

CHAPTER-5

Preparation of calf starter

Objectives

To prepare calf starter for better growth of calves.

Introduction

Calf starter is a high quality concentrate mixture fed to the calves provided with limited milk. Feeding of calf starter helps in rumen development so that the calves can utilize fibrous feeds at an early stage.

Preparation of calf starter

The calf starter is a balanced concentrate mixture which is fed to the calves to supplement the nutrients when they are raised on limited milk intake. After proper feeding and management, male calves attain about 60-70 kg body weight and female calves 50-60 kg body weight after 90 days of age. By this time rumen fermentation starts functioning and it is not economical to provide them milk or milk replacer. After 90 days, they should be offered high quality concentrate known as calf starter. By this age calves start consuming green fodders also. The calf starter should contain about 22% CP or 18% DCP and 72-75% TDN. Calf starter should be of high quality and should include mineral mixture and vitamins. Calf starter can be fed from the age of 42 days along with milk or skim milk and good growth can be achieved. Milk or milk replacer feeding should be completely stopped after 90 days and calf starter feeding should be started thereafter. Normally a calf can consume 1.0 kg calf starter each day. The composition of calf starters has been given in the following two Tables.

Table 5.1. Composition of calf starter-1

Ingredient	Protein (%)	Parts (%)	Crude protein (%)	DCP (%)	TDN (%)
Ground maize	9	42	3.78	2.94	33.60
Groundnut cake	40	28	11.20	9.80	21
Fish meal	70	7	4.90	4.55	5.60
Wheat bran	16	20	3.20	2.00	12.00
Mineral mixture	-	3	-	-	-

Table 5.2. Composition of calf starter-2

Ingredient	Protein (%)	Parts (%)	Crude protein (%)	DCP (%)	TDN (%)
Ground maize	9	30	2.70	2.10	24.00
Groundnut cake	30	40	12.00	10.00	30.00
Fish meal	70	7	4.90	4.55	5.60
Rice bran	13	10	1.30	0.80	6.00
Wheat bran	16	10	1.60	1.00	6.00
Mineral mixture	-	3	-	-	-
			22.50	18.45	71.6

Sample questions

1. What is calf starter?
2. Give the composition of calf starters.