

How to Guide

Calf Hutch & Pen Cleaning
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Calf Hutch and Pen Cleaning

Newborn calves have very limited ability to fight of diseases, so a dry, clean environment is a critical component of every successful calf management program. A thorough cleaning significantly reduces the spread of harmful pathogens that build up during the time a calf spends in individual housing. Therefore calf housing needs to be cleaned and disinfected between each calf.

The exact cleaning process will vary depending on your own management practices and your facility. The following steps are recommended guidelines for successful disinfection of plastic calf housing between calves.

Instructions

- 1.** Remove calf from hutch or pen.
- 2.** For ideal results, move dirty calf housing to a designated cleaning station away from the other calves. *This will limit the transfer of pathogens from the dirty housing units to the other calves.*
- 3.** Remove bedding and all other soiled material.
- 4.** Prepare cleaning and disinfecting solution per manufacturer's instructions. It is important to use the proper dilutions and temperatures for best results.
- 5.** Thoroughly wash the hutch or pen components. Pay attention to areas where solid debris may have accumulated and remove all debris during cleaning process. *A hot water pressure washer is the preferred method, but washing can be accomplished with a scrub brush.*

6. Move hutch or pen components to a safe clean area to dry for 24 – 48 hours. Dry times may vary depending on conditions. *Thorough drying is necessary to reduce the transfer of any residual pathogens and to ensure dry bedding for the next calf.*
7. Wash, sanitize or prepare the area for the placement of a clean hutch/pen and a new calf.
 - a. Indoor pens on concrete: disinfect walls and floors with cleaning solution and pressure washer
 - b. Indoor pens on gravel: scrape top layer of soiled material and dispose of according to your management practices and local ordinances.
 - c. Outdoor hutch: Once the soiled bedding is removed, leave the area vacant and exposed to the elements for two weeks if possible. Some pathogens, including *Cryptosporidium*, can be killed by exposing them to the sun’s ultraviolet rays. The longer you can leave the ground vacant the better. *Some facilities practice an “all in, all out” method where after the calves are weaned, the housing is cleaned and the row or rows are left vacant for the recommended “resting” period of time. During this time the new calves are placed on ground that has already sat vacant.*
8. Once the calf hutch or pen area is completely dry and clean, a clean housing unit can be placed along with new bedding.

Housing Cleaning – Key Points



Move housing to designated cleaning area away from other calves



Be sure to use a disinfecting cleaning solution



Use pressure washer to remove solid material



Thoroughly clean the area after removing housing.



Allow housing to dry after cleaning



Place calf in clean dry housing