

SURE•CHAMP[®]

IN THE CLASSROOM

CATTLE NUTRITION 101

When should I feed my animal?

Consistency is key when feeding both steers and heifers. Typically, you feed morning and night and want close to 12 hours between those feedings. Hot weather during the summer can decrease appetite, so it is beneficial to feed early in the morning and later in the evening. Make sure you clean out any old feed immediately. A calf should finish what you have fed them in 30-40 minutes.

How long do I need to feed a supplement to see a change?

It can take 45-60 days to see a true change from nutrition. There are products that are designed for “instant gratification” like using Vita Charge[®] Paste, Vita Charge Liquid Boost[®] or Vita Charge Stress Tubs to stimulate intake quickly during stress. We typically recommend giving any supplement at least 30 days before you start to see any long-term changes.

What are trace minerals and why does my animal need them?

There are two classes of minerals, macro minerals and micro (trace) minerals. Macro minerals are needed in higher levels to meet your calf's daily requirement. Trace minerals are needed in smaller amounts but are still vitally important. Trace minerals are needed to help boost the immune system and keep your calf healthy. Trace minerals also promote healthy skin, hair and hooves. When looking at the mineral source it is important that you are feeding an organic or chelated source of minerals, as these are more digestible. In addition to Sure Champ[®] Cattle offering the Amaferm[®], which is a natural prebiotics that increase intake, digestibility and absorption, it also is a complete mineral package.

How important is water?

Water is the most important nutrient to an animal. Water drives intake and is a key component of health. Your animals should always have access to abundant, clean water. In the winter and summer months it is also important to monitor water temperature.

How do I know what show feed or ration to choose?

With show cattle there are lots of different branded show feeds to pick from or you might decide to have your local feed mill create a ration. Every calf is different and feeding plans should be individualized. The best advice is to reach out to the person you bought your calf from, your 4-H leader, FFA advisor or extension agent, or talk to a nutritionist to get a plan that will suit your animal and your goals. If you are working with your local feed mill to formulate your own feed ration, don't forget about Sure Champ[®] Ration Builder, a 32% protein pelleted base mix, fully fortified with vitamins and minerals and the Amaferm advantage, to help maximize the nutrient value of your feed.

Remember, no matter which show feed you choose, you still need to be feeding roughage (hay). Roughage is vital to maintaining proper digestive health in ruminants.

For additional livestock nutrition and stock show resources, visit surechamp.com/blog.