

Using a colostrometer

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Testing colostrum is an important task that should be completed at every collection. The test results help you to make an informed decision as to whether the colostrum is good enough to be fed or stored, or needs to be discarded.

Equipment

- Check the colostrometer is free from any visual dirt and contaminants such as manure, you should also check for any cracks or breaks in the glass
- You will need:
 - Clean colostrometer
 - Jug – very clean
 - Colostrum at room temperature
 - Measuring cylinder – tall enough to allow the colostrometer to float.



Procedure

- Use a clean dump bucket and transfer the colostrum to a clean bucket with a lid on
- Take a sample of the colostrum, using a very clean jug
- Pour the colostrum into the measuring cylinder
- The colostrum should be tested at a fixed temperature, ideally room temp of 22°C – not body temp or direct from the refrigerator
- There should be no froth on the colostrum
- The colostrometer should be floated in the colostrum – leave for one minute before taking a reading.

Taking a reading

- Read the value where the colostrometer is floating at the surface of the colostrum
- Readings in the green zone indicate good quality – more than 50mg/ml of immunoglobulin

This colostrum can be used or stored

- Readings in the red zone indicate poor quality – less than 20mg/ml of immunoglobulin

This colostrum should be discarded

- Readings in the amber zone indicate marginal quality.

