

HOME SWEET HUTCH

Welcome to the calf hutch, a baby cow's home!



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1) CALF HUTCH

Baby cows stay in small houses called hutches until they are about two months old. These individual houses help the farmer keep the growing calves healthy and strong. Calf hutches are usually placed close together so the calves can hear and see each other.

2) SAND/STRAW

During the summer, the farmer spreads sand on the floor of the hutch to make a bed for the calf. The sand gives the calf a comfortable place to sleep. When the calf moves out to join the herd, the farmer can put new sand in the hutch. In the winter, the farmer puts straw on top of the sand to add warmth.

3) GRAIN BUCKET

Calves begin eating grain by the time they are a few weeks old. They won't eat much at first, but by the time they are two months old, they will be eating at least two pounds of grain every day. Most farmers add molasses to the grain to make it sweet.

4) WATER BUCKET

Along with milk replacer and grain, the farmer makes sure the calves have a constant supply of fresh water for when they get thirsty.

5) BOTTLE

Young calves are given milk replacer, which is like baby formula for cows. It has everything that calves need to grow strong and healthy.

6) EAR TAG

Cows are given a tag with a special number that they wear like an earring. This helps dairy farmers identify the cows individually and keep good health records.

7) CATTLE HALTER

Calves wear halters, which are like collars for cows. Farmers can attach a lead rope like a leash and guide the calf around the farm. Once they join the cows in the herd, they don't need the halters anymore.

8) PITCHFORK

Hutches have to be kept clean so the calves stay healthy. Pitchforks help farmers easily replace the straw and bedding so the calves have a fresh place to sleep.

9) COW SPOTS

Did you know that not all cows have black and white spots? There are 7 breeds of dairy cows commonly found in the U.S., and only one looks like this: the Holstein, which is the most common breed.



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