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*We will provide industry-leading, reliable, knowledgeable service, in a friendly, courteous and timely manner, to benefit our clients and the communities we serve.*

**St Clements Clinic Hours: Mon-Fri 7am – 5pm Open Saturday 7am-12pm**

**Hwy 89 Clinic: Mon-Sat 7am-1 pm**

**NOTE: CLINICS ARE CLOSED SUNDAY and NO DELIVERY SERVICE SATURDAYS AND HOLIDAYS**  
Orders for Delivery: Please, call BEFORE 9:30 am, for same day local delivery Monday to Friday

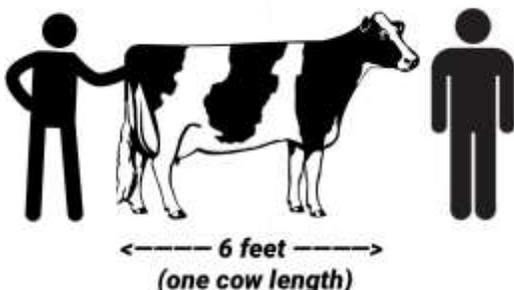
**24 Hour Emergency Vet Service - call 519-698-2610 519-323-9002 519-699-0404 1-800-663-2941**

## JUNE 2020 NEWSLETTER

### Clinic News

**PLEASE NOTE DATES** the clinics will be open with delivery and services as usual on July 1, Canada Day, and instead we will **observe the holiday on Friday July 3<sup>rd</sup> with only emergency vet services and NO delivery service.** Clinics will be open in the morning on both Friday the 3<sup>rd</sup> and Saturday July 4<sup>th</sup>.

*Thank you for your co operation with the new protocols around Covid-19 to help us all stay healthy and working, on farm and in clinic.*



*Please continue to maintain 6 feet of physical distance, and let us know if anyone on farm is not feeling well.*

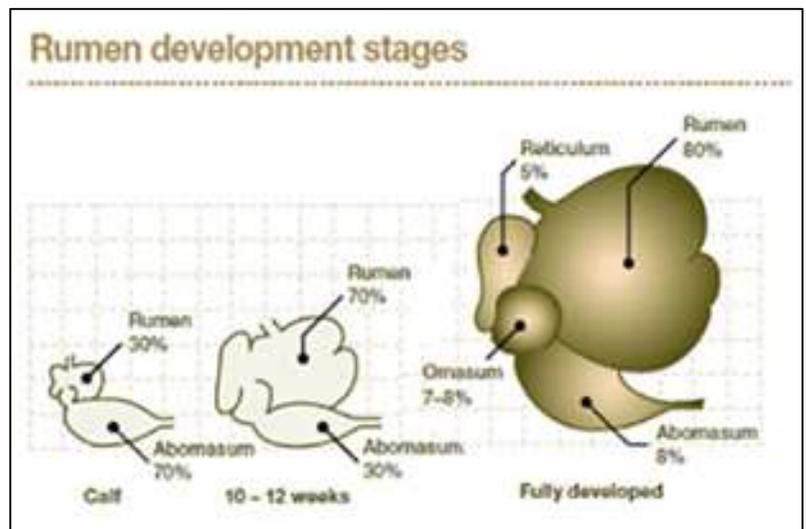
## Successful Weaning Relies on a Healthy Rumen – Part 1!

Weaning is a huge time of transition for dairy calves, often associated with reduced weight gain, increased illness rates, and stressed animals. Almost every farm has a different method to weaning depending on time, labour, and costs. No matter how you wean calves, the goal should be to minimize stress, and maximize rumen development. This will help to avoid growth slumps and set your calves up to be better cows!

When healthy calves are weaned off milk, they often begin eating large volumes of grain/calf starter to maintain their energy consumption. Although grain consumption is often our main goal at weaning, it can be problematic if the rumen is unable to digest grain. Without proper digestion of the grain's starches within the rumen, the starch ends up in the intestine which allows excess bacterial growth. This bacterial overload results in calves which go off feed, start scouring, slow their weight gains, and act as poor doers. Over the next 2 newsletters, we will discuss few steps to help improve rumen development at weaning:

### **1. The right age**

When it comes to the selecting the “best time to wean”, 2 or 3 weeks can make a big difference. Weaning younger calves is harder on the animal and more of a challenge for you! Young calves metabolize carbohydrates in the lower gut, but this function decreases with age. The switch to metabolizing carbohydrates in the rumen doesn't start to increase until the calf is 8 or 9 weeks old. Grain/calf starter consumed before 8-9 weeks of age often results in gut fill versus true growth as the rumen isn't ready to handle high levels of grain or fiber. Calves at 8 or 9 weeks old have more capacity to consume and properly metabolize starter needed to meet nutritional needs. The physical size of the rumen is larger, the rumen microbiome composition is more diverse and mature, and there's more rumen tissue available for absorption and metabolism of starter feed. When calves are weaned too early, the result is often a gap in the ability of the gut to absorb and metabolize the starter feed, and calves often experience a post-weaning growth slump.



### **2. A gradual transition (without sacrificing calf age)**

The transition from milk to solid feed intake can be a bit of a shock to a calf – a gradual transition can ease the shock and stress. Allowing calves access to grain/calf starter from a young age is a good way for them to get used to the solid feed without needing it nutritionally. They will play with the texture, taste it, and consume small amounts, which is great for the rumen.

*More information next month!*