

Move calf feed and supplies by wagon

It's inefficient to transfer milk, containers and supplies in several trips by hand. A simple cart or wagon can dramatically improve your calf feeding system.

Save time. When you carry milk, feed and supplies for 15 pre-weaned calves by hand, you may make 10 round trips a day between the milkhous and the hutch area. At a distance of 50 yards, this means carrying loads in buckets for a total of 10-15 minutes each day. Using a simple cart can cut the number of trips and the total travel time in half and save more than an hour each week.

Improved working conditions. Hand-carrying heavy 5 gallon buckets strains the back, arms, wrists and shoulders. Over time this can result in injury



Hauling heavy 5-gallon buckets is hard on the back, arms, wrists, shoulders and hands.



This worker is able to carry six buckets of milk at once. Without the cart it would take her three round-trips to deliver this much feed.

and lost work time. The narrow bucket handles can cause pain by cutting into your hands. Using a cart or wagon greatly reduces the amount of lifting and carrying you do. Therefore, it cuts down on the risk of back pain and injuries. What's more, you can mix and pour milk right on the wagon, which means you don't have to do as much stooping as you would if you were mixing on the floor.

Easy to implement. All you need is a wagon or cart, and a relatively smooth and level path from the barn or feed preparation area to the calves' hutches. A wider wheelbase and wider tires will make it easier to pull the cart across unpaved surfaces.

Easy to use. Carts and wagons can be easily managed by all calf care workers, both young and old.

**WORK
EFFICIENCY**



TIP SHEET

Tools and ideas for more efficient care of pre-weaned calves.

*Gunnar Josefsson,
Marcia Miquelon and
Larry Chapman*

*University of Wisconsin,
Madison
Healthy Farmers,
Healthy Profits Project*

How much will a cart or wagon cost?

Prices range from \$75 for a “little red wagon” to \$200 for high quality, durable cart which will hold up to six 5-gallon buckets. This investment will quickly pay for itself. For example, if labor costs you \$7 per hour, and the wagon saves you 5 min. per day, a \$200 wagon will pay for itself in 12 months.



Where can I get one?

There are many different types of carts and wagons on the market. Look for a cart that is well-made and durable, and that will hold the containers that you use to deliver milk to pre-weaned calves. The following list of sources is provided as a convenience for our readers. It is not an endorsement by the University of Wisconsin, nor is it exhaustive.

- Your local **Farm Supply** or **Farmer’s Coop**.

- **Amity Carts** 301 East Washington Street, Shenandoah, PA 17976
Phone 1-800-262-6489
Fax 570-462-4942
E-mail amity@ptd.net
Website www.amitycarts.com

- **Gempler’s** Belleville, WI
Phone 1-800-382-8473
Website www.gemplers.com

- **TekSupply** 1395 John Fitch Blvd., South Windsor, CT 06074
Phone 1-800-835-7877
Fax 1-800-457-8887
E-Mail sales@TekSupply.com
Website www.TekSupply.com

The Value of Time

Spending 4 minutes per calf per day on feeding means 1 hour and 20 minutes will be required to feed 20 young calves. So, it may be worthwhile to consider changes that could save even as little as 30 seconds per calf each day. For example:

30 seconds x 20 calves x 2 feedings/day = 20 minutes/day

20 minutes/day x 30 days/month = 600 minutes = 10 hours/month

These small savings add up to a day off each month. At \$6-8/hr., that’s a \$60-\$80 cost savings per month.

This material was developed by the Healthy Farmers Healthy Profits Project. Our goal is to find and share work efficiency tips that maintain dairy farmers’ health and safety and also increase profits. For more information, call (608)262-7408 or visit our website at <http://bse.wisc.edu/hfhp/>

Material is not Copyrighted. Feel free to reproduce, please mention source: University of Wisconsin Healthy Farmers, Healthy Profits Project, July, 2000; First edition.

Authors: Gunnar Josefsson, Marcia Miquelon and Larry Chapman, Department of Biological Systems Engineering, College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, 460 Henry Mall, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 53706.

Research for this publication: was funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).



Work Efficiency Tip Sheet: Move calf feed and supplies by wagon