

Flourish Calf Trial

Objective

To generate calf performance data for heifer calves reared on Flourish Calf milk replacer.



Trial Site	Duchy College (Cornwall, England)
Calf type	Holstein heifers
Number of Calves	23 (born Sept to Oct 24)
Milk Powder	Flourish Calf (23% crude protein, 19% fat; all dairy protein with 50% skim milk powder; contains Progres®, Butyrate and Gardion)
Feeder Type	Forster Technik Computerised Feeder

Management and Feed

Colostrum:

- Calves were tubed with 4L pooled colostrum (>22% Brix) within 4 to 6 hours of birth and then group housed (n=10 calves/pen) for 72 hours and fed colostrum / whole milk (2nd and 3rd milking) via an ad lib drum (~4L milk per feed)

Milk Replacer:

- On day 4, calves were introduced to a computerised feeder with two feed stations
- Calves were fed Flourish Calf milk replacer mixed at 150g/L (150g powder + 850ml water = 1 litre of mixed milk) (Table 1)

Table 1. Milk Feeding Plan

Age period (days)	Days	CMR (g/litre)	CMR (litres/d)	CMR (g/d)
1 to 3	3	4L colostrum, followed by ad lib colostrum/whole milk		
4 to 10	7	150	5 to 7	750 to 1050
11 to 45	35	150	7	1050
46 to 66	21	150	7 to 2	1050 to 300

Total days on feeder=63d; Total milk volume, 380L; Total milk powder, 57.1kg



Water and Dry Feed:

- Fresh water, calf starter pellets (Calf nuts, 17% CP) and straw in racks was available ad-libitum (from day 4)

Weaning:

- Milk was reduced gradually from 7 to 2 litres over 21 days and calves were weaned at 66 days of age

Results

- Calves weighed on average 38kg at birth (range 32 to 46kg) and 91.0kg at weaning (range 78 to 104kg) (Table 2 and 3). Calves had a daily live weight gain (DLWG) of 0.81kg/d from birth to weaning and 0.84kg/d from 7 days to weaning (Table 2).
- After weaning, calves weighed on average 109kg at 12 weeks equating to a post weaning DLWG of 0.97kg/d (Table 2 and 3).

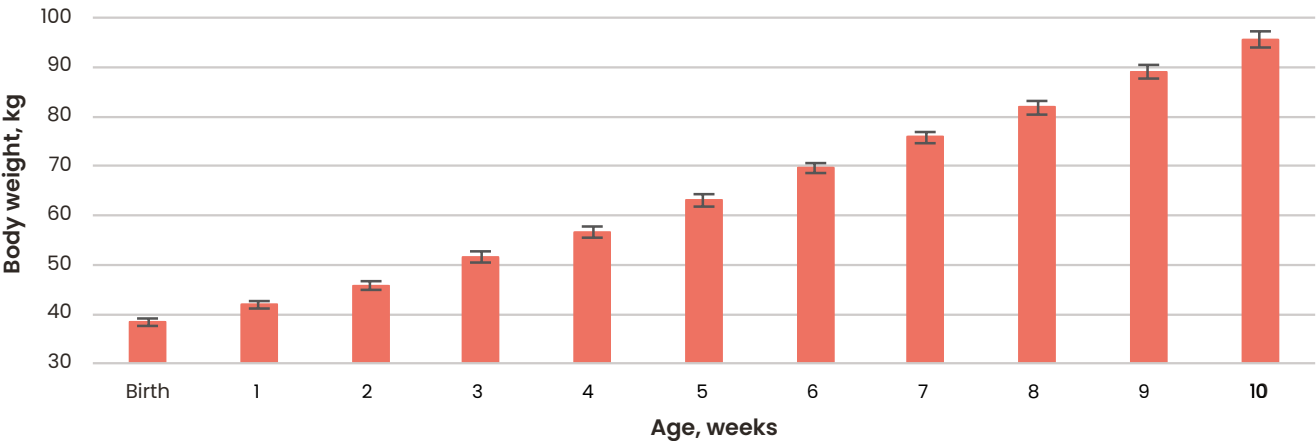
Table 2. Calf body weight and daily live weight gain (DLWG) pre and post weaning

	Mean \pm SE	Range
Birth weight, kg	38 \pm 0.8	32-46
Body weight at weaning, kg	91.0 \pm 1.3	78-104
DLWG birth to weaning, kg/d	0.81 \pm 0.02	0.6-0.94
DLWG 7d to weaning, kg/d	0.84 \pm 0.02	0.6-0.96
DLWG weaning to 12 weeks, kg/d	0.97 \pm 0.05	0.6-1.4

Table 3. Calf body weight (kg) up to 12 weeks of age

	Body weight, kg			Body weight, kg	
	Mean \pm SE	Range		Mean \pm SE	Range
Birth	38 \pm 0.8	32-46	Week 7	76 \pm 1.3	67-90
Week 1	42 \pm 0.8	35-50	Week 8	82 \pm 1.3	74-98
Week 2	46 \pm 0.9	37-55	Week 9	89 \pm 1.4	78-104
Week 3	52 \pm 1.2	44-65	Week 10	96 \pm 1.6	84-115
Week 4	57 \pm 1.2	48-69	Week 11	102 \pm 2 (n=21)	88-119
Week 5	63 \pm 1.2	54-76	Week 12	109 \pm 2 (n=18)	96-128
Week 6	70 \pm 1.1	62-83			

Figure 3. Calf body weight (\pm SE) up to 10 weeks of age



Calf Health

- Calf health was good; most calves received a faecal, nasal and eye score of 1 (normal) up to 10 weeks. Throughout the trial, only 3/23 calves (at week 3) had a faecal score of 2 (loose) and no calf received a score of 3 (watery) at any point.

Cost per kg body weight gain:

Milk powder intake per calf	57kg
Milk powder cost per 1000kg	£2400
Total milk powder cost per calf	£136.80
Mean body weight gain to 10 weeks	53kg
Milk powder cost per kg BW gain	£2.58

Based on March 2025 costings

Conclusions

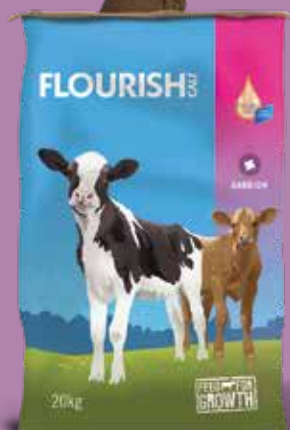
- Calves fed a total of 57kg Flourish Calf milk replacer over 63 days doubled their birth weight (38kg) by weaning, weighing on average 91kg at 66 days of age.
- Calves had excellent growth rates up to weaning of 0.84kg per day and continued to thrive post weaning with growth rates of 0.97kg per day.
- Calf health was good throughout the trial.

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