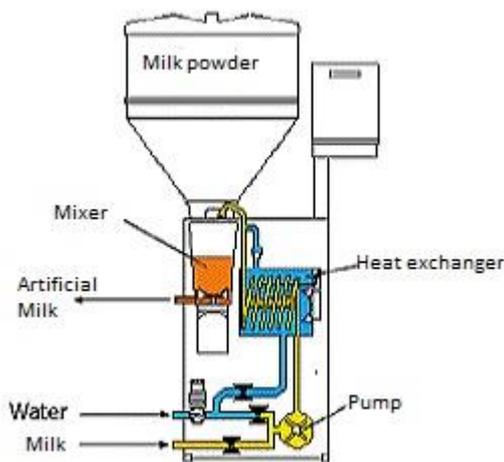


Age	Rumen and Rectulum	Abomasum	Ratio
0	0.5 -0.6 litres	1 -3.2 litres	1: 2
6	4 -6 litres	5 litres	1: 2
12	10 -15 litres	5 litres	3: 1
16	30 litres	5 litres	6: 1

When the calf is about 9 weeks old, it can be weaned. The milk supply should be reduced during the last week of weaning. This can be done by feeding milk once a day instead of twice. The calf gets hungry and the intake of roughage and concentrate will increase. During the weaning stage, the calf should weigh about 80 kilograms (chest size should be about 96 centimetres) and intake of concentrates about 1.5 kilograms per day.

Calf rearing and health

Hygiene and avoiding diseases is most important for calves to ensure proper growth. Unfortunately, about 10% of the calves die in their first year. For farms performing in the top quarter, this is only 1.6%. For farms performing in the bottom quarter, this is 20%. The difference is caused by the approach in calf rearing. 70% of the lost calves die due to disorders in their gastrointestinal tract. All kinds of pathogens, like E.coli, cryptosporidium, the rotavirus, the coronavirus and coccidiosis cause a threat.



Calf feeding machines should be calibrated once every 2 months. The water-milk ratio is checked. The correct temperature is tuned. Falsely calibrated machines increase the risk of diarrhoea for calves.

A quarter of calves die as a result of flaws in their diet. Providing milk at a low temperature, using the wrong concentration of powder, clotting of the milk due to incorrect mixing of powder with water, or feeding too much artificial milk are all causes of diarrhoea. Milk with the wrong concentration of powder or poorly mixed artificial milk cannot clot in the abomasum. This causes poor digestion before the milk flows through to the intestines. In the intestines, the milk starts to ferment, causing the temperature to increase. These are ideal circumstances for bacteria and can be the start of diseases in the calves.

Calf rearing and growth

Chart 1.4 presents the growth standards for a calf in grams per day. Until the calf is 8 months of age, it should grow as much as possible. From the 9th month, the calf will fatten if the feed contains too much energy and protein. Over feeding the animals leads to decreased fertility.