

BUSTING CALF FEEDING MYTHS

Dr. Bas Schouten is regarded as one of New Zealand's leading calf-rearing specialists, so his considered opinion carries immense weight within the calf rearing community. He clears up some of the myths about calf feeding:

MYTH: Bucket feeding calves causes lower growth rate, diarrhoea and affects digestion of milk.

FACT: Over the last 50 years, worldwide research has not proven any difference to growth, digestion or diarrhoea between bucket and teat feeding systems. (Source: Davis & Drackley)

MYTH: There are differences in calves reared with fast feeding and slower feeding teats.

FACT: There is no credible, independent clinical trial data to support the indication of any differences between fast and slow teat feeding.

MYTH: The speed calves feed at causes nutritional scours.

FACT: Nutritional scours are caused by low immunity, feeding cold milk, contaminated milk, environmental factors and over-feeding. (Source: Roy, Davis & Drackley)

MYTH: The amount of saliva a calf produces is due to the teats used on the calf feeder.

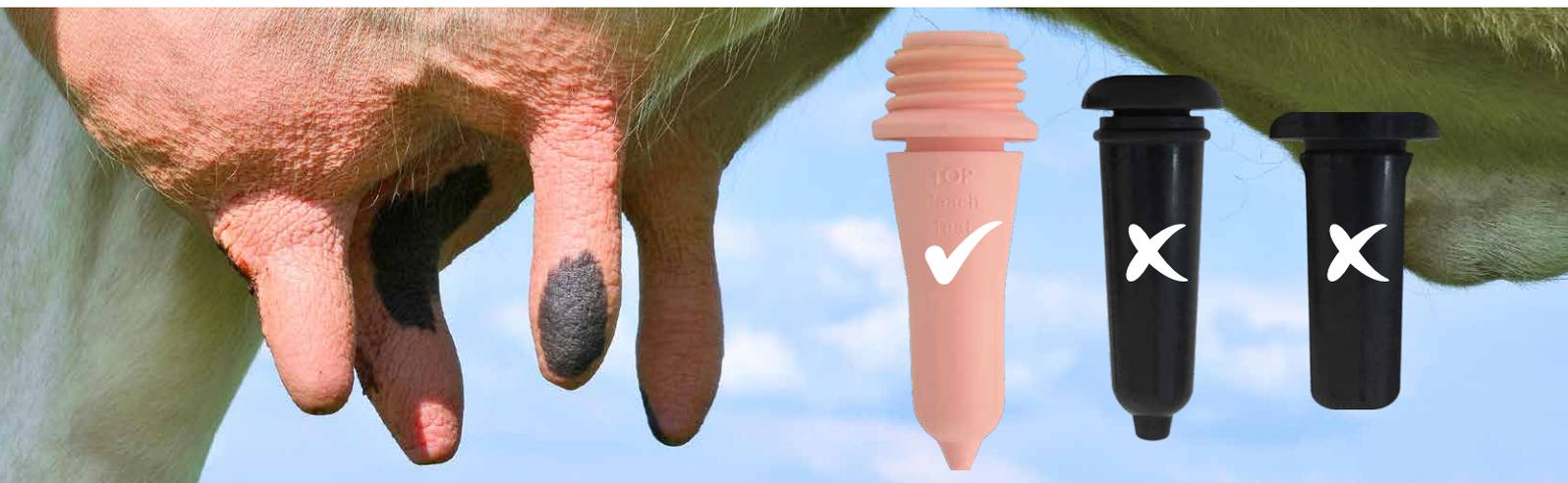
FACT: The amount of saliva is influenced by physiological factors, such as seeing the milk feeder and the calf-rearer, as well as the smell of the milk.

MYTH: Nutritional scours are caused by teat quality on the calf feeder.

FACT: Nutritional scours arise because of an overflow of undigested Casein proteins from the calf's abomasum into the small intestine, not the digestion of lactose in the milk. Digestion of lactose occurs naturally in the calf's small intestine. (Source: Woodford et al; Tomkins & Jaster 1991)

MYTH: The presence and volume of Ecoli in a calf's small intestine is enhanced by raw, undigested milk entering the small intestine too quickly.

FACT: Ecoli is a bacteria caused by environmental (faecal) contamination and is not related to the type of calf teat used.



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