



**FEEDING OF CALVES FOR THE FIRST 3 MONTHS**

**AIM: TO GIVE CALVES A GOOD START AND ACHIEVE A GROWTH RATE OF ABOUT 500 G PER DAY**

CALF FEEDING – WEEK 1		
AGE (Days)	VOLUME OF MILK TO BE GIVEN DAILY TO EACH CALF (Litres)	COMMENTS
1	4-5 litres of colostrum	First colostrum within 2 hours
2-4	4 litres of colostrum	2 litres AM and 2 litres PM
5-7	4 litres colostrum / milk from mother	2 litres AM and 2 litres PM

CALF FEEDING – WEEKS 2 - 12				
WEEKS AFTER BIRTH	MILK (Half morning and half evening)	CALF STARTER CONCENTRATE (kg)	FORAGE (kg)	COMMENTS
2 <sup>nd</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> Week	4 litres 2 L AM 2 L PM	0.2 Kg Up to 0.8 Kg	0.1 Kg Up to 0.4 Kg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Concentrate with 20 % Crude Protein (Calf Starter)</li> <li>➤ Best quality forage</li> </ul>
10 <sup>th</sup> Week	From 4 litres to 0 <i>(Gradually ↓ during the week)</i>	0.8 Kg Up to 1.5 Kg <i>(Gradually ↑ during the week)</i>	0.4 Kg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Weaning only if <b>CALF EATS 0.8 Kg Concentrate /day</b></li> </ul>
11 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Week	No milk	1.5 Kg Up to 2.5 Kg	0.4 Kg Up to 1.5 Kg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Free access to good quality forage</li> </ul>



## CALF FEEDING AND MANAGEMENT

IMPORTANT POINTS WHEN REARING CALVES	
1	Make sure the calf is getting enough <b>colostrum</b> during the first 4 days. First feeding or suckling within 2 hours of birth.
2	Give fresh CALF STARTER <b>concentrate</b> from week 2.
3	Give fresh CALF STARTER <b>concentrate</b> 2 times per day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ In a clean trough</li> <li>✓ Remove any leftovers</li> </ul>
4	Examples of best quality CALF STARTER <b>concentrate</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Commercial CALF STARTER – 18-20 % Crude Protein (CP)</li> <li>✓ Home-made CALF STARTER (1): Maize Bran (69% CP) + Soya bean cake (31% CP) + 3 % Mineral Mix</li> <li>✓ Home-made CALF STARTER (2): Maize Bran (61% CP) + Sunflower cake (39 % CP) + 3 % Mineral mix</li> </ul> If possible, add a bit of Molasses
5	Provide free access to <b>water</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Clean the trough every day</li> </ul>
6	<p><b>Roughage:</b> Best quality, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Maize (fresh)</li> <li>• Maize silage</li> <li>• Green sorghum</li> <li>• Young Napier (fresh), Rhodes grass;</li> <li>• Tree leaves, e.g. <i>kapenta nsoku</i></li> </ul> <p>✓ All chopped to 1-2 cm and fed in a clean trough</p>



ZDTP is focused on supporting dairy farmers to improve their productivity, milk quality and linkages to urban markets. The views expressed in this publication are those of the implementers of the programme and do not necessarily reflect those of the New Zealand Government. For further information, please contact ZDTP on [zdtpinfo@primeconsultants.net](mailto:zdtpinfo@primeconsultants.net). Follow us on [www.zambiadairy.com](http://www.zambiadairy.com), Facebook ([facebook.com/zambiadairy/](https://facebook.com/zambiadairy/)) and Twitter (@DairyZambia).