

Diary for October

HENSLEY FARM DIARY FOR OCTOBER

Calving time is here!!

After a few busy weeks preparing, our calving season is now in full swing, and the weather couldn't be better! As we block calve all our cows and heifers in the autumn it means calving has our full focus for the next few months. It's a very exciting time with new life and a new start to the cow calendar.



The cows are left to have their calves out in the field, and in this case, in the lovely evening sunshine.

Drying off

The cows are dried off (stopped milking) two months before their due calving date to give them a chance to rest. During this period they are left to graze in the fields. Two weeks before calving we add silage and minerals to their diet.

As soon as the calf is born the cow is up and licking her calf clean. This also stimulates the calf into getting up.



This photo shows a new born calf standing up within minutes.



Bringing the cows back nearer to home as they get close to calving

We started calving at the end of August and so far have had 80 calves born. Our busiest time is September and October when we have 140 cows and heifers to calve in 7 weeks. The remaining cows will mostly calve by Christmas with a few going into the new year.



This cow is having the second of twins which was actually born backwards, but no help was needed.

Groups

The cows are put into groups according to their expected calving dates, starting off in fields away from the farm, and being moved closer to home for feeding in the last fortnight of their dry period. Having them close to the house also means we can keep an eye on them in case any need any assistance. So far we have only had to intervene with two births, one calf was coming backwards and got stuck so needed a bit of help, and the other case was a twisted uterus so the calf had to be

delivered by caesarean.

Birth

This weather is perfect for letting the cows calve outside in the field and is the healthiest option for mum and baby. The calf naturally wants to get up and suck a lot quicker when born outside than if they are born in a shed. Just as with a baby, the quicker they have some colostrum the better, as this helps strengthen their immune system. Unlike a human baby though, they are able to stand and walk in a matter of minutes!!



Almost immediately after getting up the calf is ready for its first feed of colostrum.



By the morning the calf has wandered down for a play!!



The twins the next morning.



Bringing them in

Feeding

Each morning we bring the cows that have calved into the yard and the calves are taken away from their mothers and put in a shed, in groups of 8. They are still fed colostrum for the first 48 hours but from teats rather than sucking their mums. The calves are fed milk twice a day and have 2 litres per feed. When they are about a week old we add calf pellets to their diet. They also start to eat a bit of straw and drink water as well.

Ear Tags and Passports

It is a legal requirement that all calves have two ear tags as soon as possible after they are born. The ear tags show the country they were born in, our herd number and an individual animal number. Once we have tagged the calf we have to apply for a passport for it. The passport contains its



Milk from the newly calved cows is fed to the

family history and will also show any movement history so an animal has full traceability.

calves.



Enjoying their milk!



Mmm, that's good!!

All our dairy heifer calves (girls) are kept to join the milking herd when they are older. The bull calves (boys) and beef calves are sold to local farms to rear for meat.



The calves are reared in groups of 8.



Where's our milk ?!



Alan uses a special applicator to insert the ear tags.



So cute!



Mummy, the calf just licked my fingers!



Another new born calf as he tries to stand for the first time just five minutes after being born.

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Breed /Brid:	SWEDISH RED&WHITE X				
Sex /Rhyw:	FEMALE				
Born /Ganwyd:	05 09 2011				
Genetic Dam /Mam Eneid:	UK164367300088				
Sex /Tad:					
Issue Date / Dyddiad cyflwyno:		09 09 2011		Version / Fersiwn: 01	
Please check the details are correct. If not amend and return to BCMS. Gwiriwch beth ydych chi'n ysgrifennu yn gywir. Os heb i'w gywiro, gollwch yr hollbwrdd at y bwrdd o GSGP.					
Movement history / Hanes Symud					
Location / Lleoliad:	Address / Cyfeirnod:	Date on / Dyddiad cyflwyno:	Date off / Dyddiad ymlaeth:		
10/025/0032	HEOLTY HAWYLL, HEREST FARM, DOL BRANAFON, CREDDON OYDON, DOLY, WLS	05 09 2011			
<p>To be completed by keeper on receipt of passport / I'w gwblhau gan geidwad ar dderbyn pasport</p> <p>Name for other information:</p> <p>Signature / Llofnod:</p> <p>Date of movement OFF holding / Dyddiad ymlaeth:</p> <p>Signature / Llofnod:</p>					
<p>Reported electronically / SIC this box</p> <p>Medi'i adroddi yn electronig bwrdd y bwrdd hwn</p>		<p>Date of DEATH / Dyddiad y FARWOLAETH:</p> <p>Signature / Llofnod:</p>		<p>Please remember to return the animal's passport to BCMS within seven days of the animal's death / Cofrechiwch dychwelyd pasport yr anifail i GSGP o fewn saith diwrnod o farwolaeth yr anifail</p>	
<p>Place your holding address label here / Rhowch label cyfeirnod eich dalriad yma</p>					
<p>British Cattle Movement Service Dinaswladfa Symud Gwartheg Ffôn Curwen Road, Worthington, Cumbria, CA14 2DD General helpline / Cyffwrdd: 0845 656 1234 Cymwag: 0845 250 2634 Email / Cyfeirnod e-bwrdd: bcms.enquiries@bcms.org.uk</p>		<p>Report to BCMS, movements and deaths electronically using: Adroddi ar ymdegyddion, symudau a farwolaethau yn electronig gan ddefnyddio: • CTS Online / SOG Ar-lin: www.bcms.gov.uk • CTS self service line: 0845 011 1212 • CTS Human Helpline: 0845 011 1213 • Di using a farm software package / Nodiwch ddefnyddio pacsiwr meddalwedd Ffôn</p>			
<p>For TSE use only / At ddefnydd TSE yn unig</p>		<p>Born / Ganwyd</p>		<p>UK364865200912</p>	
		<p>05 09 2011</p>		<p>UK364865200912</p>	

A Calf's Passport