

5 Station Exam of a Calf

• Station 1 - Hindquarters

- Temperature – optimum: 38.6 – 39.1°C
- Male/female
- Hermaphrodite
- Freemartin (condition when a male twin's hormones pass through the placenta and affect the reproductive organs of the female twin) Diagnosed by checking the length of the vagina and vulva; shorter length (5cm or less) would be indicative of the condition, as length in normal females is around 12cm.
- Atresia ani

• Station 2 – Left Side

- Palpate limbs and joints to assess for signs of: pain, crepitus, swellings or deformities (eg. arthrogryposis)
- Lung fields – optimum respiration rate: 15-40bpm. Also auscultate to check for signs of aspiration pneumonia or a collapsed lung
- Heart sounds – optimum rate: 100-120 bpm (also checking for any congenital malformations)
- No need to check for a functional rumen while the calf is on milk until aged 6-8 weeks, as it is the presence of solid food which promotes the start of the rumen function

• Station 3 – Head and Neck

- Assess vision by testing to see if animal can see you coming (menace reflex is not used, as it is a learned behavior)
- Hydration Status
- Suckle reflex – allows to see if they have any problems feeding
- Congenital abnormalities
- Mucous Membranes – checking nose, mouth (CRT of <2 seconds is ideal, eyes and ears for unusual discharge)

• Station 4 – Right Side

- Lung Fields - Auscultate
- Palpate all limbs and joints to assess for signs of: pain, crepitus, swellings or deformities (eg. arthrogryposis)

• Station 5

- Hernias; check for signs of inguinal, umbilical (and if so, is it still patent?) or abdominal hernias
- Examine umbilicus to assess appearance, odour and look for signs of infection or discharges. Also assess for any umbilical disorders