

#### E-ISSN: 2320-7078 P-ISSN: 2349-6800 www.entomoljournal.com

JEZS 2020; 8(2): 142-143 © 2020 JEZS Received: 16-01-2020 Accepted: 18-02-2020

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# Journal of Entomology and Zoology Studies

Available online at www.entomoljournal.com



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### Calves management practices in Villupuram district of Tamilnadu

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#### Abstract

The present study is related to feeding management practices of dairy cows in Villupuram District of Tamil Nadu. All the dairy farmers were practicing removal of mucous, cutting umbilical cord and feeding colostrum in puducherry region. Dairy farmers were practicing assisting weak calves (96.5 per cent) in both regions. The overall per cent of deworming practice only 35.3 per cent. Calves were given health care by dairy farmers were commonly (86.4 per cent). More than 80 per cent of dairy farmers are providing protection to the calves during inclement weather, better ventilation facilities, sanitation, housing and offering green fodder. The practice of providing concentrate to the calves was 43.2 in Villupuram District of Tamil Nadu.

Keywords: Calves management, dairy farmers, Villupuram district, Tamil Nadu

#### Introduction

Calves are the livestock industry of the future. Calf management plays an important role in the development of the dairy sector of the country. The success of the dairy industry depends on appropriate calf management. Calf care is not only essential for sustainance of the dairy industry but is also essential in the wake of preserving and maintaining our good quality germplasm. Important aspects in the calf rearing are the health management and proper nutrition to the calves. Tiwari *et al.* (2007)

#### **Materials and Methods**

#### **Pilot study**

The semi-structured interview schedule was designed to obtain data on the various parameters of the study. It was pre-tested among 20 dairy cattle owners. Based on the pilot study, some questions were modified, some deleted and some added.

The pilot study also gave an idea on the time taken to interview each respondent.

#### Sampling design and size

The sampling procedure followed for this study was random sampling and the sample size was 1000.

#### Results

It is recorded that all the dairy farmers were practicing removal of mucous membrane, cutting umbilical cord and feeding colostrum in Villupuram District of Tamil Nadu.

Dairy farmers were practicing assisting weak calves (96.5 per cent) in both urban and rural. The overall per cent of deworming practice only 35.3 per cent. Calves were given health care by dairy farmers commonly (86.4 per cent). More than 80 per cent of dairy farmers are providing protection to the calves during inclement weather, better ventilation facilities, sanitation, housing and offering green fodder with the same trend was observed in urban and rural with minor numerical variations. The practice of providing concentrate to the calves was 38 per cent in Villupuram District of Tamil Nadu.

This finding is similar to Reddy (2013)<sup>[4]</sup> who found that weaning of calves was not followed. Cutting the naval cord with hygienic blade and then dipping the cord in antiseptic solution prevents the naval cord infection to the calf (Sharma and Mishra, 1987)<sup>[7]</sup>. Sabapara (2015)<sup>[5]</sup> revealed that majority (82.33%) of the respondents provided green fodders from two months

followed by 11.67 and only 6% of the respondents provided green fodders from three and one month after birth, respectively. The farmers were in the habit of deworming their calves only when they observe the worms in faeces or when the calves are in ill health condition Khan et al. (2007) <sup>[3]</sup> and Tiwari et al. (2007)<sup>[8]</sup> and Farooq et al. (1999) reported that the health condition of calf is poor due to lack of deworming. Sharma and Mishra (1987)<sup>[7]</sup> also found that most of the calves died due to parasitic load which caused deterioration of health resulting death of the calf. Hence it is essential to deworm the calf frequently at regular intervals starting from 1st week of age, followed after 21 days and should be repeated monthly once upto six months, later on thrice a year. Divekar (2016) [1] reported that Feeding of colostrum to new-born calves within one hour of birth 56 per cent, Use of sterilized scissors/knife for cutting naval cord and application of tincture iodine on the naval cord (45 per cent) Disbudding of calves (52 per cent), Cleaning of calves after birth (77 per cent) and Deworming of calves (80 per cent) in Gujarat. Sabapara (2015) [5] indicated that 97% of the respondents followed practice of colostrum feeding to new born calves for their survival. Feeding colostrum to new-born calves within one hour of birth was being practiced by 35.05% of the respondents which might be due to the low level of awareness regarding importance of timely colostrum feeding. This finding are contradiction of Vivek et al. (2014) <sup>[9]</sup> who found that respondents did not cut naval cord of calves Sabapara (2016)<sup>[5]</sup> reported that but only 40 per cent of the farmers fed colostrum to new born calf before expulsion of placenta. No commercial dairy farmer has followed disinfection of naval cord except two farmers of small dairy farms. This might be due to lack of awareness among the farmers about scientific management of calf rearing. Sabapara (2015)<sup>[5]</sup> revealed that majority of the (58.67%) respondents followed weaning practices at the age of three months, while 6.33, 2.67 and 9% of the respondents followed weaning practices at the age of two months, one month and 0-3 days, respectively and remaining 23.33% of respondents didn't follow weaning practice. Majority of the dairy farmers (83.33%) fed colostrum to the calves only after release of placenta which is not so beneficial for new born calves. Only a few farmers (16.67%) fed colostrum to the calves within one hour immediately after birth. Tiwari et al. (2007)<sup>[8]</sup> also reported that the farmers fed colostrum to the calves only after release of placenta as they felt that if colostrum was fed immediately after birth the animal will not expel the placenta. Timely feeding of colostrum to calves is essential and it should be fed within one hour immediately after birth. It is a well-established fact that delays in feeding of colostrum leads to lowered effectiveness of colostrum in terms of providing immunity to calves Sharma et al. (1987)<sup>[7]</sup>.

#### Conclusion

We must give good feeding and management for the calves so that they develop well and, useful for replacement stock. The feeding and care of the calf being before its birth. The dam should be dried 6-8 weeks before expected calving and should be fed well. Under fed animals will give weak and small calves. The knowledge of dairy members on dairy farming was very low in both rural and urban categories which require suitable interventions. The capacity building for dairy farmers in dairy farming area is essential that may be done by providing knowledge kit on livestock for their livelihood

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