

Not all colostrum replacers are created equal

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More and more producers every day are learning the value of using a high quality colostrum replacer in their calf raising program. Colostrum replacers are a convenient and safe source of immunoglobulins for newborn calves. But, it seems there are more and more products in the marketplace and telling the difference among them may not be as clear as it seems. This short article addresses some of the issues to consider when purchasing

How much is enough?

Colostrum replacers are first and foremost a source of immunoglobulin G (IgG). Calves are born without circulating IgG and need to consume enough IgG in the first 24 hours of life to ensure adequate passive transfer. When calves don't get enough IgG, it's called *failure of passive transfer (FPT)* and these calves are more susceptible to disease and death.

The key, then, is to determine how much IgG will minimize FPT in your calves. Of course, high quality maternal colostrum contains lots of IgG and is the first choice as a feed for newborn calves. However, a lot of colostrum either contains too little IgG or is contaminated with bacteria so it shouldn't be fed. In other situations, it's difficult to manage colostrum so that calves are fed enough in the right time after birth. That's where a colostrum replacer comes into play.

Colostrum products – supplements and replacers – provide a source of

IgG (also called globulin protein). The amount of globulin protein is on the label. Products range from 45 grams of globulin per dose to 150 or more grams. But how much globulin does a calf need? Most industry experts recommend that calves achieve a serum concentration of 10 grams of IgG per liter of serum when tested in the first week of life. Generally, to achieve this level of serum IgG, a calf must consume at least 100 grams of IgG in the first 24 hours.

The absolute amount of IgG in the blood sets the level of protection a calf has to fight off disease causing pathogens such as rotavirus or cryptosporidium. Of course, in high stress conditions such as when calves are shipped to a calf raising farm, greater serum IgG is valuable to help protect the calf.

Not all globulin protein is equal

Another important point is that not all globulin protein is created equal. The product must not only contain enough globulin protein, but that globulin protein must also be *absorbable by the calf*. There's a lot of variation in the industry – the globulin protein in some products is absorbed very well while in other products, the globulin protein may not be absorbed at all. So, a product containing 150 grams of IgG may not provide the same level of absorbable IgG as other products. How can you know if the IgG in one product will be absorbed well? The best way is to ask for actual research trials that document absorption.



Nutrition

A final consideration in selecting a colostrum product is nutrition. Colostrum replacers must provide proper and complete nutrition in addition to IgG. Not all products provide sufficient calories and protein to meet the needs for newborn calves. Products with less than 15 percent fat may put calves at risk unless they're fed in conjunction with colostrum. Colostrum replacement products must also be properly supplemented with vitamins and minerals to meet the calf's nutrient requirements.

The clear choice

Convert™ ImmPower™ Colostrum Replacer is one of the best researched products in the market today, and has been carefully formulated to meet ALL of the calf's nutrient requirements. Convert ImmPower offers 100 grams of highly absorbable globulin proteins, 25 percent fat to provide ample calories, and a proper mix of vitamins and minerals. Backed by research, you can be confident when feeding Convert ImmPower.

To learn more about Convert ImmPower talk to your NorthStar Specialists or visit northstarcooperative.com and search 'Convert ImmPower.' ★

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PERFECT UDDER
DELIVERY SYSTEM

Contains the same Convert ImmPower™ formulation of guaranteed globulin protein and nutrition levels, with the added convenience and biosecurity features of the Perfect Udder delivery system.

