



Milk Replacer Research Acidification

Twenty-four calves were purchased and randomly assigned to a non-acidified or acidified 20% CP, 20% fat milk replacer (MR) with Deccox[®] (22.7 mg/lb). All calves had access to a constant supply of fresh water and fresh calf starter. The MR were fed 1 lb of powder per head daily divided into 2 equal meals. The calves averaged 90 lb at the beginning of the trial.

The results for the six weeks when calves were fed both MR and starter are tabulated below. There were no differences in gains or starter intake; however, there was 0.9 less medical treatments/calf and slightly better fecal scores with acidification. Medical treatments average approximately \$2/treatment and acidification costs approximately \$0.30/calf. The net value of acidification would be approximately \$1.50/calf.

Acidification serves to reduce some of the enteric bacteria that cause scouring in young calves. One would expect to see an improvement in gain or efficiency of gain to accompany this effect. We did not observe significant gain, starter intake, or efficiency responses, only a slight reduction in scouring and associated medical treatments similar to other published controlled research.

Milk Replacers	Daily Gain, lb	Daily Starter Intake, lb	Medical Treatments/Calf*	Fecal Score*
Non-acidified	0.97	1.14	10.2	1.65
Acidified	0.98	1.09	9.3	1.61

*Acidification improved fecal scores and reduced medical treatments ($P < 0.05$).