

## Colostrum News From Abroad

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**NEWARK, Del.** — Colostrum, the milk secreted for a few days following birth, is important to calves, lambs, goat kids and other ruminant newborns, since it contains antibodies against all kinds of deadly diseases.

Ruminants do not transmit antibodies during pregnancy because of the distinctive thick structure of the placenta.

The usual practice is to let the newborn nurse colostrum during the first few hours following birth, after which it is moved to its own quarters.

This not only ensures the safety of the newborn, it allows the mother to enter the milking string, with all its adjustments, as soon as possible.

In addition, some newborns nurse more than is good for them. Overeating scours is often the result, a not uncommon cause of death.

Lambs normally continue nursing, and kids may, depending on the owner's management system. However, a disease known as Caprine Arthritis Encephalitis (CAE)

is transmitted primarily in goats' milk to their kids, unless the milk or colostrum is pasteurized.

Many dairy goat owners pasteurize the milk before nursing their kids, but colostrum curdles during the heating process. The successful practice is to heat it only to a low temperature of 130 degree F, and hold it at that temperature for 1 hour.

If colostrum is heated above 140 degree F, it will not only begin to curdle, it will lose its important antibodies. The problems are obvious.

Now, a newly developed product may help. In the very interesting magazine, "The Sheep Farmer," a publication of the British National Sheep Association, I found an announcement for **SPRAY-DRIED WHOLE NATURAL COLOSTRUM FOR LAMBS**. It's called "Start 'em Right" and is sold by Sorex Limited, Widnes-Cheshire WA8 8TJ, England; phone 44-51-420-7151; FAX 44-51-495-1163.

The announcement states that "Start 'em Right" is high in immunoglobulins for protection against diseases and contains added lactose for extra energy to com-

bat hypothermia, a frequent cause of death in newborns.

The product comes packaged in sealed single-dose sachets or foil bags for easy storage and convenient mixing.

For one lamb, the directions call for the sachet contents to be added to 3 ounces of water at body temperature (25 g/100 ml water). After thorough mixing, the reconstituted colostrum can be fed by bottle or stomach tube. It can be stored in the refrigerator but must be warmed again to body temperature before next feeding.

A meal should not exceed 1 ounce per pound lamb body weight. Per 24 hours the recommended total colostrum feeding is supposed to be 1 pint per small lamb (6.5 pound), 1.5 pints for medium size lambs (8.5 pound) and 1.8 pints for large lambs (11 pounds).

Prices were not listed for this ovine spray-dried colostrum, but the product seems to be widely available in feed and animal supply stores throughout Great Britain.

Use of cow colostrum for lamb raising is discouraged because of alleged risk of anemia.

The article also mentioned that up to 20 percent of newborn lambs do not survive the third day of life in Great Britain. Six lambs per 100 born are lost as a result of hypothermia and starvation, at a cost of \$3.40 per head on the surviving lambs.

I have not used or examined this dry colostrum product, nor have I read reports about it; possibly because it applies more to lambs and

kids than to calves.

Cow farmers could easily have some colostrum stored frozen from a previous calving, and there is no reason they should have to pasteurize their colostrum.

This column is neither an endorsement nor an advertisement. I am simply providing interesting news about something that sheep and goat farmers have needed for a long time.

## 'Distinction' Program Seeks Beautiful Dairy Farms

Beautiful dairy farms are being sought for recognition as part of the Dairy of Distinction Program in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Started in 1983, the Northeast Farm Beautification Program recognizes the hard work and dedication of dairy owner/operators who maintain attractive farms. The purpose of the program is to 1) promote a positive dairy image; and 2) instill in consumers a greater sense of confidence in the wholesomeness of dairy products.

Farms that apply for recogni-

tion are judged on the roadside appearance of buildings, grounds and surroundings. Animal cleanliness, the barnyard, feed areas and manure management are other aspects of the farm operation taken into consideration.

To qualify, applicants must be actively dairy farming. Applications, which are available from the program secretary in each of the three participating states, are due by April 15.

For more information, contact the following: New York — Carol Weddle, NY Holstein Association, (607) 273-7591; Pennsylvania — Paul Nichols, American Dairy Association and Dairy Council, (717) 283-2204; and New Jersey — August Knispel, (201) 735-4989.

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