

Health check

IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR CALVES PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO GIVE YOUR FARMER A CALL - I AM SURE THEY WOULD APPRECIATE THE CALL!

What's normal?

Eyes Bright, alert
Not sunken

Breathing 50 breaths per minute for 14-day-old calves
37 breaths per minute for 35-day-old calves
Calm, rhythmic breathing, not laboured
No rattles, gurgles or raspy sounds

Ears Perky
Not droopy

Muzzle Warm (not hot) and wet to touch

Coat Clean and shiny
Quickly returns to a flat position when you pinch a bit of skin near the ribs and twist it 90 degrees

Navel Dry
No signs of swelling

Behaviour Running around the pen
Bellowing, particularly close to feed times
Strong suck, aggressive feeder
Sucking items in its environment
Resting in a curled position with feet tucked under and head back along the body, often about an hour after feed time
Gets up immediately with prodding
Calves that are ill will be slow to rise

Manure Soft but formed
Colour will vary with diet from milky to brown
Free from blood
Not watery or very loose
Not hard
No straining when manure is passed

Holstein 0.1-0.2 kg/day at 1-2 weeks
Growth Rates 0.5-0.6 kg/day at 3-5 weeks

Emergency procedures

The order of contact for schools in case of animal husbandry questions are:-

1. Farmer
2. Project Manager/s
3. Veterinary Surgeon