



• *Since 1902* •

MILK FROM THE GRASS TO THE GLASS



**Autumnwood Dairy
Store Hours**
Monday- Friday
Noon-6pm
Saturday, 10am-4pm

APRIL 2009 · NEWSLETTER

SPECIAL DELIVERY- FARM STYLE

Thursday morning milking progressed and the eastern sky brightened, giving shape to everything around the farmyard. While the shadows were still long, I checked the two cows which were due to give birth soon. The smaller black cow was standing with her back hunched, and leaking milk. She was obviously in labor. I got a few more cows milked and peeked out the barn door about ten minutes later to check on her progress. That was when I noticed fetal membranes visible from the rear of the cow. This is not a good sign, as typical presentation for birth is the water bag (amniotic sac) followed by two front feet and then the nose. If membranes come first, it is probably an abnormal presentation, likely resulting in a more difficult birth and thereby increased chance of a stillborn calf.

I realized at that point the urgency of the situation, and hung up the milking machines and shut down the milking system. I let the expectant mother into the milking barn, and she cooperatively stepped into an open stall, allowing me to fasten her chain to her collar. Next, a pelvic examination was in order. I donned a plastic shoulder length glove and proceeded to check internally what was not yet visible. Two hooves were the first thing I felt, but there was no nose to be found. When I palpated a tail, my suspicion was confirmed, the calf was being delivered breech.

Delivering a calf backwards is more risky because a newborn calf is about four feet long, end to end, and the umbilical cord will be crushed or broken in the birth canal before the nose and mouth is delivered. This often results in suffocation, sometimes a fatality.

At this point, the best thing to do is attempt to assist the mama cow with her efforts. I salvaged a few used haybale twines, and tied one around each pastern (ankle), just above the hoof. Tying the outside ends of all the twines together, an iron crow bar was slid through the looped end to provide leverage. Approximately ten minutes of steady pressure ensued.

The contractions and pulling on the twine continued but the width of the calf's hips could not be squeezed through the birth canal. Time was growing short. If not delivered soon, the calf would most likely die. Desperate situations require desperate measures, so I ran to get a come-along device and a heavy chain. The chain would be fastened to a stall partition across the barn to provide an anchor and the ratcheting process would begin. Ever so slowly, the newborn's back hind quarters emerged. The birth canal was by then adequately dilated to allow the front half of the calf to be

pulled manually, without assistance of the come-along tool. Following the intense and prolonged effort on the part of both the cow and me, the ninety pound newborn hit the barn floor to make his grand entry into the world. Using the front feet I lifted and dragged the newcomer up in the front of the new mother so she could lick it clean. The cow does this for a few reasons. One is it stimulates blood circulation and also covers the calf with antibodies.

Having laid the newborn on the manger floor I checked for vital signs. Its eyes were still and rolled back and no breathing could be observed. Through the slick and slimy hair coat, I could see a strong and regular heart beat, so I knew it still had a chance, but it desperately needed to take a breath. Taking a straw, I tickled his nostril hoping to cause a sneeze. Nothing. Another tickle. Still no sneeze. In a last ditch effort, I decided to try to get some air into his lungs. Cupping my hands around his nose and mouth, I blew as big and long of a breath as I could. No response. Another try. Nothing. I tried again. I noticed a slight movement of his diaphragm. Thinking maybe it was the wishful thinking on my part, I gave him another breath. Finally, I saw him take a half breath. Then another, and another. Then a full, deep breath, followed by regular respiration.

As the newborn bull continued to gain strength as oxygen spread through his system, the mother cow aggressively licked him clean. Several cows on either side of her strained at their chains and collars to attempt to make contact with the newcomer and eager mooing filled the barn for several minutes.

Gradually, all the cows returned to their normal calm and content state and I resumed milking the rest of the herd, ending with the new mother being milked into a stainless steel catch bucket. The first milk given following birth is called colostrum and is full of vital nutrients and immunoglobulins to boost the immune system of the calf. Two quarts constituted the first meal of this hungry baby boy and within an hour he was up on his feet, awkwardly attempting to walk.

So began this Thursday morning at Autumnwood Farm.

Pat Daninger

WHAT'S NEW

Autumnwood Farm milk is now available in the Stillwater Station, located at Stillwater Blvd. & Croixwood.

Real Maple Syrup- the best we've ever had
- is available for sale at our Dairy Store

We love our customers!

- *There are not enough "O's in smooth to describe your chocolate milk*

- *Norman, Wyoming*

- *I have no more tummy aches and I'm losing weight since I started drinking your creamline milk*

- *Forest Lake customer*

- *Just wanted to send you a quick note to tell you that we love your milk. I have been purchasing it at Festival Foods in Andover for months now and will not go back to any other. I am so grateful that I can support a dairy farm close to my home that supplies us with milk from grass-fed cows without antibiotics. I also love the fact the we can drink from a glass bottle instead of plastic. My boys especially enjoy your chocolate milk (mom does to on occasion!). Keep up the great work and thanks to your family and others that help in this endeavor!!*

*God Bless You,
Virgene, Coon Rapids*

WHERE TO PURCHASE OUR PRODUCTS

- Autumnwood Dairy Store
(M-F Noon - 6pm, Sat 10-4)
- Andover - Festival Foods
- Bloomington - Festival Foods
- Brooklyn Park - Festival Foods
- Forest Lake - Marketplace Foods
- Forest Lake - Cub Foods
- Hugo - Festival Foods
- Hugo - Grundhofer's Old Fashion Meats
- Lexington - Festival Foods
- St. Michael - The Marketplace
- Stacy - Stacy-Lent Tesoro
- Stacy - Tim's Country Cupboard
- Stillwater - Cub Foods
- Stillwater - Stillwater Station
(Stillwater Blvd & Croixview)
- Vadnais Heights - Festival Foods
- White Bear Lake - Festival Foods

Family Day at the Farm

Open House

May 31st 1-4:30pm

Creamery tours, cow milking demonstrations, hayrides, baby animals, milk and cookies, Meet Princess Kay of the Milky Way, Kristy Mussman



651-464-0776 • www.autumnwoodfarmllc.com