



Newsletter no5

# BONANZA CALF NUTRITION NEWSLETTER

## TRANSFORMULA BABY MILK FOR BABY CALVES



The benefits of colostrum are a given and feeding 4L of good colostrum in the first 2 hours of a calf's life is key, but increasingly there is a realisation that this is not the full story.

The surface of the small intestine (SI) is like an external skin and has to withstand the physical and chemical abrasion of food, digestion and the continuous attack of pathogenic organisms. The cells of the small intestine are replaced by new cells within a few days of birth and the surface antibody from colostrum, at this stage, is rapidly depleting leaving these new cells vulnerable to attack. Transition milk contains surface antibody that can replace the colostrum antibody and this will remain in the SI to help maintain calf intestinal health. In order to protect calves against rotavirus farmers are vaccinating cows to increase the level of antibody in colostrum but this will only be partially effective unless colostrum or transition milk is continued to be fed for at least 7-14 days. Because of Johne's disease and practical issues on many farms, calves only get 1 or 2 feeds of colostrum, at most, before going on to milk replacer.



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## What is Transformula?

Transformula is designed for use after colostrum feeding. Made with over 60% skim milk and buttermilk along with 5 plant oils and whey protein it is easily digested by the baby calf. Dried under low temperatures it ensures the baby calf is not exposed to high bacterial counts found in stored raw cow's milk. These bacteria remove antibody from the milk and can have pathogenic effects as well.

It also contains ultra high levels of plants extracts, probiotics, prebiotic and egg protein. These can be found in other calf milks but only at low levels. The levels included in Transformula are comparable to the calf tubes and pastes available in the market.

Transformula should be fed for 7 days post colostrum before calves are moved on to calf milk or pasteurised cow's milk.



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## Feeding Transformula?

Feeding TRANSFORMULA will cost £14-15/calf or a net cost of £5 over standard milk replacers. It will set baby calves up for the next 6-7 weeks of milk feeding and produce stronger healthier weaned calves.

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# OVER 6 YEARS OF SUCCESS WITH SHINE ONCE-A-DAY



## AN AWARD-WINNING DAIRY AND BEEF FARMING PARTNERSHIP SAYS THE SHINE ONCE A DAY SYSTEM OF FEEDING CALVES LAYS THE FOUNDATION FOR A PRODUCTIVE HERD

David and John Hatrick started using Shine Once-a-Day milk replacer at Creggan Farm, Londonderry, in 2008. Since then their heifers have been calving at 23 months and the average current production across the heifers is 8,200 litres. Their heifers are also larger at bulling and at first calving and they produce more milk.

"We are getting excellent results in calves and this lays the perfect foundation to realise production ambitions in older animals," says David.

The Hatricks run a herd of 230 cows. Semen from black and white bulls is used on 65% of the herd - all heifers are served with sexed semen for a maximum of two straws. A proportion of the herd is served with Belgian Blue, Hereford and Aberdeen Angus semen.

When calves are born they are manually fed eight litres of colostrum and transition milk for the first three days before progressing onto powder.

When John feels calves are ready he moves them onto Shine Once-a-Day milk powder, starting at 500g milk solids. Over a period of 10 days this is increased to 740g daily.

"This is done without increasing the volume of water

in the mix," says Joe Murphy, of Bonanza Nutrition. "John finds this improves performance because without big volumes of watery milk his calves eat more calf cudlets which he gets from Thompsons in Belfast. As a consequence their rumen is better developed. This means less stress at weaning and post weaning." John is also adamant that attention must be given to topping up water in drinking buckets at midday on very hot days.

Shine Once-a-Day helps achieve a target of abruptly weaning all calves at 50 days and intakes of calf cudlets of 2.5 kgs per head at nine weeks.

The Hatricks say Shine Once-a-Day will remain an important part of their system because since they first used it their calves are more content and healthier. Dry feed intake is strong without milk solids being reduced.

Limited staff means the calves receive excellent supervision multiple times daily without the need to spend an extra hour daily milk feeding. This is especially vital in the evenings at weekends.

The Hatricks take great pride in their system, evident from a string of recent awards including 2013 United Dairy Farmers, Farmer of the Year 2013 and Aberdeen Angus Quality Beef Limited Large Dairy Herd Competition winner.

"Together with better genetics and correct dry feed planning from John Thompson and Son, the Shine Once-a-Day system delivers," says John.

"Shine has been specifically formulated to meet the needs of calf and farmer in equal measure," explained Joe Murphy. Containing Skim milk powder and buttermilk Shine forms a soft curd in the calf's stomach and is then digested throughout the day. Trials in Northern Ireland, in the UK and as far away as New Zealand has proven that for Once-a-day feeding Skim milk is a must"

It is important that calves have access to dry feed, straw and water at all times and calves will drink 4 litres of clean water for every kg of dry feed consumed. Lack of clean water reduces rumen development, reduces growth and increases rearing costs. Straw is also a great feed for calves as it allows calves to eat more dry feed as the calf produces twice as much saliva eating straw as it does eating hay. Saliva helps to buffer the acid in the rumen allowing the calf to consume more dry feed.

# NO POST-WEANING GROWTH CHECK IN SHINE ONCE-A-DAY CALVES

## CALVES AT AN IRISH BEEF FARM ARE WEANING TWO WEEKS EARLIER WITH NO GROWTH CHECK SINCE A ONCE A DAY MILK FEEDING SYSTEM WAS INTRODUCED.

Noel O'Shea rears 135 Friesian bull calves at Watergrasshill, Cork and is also involved in a machinery enterprise. Dividing his time between the two businesses is challenging so Noel decided to try Shine Once-a-Day calf milk replacer after discussing the system with Francis and Eamon Sweeny at Glanbia Agri-business.

Glanbia Agri-business manufacture the GAIN brand of premium quality animal feed.

Noel was initially nervous about using the product and therefore fed it twice per day for the first week. But after switching to a once a day regime, he quickly discovered that calves were more content. And although the powder allocation is the same, concentrate intake is higher. "When the calves were fed at 7.30am daily with free access to dry feed they were more content than when they were fed twice daily," says Noel, whose mother, Rosarie, and son, Eamon, assist with the calf rearing.

Calves of the same age are sourced from the one livestock market at the end of January, ensuring an even batch that make the best use of spring grass at turnout in April.

Calves are grouped in batches of eight when they arrive on farm and are fed 600 grams of Shine Once-a-Day mixed with three litres of water. There is free access to fresh water, dry feed and straw in every pen.

Noel says calves are significantly easier to wean and there is no post-weaning check. "Calves are weaned around 14 days quicker compared to the previous twice a day system and calves are healthier," says Noel.

Fresh bedding is introduced daily and pens cleaned out weekly. Noel is certain that this reduces the risk of pneumonia. "We have significantly less difficulty with scour and pneumonia," says Noel.

According to Joe Murphy of Bonanza Calf Nutrition, Shine Once-a-day is made with skim milk and buttermilk along with 4 plant oils to ensure slow even digestion. The skim protein and fat form a soft curd in the calf's stomach taking up to 14 hours to be digested. This compares to whey protein that needs to be digested in 1 hour, he added.

Shine Once-a-Day, together with palatable and nutritious dry feed are now a key part of Noel's business. All calves are castrated and after weaning are reared on silage together with 1.5kg of concentrate for the first winter and fattened on 8kgs of concentrate for the final 120 days before slaughter. Average kill out weight for each carcass is 340kg.



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