

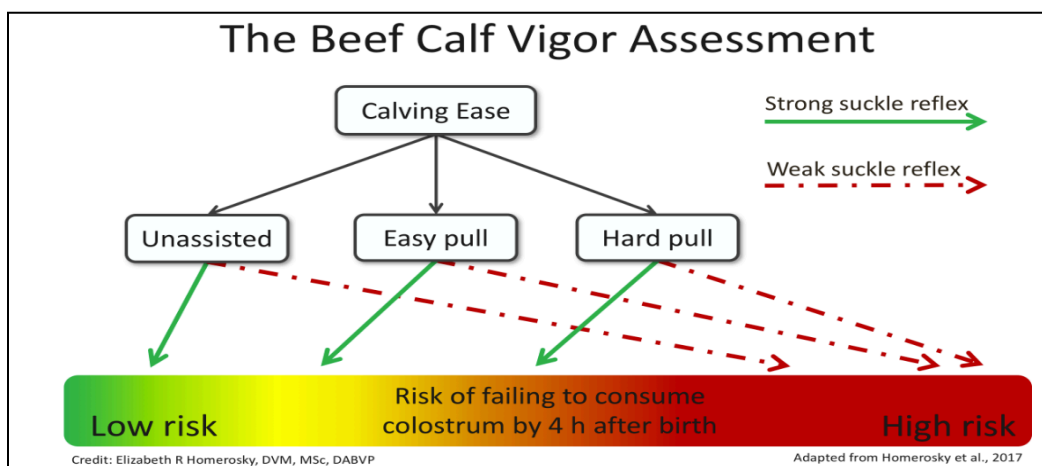
# Colostrum Management

## Colostrum Basics:

- Colostrum is the first milk produced by the dam. It contains antibodies (specifically IgG) produced by the dam's immune system along with immune cells, energy, protein, fats, and vitamins.
- Without adequate colostrum intake, newborn calves have no protection against infectious agents that cause scours, pneumonia, septicemia, and other diseases.
- Calves that don't get enough colostrum are 8 times more likely to be treated for disease and 18 times more likely to die. Calves that receive >200g of IgG within 4 hours gain 0.2 lbs more per day than calves with inadequate colostrum intake.
- **About 33% of beef calves will fail to consume enough colostrum on their own**
- Calves need at least **200 grams of IgG within 4-6 hours of birth**

## When to feed colostrum:

- Calves that are at-risk of not nursing enough colostrum:
  - Any assisted birth (even easy pulls)
  - Twins
  - Calves born to heifers
  - Calves born in severe weather
- Calves with a weak/absent suckle reflex 10 minutes after birth are 40 times more likely to fail to nurse on their own within 4 hours of birth
- How to test suckle reflex:
  - Place 1-2 fingers in calf's mouth and use fingers to rub the roof of their mouth
  - This should trigger the suckle reflex and cause the calf to latch onto your fingers
  - If the calf has a **weak suckle or fails to suck, it needs colostrum replacer!**



### **Guide to Colostrum Replacers:**

- Choose colostrum replacer made from dried whole colostrum that provides **Bovine IgG**
  - Calf's Choice Total HiCal
  - Calf's Choice Total Gold
  - Colostrx
  - Products that say "Bovine IgG" on the label
- Mix the product as directed on the package. Too little water can make the colostrum too rich and cause digestive upset. Too much water will fill the calf's stomach without providing adequate IgG and nutrients.
- Rules of Thumb:
  - Calves need a minimum of **200g IgG within 6 hours of birth**
  - Split this dose between 2 feedings for newborns
    - **1st feeding within 2 hours of birth:**
      - **100g IgG supplied in 1-2 L**
    - **2nd feeding within 6 hours of birth:**
      - Give if calf has not successfully nursed from dam within 6 hrs
      - **100g IgG supplied in 1-2 L**
- Try feeding with a bottle first. If unsuccessful, the calf will need to be tubed.
  - PRO TIP: calves that nurse part of the bottle and have to be tubed with remaining colostrum are less likely to get up and nurse on their own so these calves will need to be monitored!
- Calves born >4 hours before can be fed higher volumes (>2 L at a time)

