum would require two, if not three, units of supplement to get the calf up to successful passive transfer level. “Very poor” quality is defined as less than 20 gms/liter. Actual success is doubtful with only one supplement dose.
- Effective use depends on following the manufacturer’s instructions carefully. For powdered supplements, dilute with water. **DO NOT add** powdered supplements directly to colostrum. This practice may substantially depress the number of antibodies absorbed.

Sam Leadley, Calf & Heifer Management Specialist

sleadley@yahoo.com www.atticacows.com

For Calves with Sam blog go to dairycafcare.blogspot.com

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