



Best Practices for Assisting Cows During **CALVING**





Welcome to Calving Season!

Planning ahead for calving helps you set yourself up for success during an exciting but sometimes stressful season. Spending a little time now educating yourself on best practices and stocking up on trusted calving essentials can help protect your ROI and the health and well-being of your cows and their calves.

In this guide, we'll cover four best practices for assisting cows during calving:

- 1** Gather the Right Supplies and Equipment
- 2** Know When to Assist During Calving
- 3** Don't Wait Too Long to Call a Veterinarian
- 4** Provide Postpartum Care to Your Cow



You'll also find a list of popular animal health products and supplies for cows, heifers, and calves at the [back of this guide](#).



GATHER THE RIGHT SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

A broad spectrum of supplies and equipment is helpful during calving. Facilities vary, but having somewhere safe to handle your cows is important. Access to a chute is ideal because cows in distress during calving often require restraint for both their safety and yours.

Obstetrical sleeves can help protect against infection if you need to reach in a cow to assist with a difficult birth. You may also want a **head snare** to help redirect calves and ensure their head is coming in the right direction and not turning back on itself. OB chains (**30"**, **45"**, or **60"**) and **handles** will help assist in pulling the calf. A calf jack is also good to have on hand just in case additional leverage is necessary.

It's important to have lots of **lube** when **pulling a calf**. A valuable tip is to utilize an equine **stomach pump** and **hose** to pump a warm water and lube mixture from a **bucket** into the cow's birth canal and around the calf. This will lubricate the birth canal and create buoyancy for the calf, helping you get the calf out more easily.



Get all the calving essentials you need in one click on *FBN* with the **FBN Calving Kit**. This all-in-one, convenient kit helps you stay organized and ready to go at a moment's notice. *FBN* carries an extensive portfolio of animal health products and supplies that you can get shipped directly to your farm.

[Get the FBN Calving Kit](#)



KNOW WHEN TO ASSIST DURING CALVING



Watching a cow during labor can be stressful, especially when you're unsure about when to intervene. However, it's crucial to recognize the signs and behaviors that indicate whether assistance is needed:

- If she stops actively pushing and doesn't seem to be making progress in 1–2 hours, it's time to put on a **sleeve** and evaluate if she's too fatigued or if there's a complication preventing the calf from being delivered.
- If you see no progression in 1–2 hours, such as not seeing the "water bag" or fetal sac come through and break or you don't see the calf's feet, this could mean the cow is not dilated enough or the calf is positioned the wrong way in the birth canal.
- If you are assisting the cow, try to pull when she pushes. If the cow lets up, give her a break and then continue the cycle of pulling and pushing. This is a good collaborative way to get the calf out of the cow with minimal stress to both cow and calf.



DON'T WAIT TOO LONG TO CALL A VETERINARIAN



If you've been physically working and assisting the cow for more than 45 minutes, it's a good time to call a veterinarian. Depending on how far away your vet is, you may want to call sooner.

One of the biggest mistakes producers make is waiting too long or not calling a vet when their help could make a difference. In the end, improper intervention can do more harm than good, potentially leading to irreversible damage and ultimately risking the loss of both the calf and/or the cow.

The faster you're able to get professional help, the more likely you will have a positive outcome with a live calf. This is especially true if the cow has to undergo a c-section.



PROVIDE POSTPARTUM CARE TO YOUR COW



If difficult calving occurs, here are three treatments to consider:

1. Uterine Boluses

[Uterine boluses](#), an antiseptic and proteolytic aid, will help in the case of a retained placenta. It may also help with any present uterine infections.

2. Oral Rehydration

Oral rehydration is particularly important if the cow calves during extremely hot or cold weather. Calving is a stressful event for the cow, and [oral rehydration](#) could help produce more [colostrum](#), which will enable the cow to better supply her calf with crucial antibodies and nutrients.

3. Pain Medications & Antibiotics

If your cow is not recovering from calving as you'd expect, speak with your veterinarian. They may be able to recommend [antibiotics](#) and other [pain medication](#) that can help.



Get Prescription Animal Health Products from FBN

If you'd like to purchase a product that requires a prescription, provide your preferred veterinarian's contact information when you place your online order, and we'll reach out to them on your behalf to obtain the prescription.

[Download Instructions](#)

CALVING & ANIMAL HEALTH SUPPLIES



Calving season is here! Stock up on the products you and your herd need for a successful calving season. **FBN** carries a broad selection of cattle health essentials. Check out this popular products list for some helpful reminders.



Disease Prevention

Scours and respiratory diseases can severely impact calf survival rates and productivity. Disinfectants can help control contamination and transmission of common pathogens. Your best defenses against infection are quick access to good colostrum and vaccines for your cows and calves.



Pharmaceuticals

Stock up on electrolytes and antibiotics for calf scours. Vitamin and mineral supplements can help cows stay healthy before and after calving.



Nutrition

Providing adequate nutrition pre-calving can impact the difficulty of delivery, the production of colostrum, the cow's recovery and ability to rebreed, and ultimately the new calf's ability to fight disease and perform.



Facilities

Thoroughly clean facilities and stock up on necessary equipment (recommendations on the next page).

This is not a protocol recommendation. Please consult a veterinarian before making any treatment decisions. ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW LABEL DIRECTIONS.

View all products and pricing at FBN.com/Calving

Calves	
TREATMENT	PRODUCT NAME
Intranasal Respiratory Vaccines	BOVILIS® Nasalgen 3
	Inforce 3®
	BOVILIS® Nasalgen 3-PMH
7-Way Clostridium Vaccines	Alpha-7®
	Bar-Vac® 7
	Caliber® 7
Clostridium Vaccines - Types C & D Origin	Ultrabac® CD
	Vision® CD-T
	Alpha-CD®
Scours Prevention Vaccine	BOVILIS® Coronavirus
	Calf-Guard®
Antibody Supplements	Optimizer Calf Gel
	First Defense® Bolus
	Surveillance Calf
Electrolytes	Hydra-Lyte®
	Entrolyte® H.E.
	Diaque®
	CDT
Implants	Synovex® C
Antibiotics	Oxytetracycline 200 Value Pick*
	Noromycin 300 LA* (Oxytetracycline)
	Nuflor® (Norfenicol)
Supplements	BO-SE®*

**Prescription required. All products subject to availability.*

Pregnant Cows/Heifers	
TREATMENT	DRUG NAME
Scour Protection	Scour Bos™ 4
	Scour Bos™ 9
	ScourGuard® 4KC
	Guardian®
Labor and Delivery Drug	Oxytocin*
Supplements	Bovikalc®
	Calcium Gluconate 23%
	Multimin® 90*

FBN Calving Kit	
TYPE	INCLUDED IN KIT
Featured Product FBN Calving Kit	OB Chain, 60" OB Handle Elastrator Bands Allflex Tag Pen Black Iodine 1%, 16 oz Chlorhexidine Solution 2%, 16 oz General Lube, 8 oz OB Standard Sleeve, 10 count Shop Towels

Colostrum	
TYPE	NAME
Colostrum Replacer	Bovine IgG Replacer 115™
	Calf's Choice Total® HiCal
Colostrum Supplement	Bovine IgG Supplement 57.5™
	ColostRx® CS 50g IgG

Supplies	
TYPE	NAME
Obstetrics	OB Chain, 30"
	OB Chain, 60"
	OB Lube
	OB Sleeves Shoulder Length
	Ratchet-Style Calf Puller
Castrating	Castrating Rings
	Band Castrating Pliers
	Castration Bands
Tags	Z Tag, Calf, Blank
	Z Tag Marking Pen, Black
Needles	18G x 3/4" Aluminum Hub
	18G x 5/8" Aluminum Hub

Feed	
TYPE	NAME
Liquid Feed	Liquid Supplements
Mineral	FBN Mineral
Lick Tubs	FBN Lick Tubs



STOCK UP & SAVE

Get 5% off when you spend **\$2,500+** on animal health and supplies. *T&C apply.*

Questions? Call (866) 698-5322 to speak with a member of our team. We're here to help!

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