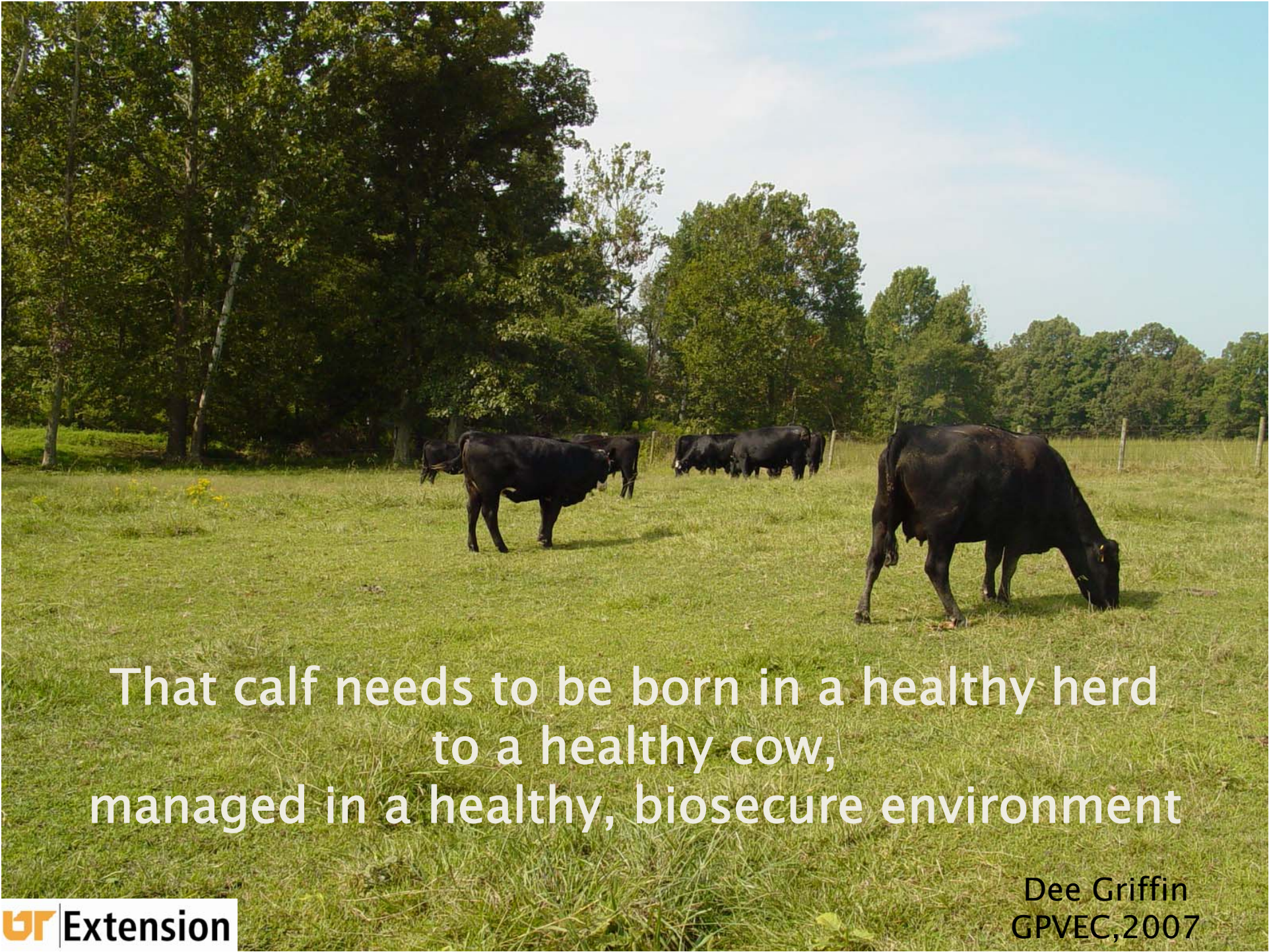


# Weaning Healthy Calves



Fred Hopkins  
UT Extension Veterinarian



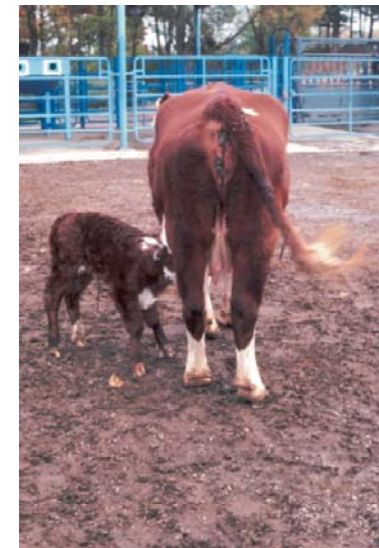


That calf needs to be born in a healthy herd  
to a healthy cow,  
managed in a healthy, biosecure environment



# When do Calves Die?

- At birth–2.1%
- Within 24 hours–1.1%
- 24 hours to 3 weeks–1.1%
- 3 weeks to weaning–1.2%



# Healthy Cows

- Are vaccinated beginning as calves and continuing in mid pregnancy
- IBR, BVD, PI3, BRSV, Lepto, others
- Body condition scoring
- Dewormed



# Healthy Calving Environment

- Restricted calving season
- Not Crowded
- Convenient to check cows and assist calving, quarantine sick animals
- No new additions during calving season



# Difficult Births

- Birth to 24 hours is the time calves are most likely to die and most problems are due to difficult calving
- Cows having difficult births are slower to rebreed and wean lighter calves





# Handling Difficult Births

- If you are clean and the cow is completely dilated, you can't help too early.

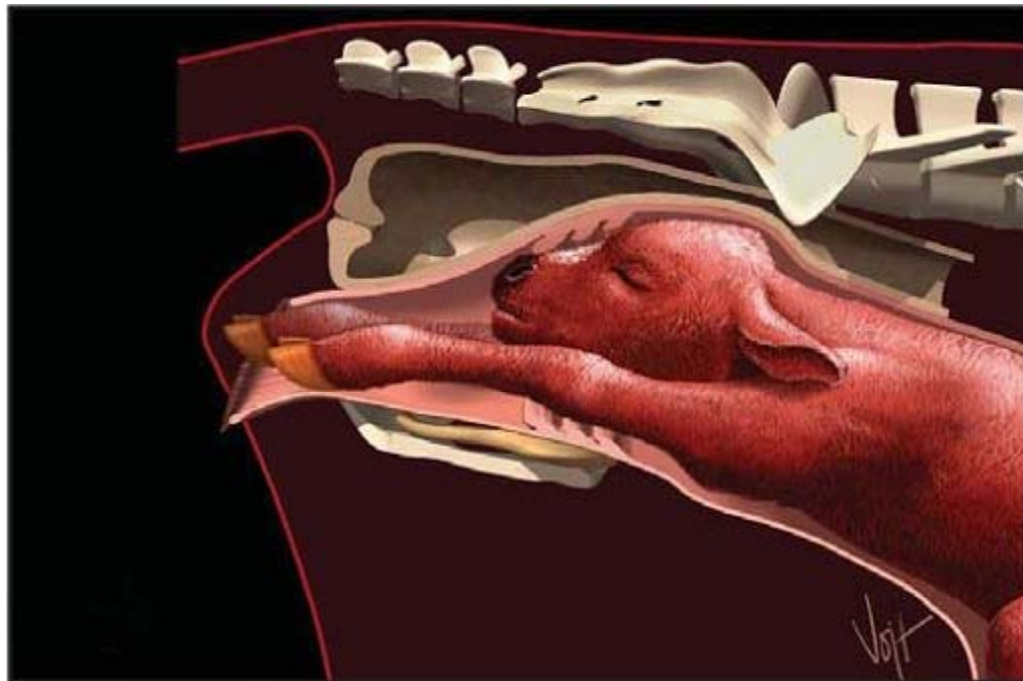


Figure 20. The end result.

# Preventing Calving Losses

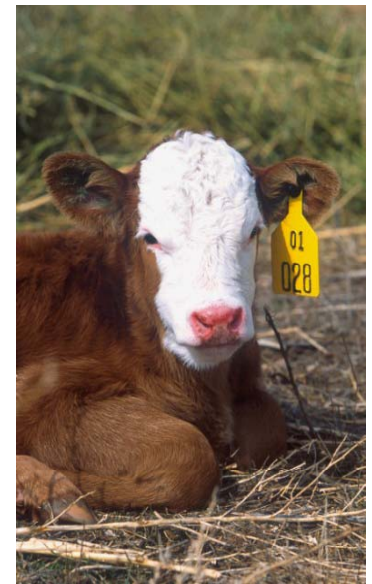
- Develop heifers for adequate size
- Use low birth weight EPD bull
- Check cows often
- Assist early





# Management after Birth

- Navel dipping
- Castration
- Dehorning
- ID



# Colostrum and Calves

- Calves are born without immunity and must get it from first milk
- Calves born to heifers, assisted births and mothers slow to accept their calves may not get enough first milk within 16 hours of life





# Treatment of Failure to Get Colostrum

- Colostrum from the mother, another mother who has just calved or purchased colostrum replacement
- 10% of body weight in 2 or more feedings by 24 hours of life.



# Vaccination Before 3 Months

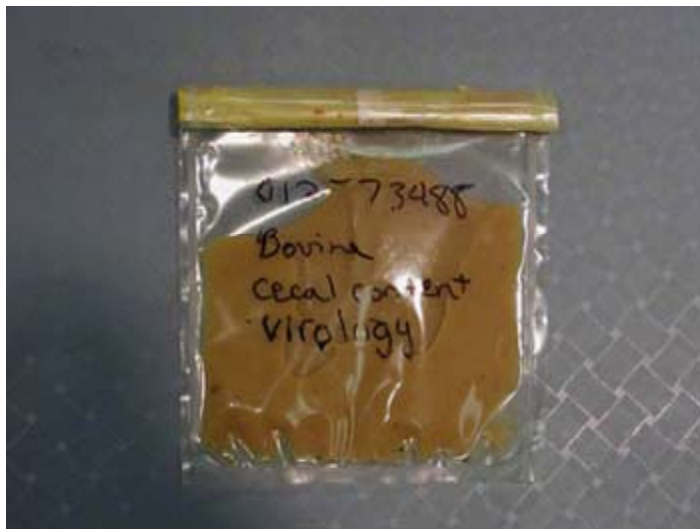
- Generally believed that early vaccinations were not effective due to colostral immunity
- Recent research says that early (4 weeks) vaccinated calf may be more resistant to infection anyway.
- Early vaccination may be useful if early disease is a problem.





# Baby Calf Diarrhea

- Isolate the cow and calf
- Give electrolyte mixture to the calf 2 to 4 times a day for 3 days.
- Vaccinate the cow before calving



# Vaccinations for Calves

- Today's vaccines are both safe and effective when stored and used as directed.
- Vaccines must be completed 10 days to 3 weeks before exposure to a disease to be effective





# More Vaccine Facts

- Boosters are important!
- Stress can reduce vaccine effectiveness



# Vaccine Care and Use

- Store in refrigerator at 35 to 45° F
- Keep MLV cool and use within 1 hour of mixing
- Use a clean syringe and a sharp needle



# MLV vs. Killed vaccines

- Proper use of a vaccine is important whether MLV or Killed
- Killed advantages and disadvantages
- MLV advantages and disadvantages





# Blackleg vaccines

- Many combinations
- Beginning at 3 months of age
- Remember booster



# Deworming Calves

- Generally, calves over 3 months of age and grazing will benefit from deworming
- Lots of great products are available.



# 4 way Respiratory

- IBR, BVD, PI3, BRSV
- BVD II?
- Begin at 6 months of age
- Remember booster!





# Other Vaccines for Calves

- Mannheimia
- Histophilus
- Moraxella
- Lepto
- Mycoplasma



# Mixing Vaccine Types

- MLV followed by killed
- Killed followed by MLV



# Preconditioning Programs

- Calves need to be immune before exposure





# Tri-State Cow/Calf Conference



The conference is presented under a grant from the Southern Region Risk Management Education Center with additional support from the University of Tennessee Extension, Virginia Cooperative Extension and North Carolina Cooperative Extension.



VIRGINIA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

*This material is based upon work supported by USDA/CSREES under Award Number 2007-49200-03891*

