

APRIL 2024

Sublette County Ag. & Natural Resources Extension Newsletter

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SUBLETTE COUNTY AG. AND NATURAL RESOURCES EXTENSION

UPCOMING EVENTS:

MAY

13TH-15TH: UINTA COUNTY AI SCHOOL

21ST: WHITE SATIN MOTH MEETING,
SUBLETTE COUNTY LIBRARY

21ST: PINEDALE 4-H SMALL LIVESTOCK
TAGGING

28TH: BIG PINEY 4-H SMALL LIVESTOCK
TAGGING



UNIVERSITY
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Sublette County

Newsletter

Highlights and Upcoming Events

**Colostrum in Beef Cattle
Operations**

**Sublette County Hay
Quality Survey**

**Uinta County Artificial
Insemination Clinics**

**White Satin Moth Public
Meeting**

**From the Ground Up
Garden Planning**

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**Sublette County
Extension Webpage**

COLOSTRUM AND THE BEEF HERD

Calving season is well underway for many Wyoming ranches. Though this spring may seem mild when we remember last year's cold and snow, there are still many challenges facing newborn calves when they hit the ground. The connection between calf loss and a ranch's profit need not be explained, but what can we as cattlemen do to improve the survival chances of our herd's newest members? One way to prevent calf loss is to build a thorough understanding of colostrum and its importance in calf health.

Colostrum is the first milk produced by the cow following birth. Colostrum contains antibodies and is extremely nutrient dense. Unlike in humans and many other mammals, where antibodies can be passed through the placenta during pregnancy, the bovine reproductive tract doesn't allow for immunological transfer from dam to calf, leaving the newborn vulnerable. This makes the antibodies in colostrum critical for their initial resistance to disease. According to the USDA ARS center in Clay Center, Nebraska, calves that don't get colostrum become over 50 times more likely to die within their first three weeks. Calves that don't receive enough colostrum but still manage to survive to weaning are at a significantly higher risk of developing diseases later in life compared to those that do.

The timing of colostrum intake is absolutely crucial in securing calf health. In general, calves should receive roughly two quarts or about 5% of their body weight in the first half hour after birth. They should then receive at least one gallon within twelve hours. This is because the calf's digestive tract only allows antibodies to pass directly to the bloodstream for the first 24 hours of life before the intestine becomes impermeable.

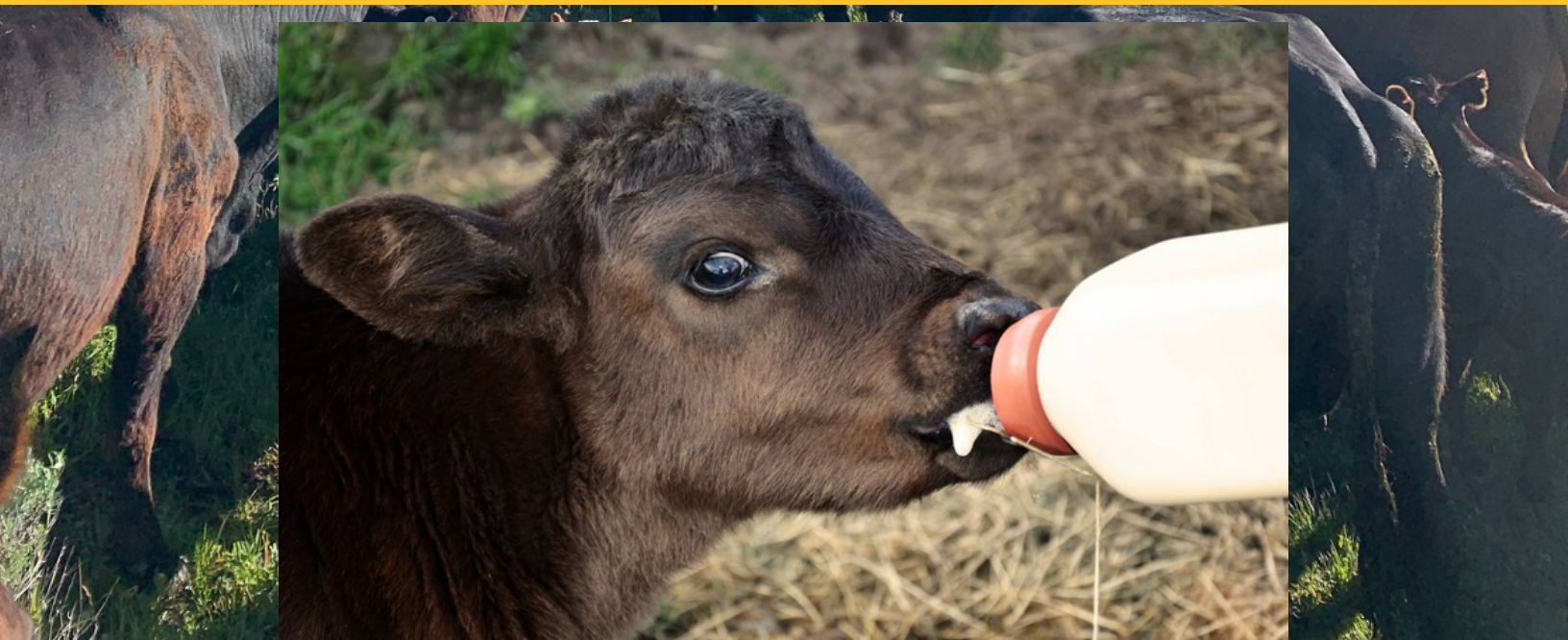
The most efficient way for the calf to receive colostrum is for it to stand and suckle from the cow on its own. However, as all producers know, there are times when it doesn't go so easily. Whether it's due to problems with the cow or calf, extreme weather, or other issues, there are occasions when the calf is unable to nurse directly from their dam during this critical period. It is important to recognize when a calf may be unable to receive colostrum in the normal way and be prepared to step in. Ideally, colostrum can be collected directly from the dam and given to the calf, but if this is for whatever reason not possible, colostrum will need to come from other sources.

If colostrum cannot be collected from a particular calf's dam, colostrum from other cows can be stored and used as needed. When colostrum is saved for future use from another cow, it is best to select healthy, mature cows as donors. Research shows us colostrum from cows in at least their third lactation or later is higher quality than that of heifers. Collecting colostrum should take place within 12 to 24 hours of calving. It should be a thick, rich, yellow liquid. Colostrum can be stored by freezing it in milk jugs, or better yet, in 1-gallon Ziploc baggies that are half filled and have the air squeezed out.

When prepping frozen colostrum for use, do not place it in boiling water to thaw it out. Studies show this can destroy a portion of the antibodies the calf needs. Frozen colostrum should be thawed slowly in a 110°F water bath until it reaches ~104°F throughout.

If natural colostrum is not a practical choice or is unavailable, commercial colostrum replacers can be used instead, but these are more effective as supplements for a calf that has already received some natural colostrum. Natural colostrum is always the superior choice when available. Hopefully, the calf will be able to suckle from a bottle, but in some cases the calf may be too weak or will refuse to accept being hand fed. In this instance, a tube feeder can be used. However, this can be tricky and is dangerous to the calf if done wrong. A veterinarian should be consulted first, especially for those who have not attempted this method before.

In conclusion, colostrum is a vital element of a calf's survival and therefore the success of a cow-calf operation. The high nutrient content and immediate natural disease resistance make this one of the most important considerations not only in ensuring a good calf crop but in guaranteeing an animal's lifelong productivity. Be prepared to monitor for calves not receiving colostrum from their dam and have a plan to get it to them, one way or another.



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Sublette County Hay Producers:
We need your help!

The Sublette County Extension Office is seeking to collect hay sample results from willing producers in the area. These will remain completely anonymous and will help us better understand hay quality across Sublette County.

By simply sending lab results for hay you've tested, you will contribute to a comprehensive dataset that will benefit ranchers throughout western Wyoming.

Your participation is vital to the success of this survey! Together, we can enhance our understanding of hay quality in the area and improve livestock nutrition strategies.

Lab reports can be emailed to dmontgo8@uwyo.edu, mailed to PO Box 579 in Pinedale or dropped off at the Extension Office. Please include the closest town, forage species, and irrigation strategy if not specified in the report!

For questions or more information, email Dagan or call (307) 367-4380. Thank you for your support!

**SUBLETTE COUNTY EXTENSION VOLUNTARY HAY
ANALYSIS SURVEY**

The Sublette Extension office is beginning a survey of hay quality across the county. We are asking any hay producer who would be willing to share with us lab reports from hay testing they have done. We would greatly appreciate any help we can get! See the flyer for more details and please feel free to share with others!

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UINTA COUNTY EXTENSION ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION CLINIC

UW Extension Uinta County will be hosting an Artificial Insemination clinic in Evanston May 13th-15th for anyone looking to gain hands on experience with AI in cattle and learn the basics of the practice. This course is only \$150/person and a great way to become familiar with the practice for those wishing to AI 4-H calves, or to breed for commercial purposes. Click the image to the left to be taken to the registration page. Spots are going fast, so be sure to register today!

SUBLETTE COUNTY WHITE SATIN MOTH MEETING

Sublette County Weed and Pest and Extension are teaming up to host a public meeting regarding the white satin moth. This pest has caused noticeable damage to plants in the community and issues could increase if proper control and prevention measures aren't followed. This meeting will cover basic info and prevention methods. Held May 21st, 5:30 PM in the Pinedale Library Lovatt room, this will be open to the public.



FROM THE GROUND UP-GARDEN TIPS

For those used to the challenge of gardening in Wyoming, UW Extension has a great video series with plenty of garden planning tips and planting ideas to help you get off the ground. Check out the playlist on YouTube by clicking the image to the left!



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