HEALTH AND BREEDING CALENDAR

Dairy Cattle and Buffalo Care Calendar

Vaccination and deworming calendar, heat and breeding timeline, calf care, seasonal tasks and a breeding card for cows and buffaloes in India.

By Dr. Vaishnavi Karmawat, B.V.Sc. & A.H., Veterinary Officer · vetvaishnavi.com

Vaccination calendar

Disease	When to vaccinate	Notes
Foot and mouth disease (FMD)	From 4 months of age; booster after 1 month; then every 6 months	Free under the national programme (NADCP) in most states
Haemorrhagic septicaemia (HS, galghotu)	From 6 months; then every year before the monsoon (May to June)	Very important for buffaloes
Black quarter (BQ, langdi)	From 6 months; then every year before the monsoon	Mainly young cattle 6 months to 2 years
Brucellosis	Once in female calves at 4 to 8 months of age	Free under NADCP; protects against abortion
Lumpy skin disease (LSD)	From 4 months; then every year	Vaccinate before the vector season; control flies and ticks
Theileriosis	Once, from 3 months, in crossbred and exotic cattle where advised	Tick-borne; ask your vet
Anthrax	Every year in areas where it occurs	Only where the veterinary department advises
Rabies	After a bite by a suspected rabid animal, as the vet advises	Report bites at once

> Vaccinate only healthy, dewormed animals. Ask your local veterinary hospital for the dates of free government vaccination camps and keep the ear-tag (Pashu Aadhaar) numbers ready.

Deworming plan

Animal	When
Calves	At about 10 to 15 days, then every month until 6 months, then every 3 months until 1 year
Adults	Two to three times a year: before the monsoon, after the monsoon and in winter; based on a dung test if possible

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Pregnant animals	Only with a product your vet says is safe in pregnancy; usually in the last 3 months

Breeding timeline

Event	Cow	Buffalo
Heat cycle	Every 21 days (18 to 24)	Every 21 days (18 to 24)
Heat lasts	About 18 hours	About 24 hours; often silent, check early morning and late evening
Best time for AI	Heat seen in the morning: AI the same evening. Seen in the evening: AI next morning	Same rule; second half of heat
Pregnancy check	60 to 90 days after AI (by a vet)	60 to 90 days after AI
Pregnancy length	About 280 to 285 days (9 months 10 days)	About 305 to 318 days (about 10 months 10 days)
Dry off before calving	About 60 days before the expected date	About 60 days before the expected date
First heat after calving	About 45 to 60 days	About 60 to 90 days
Ideal calving interval	About 12 to 13 months	About 13 to 15 months

Signs of heat: bellowing, restlessness, mucus discharge from the vulva, swollen and red vulva, mounting or standing to be mounted, drop in milk, frequent urination.

Calf care in the first week

- ☐ Clear mucus from nose and mouth; let the mother lick the calf
- ☐ Feed colostrum (first milk) within 1 hour of birth, about one-tenth of body weight in the first day in 2 to 3 feeds
- ☐ Cut the navel cord about 2 inches from the body and dip in tincture iodine
- ☐ Keep the calf in a dry, clean, draught-free place
- ☐ Weigh the calf and record the date, sex, sire and dam
- ☐ Ear-tag and register the calf with the veterinary department
- ☐ Watch for diarrhoea, weakness or not suckling; call a vet early

Seasonal task calendar

Season	Key tasks
Summer (March to June)	Shade, fans or sprinklers; clean cool water all day; feed in cool hours; HS and BQ vaccination before the monsoon; plan green fodder sowing

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Monsoon (July to September)	Dry floors and drainage; tick and fly control; deworm after the rains start; watch for mastitis, foot rot and HS
Post-monsoon (October to November)	Deworm; FMD vaccination round; make silage or hay from surplus fodder; check breeding records
Winter (December to February)	Protect calves from cold at night; give more energy feed; clean water at room temperature; check for lice

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Breeding and calving card

Animal name / tag no.		**Breed**	
Date of birth		**Species**	Cow / Buffalo

Heat date	AI / bull date	Bull or semen code	AI by	Pregnancy check date and result	Dry-off date	Expected calving	Calving date, calf sex

Quick dates: expected calving = AI date + 283 days for cows, + 310 days for buffaloes. Dry off about 60 days earlier. Our free Dairy Farm Record Book (Excel) calculates these dates for you.

This guide is general information for animal owners and farmers and does not replace an examination by a veterinarian. Vaccine schedules and scheme rules can differ by region and change over time; confirm with your vet, local veterinary hospital or official sources. Questions? Visit vetvaishnavi.com/ask-the-vet or email care@vetvaishnavi.com.