



When to Intervene When a Cow is Calving

1. A cow that is due to calf will tend to isolate herself from the herd. The cow becomes uneasy, lies down and gets up again a number of times, kicks at the belly and starts nesting behaviour which indicates that she is looking for a place to calve.
2. When the herdsman notices the first signs of contractions, he should record the time. If the water has not broken or the calf is not born within 6 hrs, a person that is familiar, trained and experienced in assisting calf births needs to be contacted.
3. When the water sack appears or breaks the herdsman should record the time. If the hooves become visible but there is no progress or the cow stops pushing and the calf is not born within one hour, a person that is familiar, trained and experienced in assisting calf births needs to be contacted.
4. If the calf does not get up and suckle from the cow within 2 hours, the cow 's colostrum must be milked out and the calf must be given at least 2 litres of the colostrum milk per bottle or stomach tube.
5. **The afterbirth will generally be expelled within 6 hours after birth.**
6. To avoid injury to the cow and calf, only persons that are familiar with and trained in assisting difficult births should assist the cow if the birthing process is not progressing according to schedule.
7. If the person assisting the birth cannot pull the calf out within 30 minutes a veterinarian needs to be called out. Continuing to struggle to pull the calf will result in damage to the cow and/or reduce the chances of a live calf being born.

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