



# The animal welfare problem of calf rearing

Cows that are kept for milk production must have a calf every year. The calves are usually taken away from their mothers within a few hours of birth and locked in small 'calf igloos'. This prevents cow-calf mating from taking place. If they were separated from around the 3rd day of life, mother and child would grieve terribly and roar pitifully for hours. As soon as they are born, the calves are taken away from their mothers.

As calves do not yet have an intact immune system at birth, they are dependent on their mothers' "beast milk", especially during the first few weeks, because this contains defence substances (immunoglobulins) that are essential for survival. Instead, they only receive a mixture from several mothers. Calf diarrhoea, which very often occurs and is fatal, is the fatal consequence, which dairy farmers are willing to accept for cost reasons.

Fortunately, there are now farmers who practise mother-born calf rearing for at least 90 days. As a result, the calves are not only better protected against diseases, but are also better socialised by being kept within the herd.

**Mutter und Kind gehören zusammen!**



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