Calf-Link

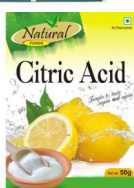## Clutha Vets Newsletter for Calf Rearers

By Olivia Hickman

Do we need to do it?

Clean milk is always going to be better for your calves. Less bacterial load is going to reduce the strain on the immune system and therefore likely to be very beneficial to your calves health. Stored colostrum tends to grow bacteria quickly. One way to reduce bacterial overgrowth in your milk is to add a preservative and / or refrigerate it. Unpreserved colostrum grows a load of coliforms which tend to be baddies in the bacteria world.

What can we use?

Any of the three below:

- Potassium sorbate sold here in the clinic
- Yoghurt; buy a make your own yoghurt sachet at the supermarket.
- Citric acid from the supermarket

Other ways to keep colostrum quality

- Clean storage containers when possible i.e. 200L drums when they are empty
- Cover colostrum to prevent stuff getting in the milk especially pesky birds and cats drowning in the storage containers.
- Stir the stored colostrum daily, not constantly
- **Refrigerate the milk**

Recipes

Potassium sorbate and yoghurt tend to be the best ways to preserve colostrum—here is how you mix them:

- Potassium sorbate 1kg/200L of milk
- Can be used for gold colostrum

Yoghurtising milk

Best for transition milk (TM) stored in bulk.

- 1 sachet of Easiyo into 20L of TM stored at 15-20 degrees overnight
- Mix and add to 200L or 1000L drum of TM
- Stir 2 x daily

DO NOT DISINFECT CONTAINERS OR STIRRER. DO NOT LET THE STIRRER TOUCH THE GROUND, KEEP IT CLEAN.

Use boiling water to clean drums and stirrer.

Don't use antibiotic milk for this either.

The bacterial population will change over the week. Good bacteria become dominant.

- Yoghurt should be tasted every day. Yoghurt tastes yummy! Just a drop will do.
- If you don't want to taste it should you expect your calves to drink it?
- If yoghurt tastes metallic or starts to froth or bubble this batch needs to be thrown out.
- Once you have a starter drum you can start a new container by just taking 20L from "yoghurtised milk" and add to a new drum of TM.