

Calves and Bicycle Wheels

[Part 4 of a six-part series]

In a short provocative article Ryan Leiterman and Lorrie Meister (Crystal Creek Natural) make the case for considering every aspect of calf care (the spokes in the bicycle wheel) to optimize calf health and growth. A perfectly round wheel depends on all spokes being strong. When one or more of six key spokes become weak the chances of delivering well-grown, healthy calves goes down.

Let's look at spoke Number 4 – Air Quality

The authors recommend evaluating the strength of this spoke by:

- Estimating air flows and directions – using smoke bombs
- Estimating air speed to evaluate “drafts.”

If you are not using both of these methods to evaluate your air quality management program the risk of a weak “spoke” may be high.

I recommend:

- Reviewing air quality – click [HERE](#) or use this URL for a general checklist: <http://atticacows.com/library/newsletters/VentilationCalfBarnsR19172.pdf>
- For air exchange rates by season – click [HERE](#) or use this URL for the chart: <http://atticacows.com/library/newsletters/VentilationAirExchangeRatesR19104.pdf>
- I carry an inexpensive anemometer to estimate air flows. I have used the Kestrel brand (Amzon \$74) for over 15 years and found it reliable. Home Depot, however, has AcuRite model (I have no experience here) for \$32. I found an anemometer useful in picking up drafts along floors and side walls.

Reference: “Calves and bicycle wheels: A systematic approach to troubleshooting pre-weaned calves” by Ryan Leiterman and Lorrie Meister. Click [HERE](#) to go to the article or use this URL <https://crystalcreeknatural.com/comparing-calves-to-bicycle-wheels-a-systematic-approach-to-troubleshooting-pre-weaned-calves/#more-8192>.