

# Getting your Farm Ready for Calving

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# Is Your Farm Ready for Calving?

- ▶ Farm facilities
  - ▶ Designated Calving Area
  - ▶ Chute/Head Catch
- ▶ Calving Equipment – Do you have a calving kit?
- ▶ Personnel – Who's going to be helping you?  
Who's your vet?

# Farm Facilities

## Designate a calving area

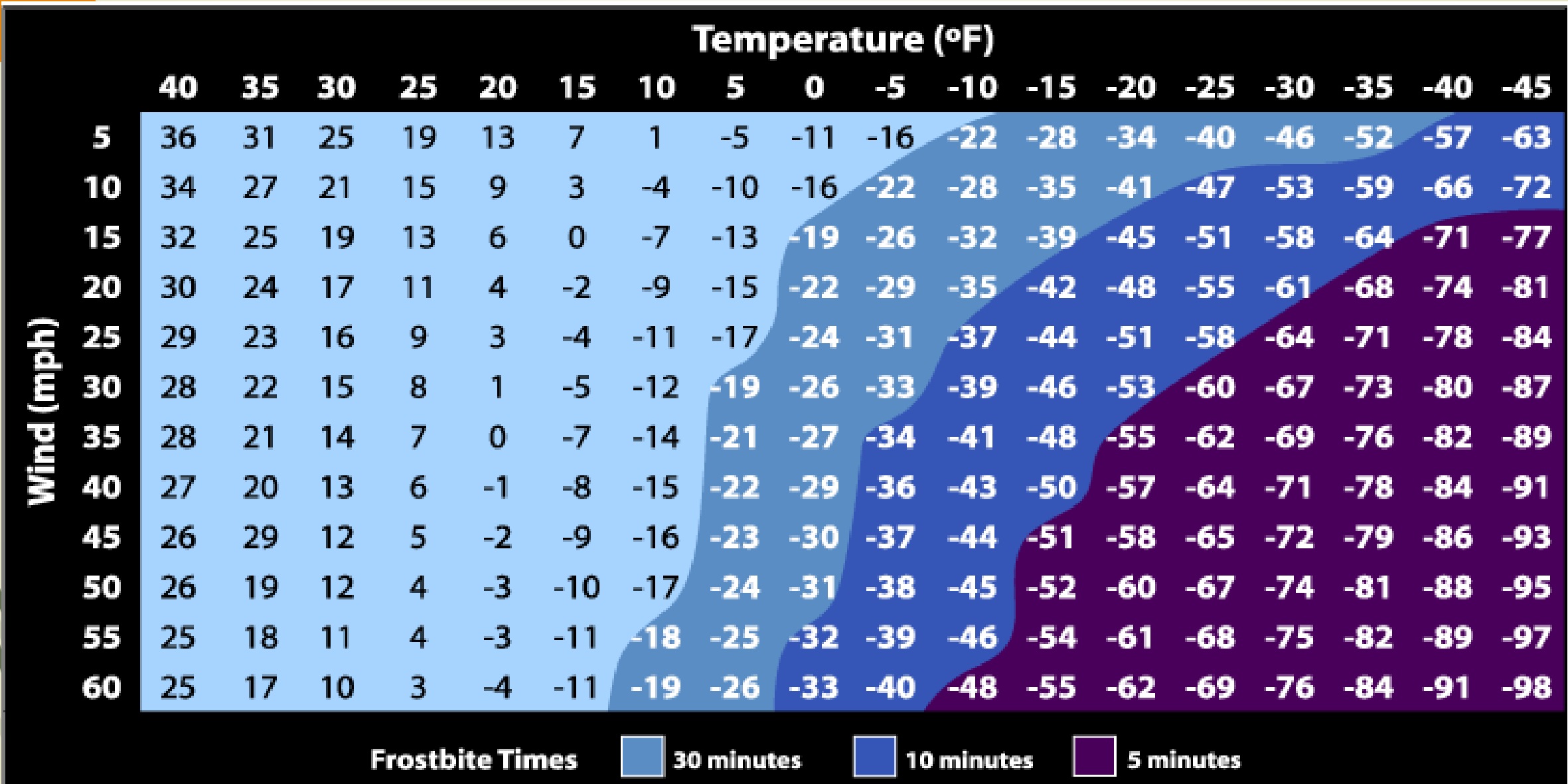
- ▶ Plan ahead: What will the weather be like? Will you be calving indoors or out?
- ▶ Clean, dry area that has limited contamination from bacteria
- ▶ **If outside:** Smaller pasture closer to the house or barn
  - ▶ Less area for the cow or heifer to go off and calve by herself
  - ▶ Easier to move into a corral or barn to assist with any calving issues
  - ▶ Easier to check 24hrs a day
- ▶ **If Inside:** Calving Barn
  - ▶ Shelter from the elements – wind and cold
    - ▶ Clean dry bedding such as straw.
    - ▶ Make sure to clean pens between cow-calf pairs to help prevent the spread of potential diseases like scours
  - ▶ Space for multiple cows/heifers to calve at once - Individually
  - ▶ Individual pens for each pair eliminate potential mix-ups (12'x12' minimum)
    - ▶ Make moveable partitions with metal gates – use plywood or boards on the bottom to prevent calves from sticking their heads through. These movable partitions can also be used to catch cows behind to deal with potential calving issues.
- ▶ Have a Headcatch – this can be a full chute or a headgate that allows for safe handling of the cow/heifer.



## Examples of Calving Pens and Bedding Depth



# Wind Chill





# Heat Index

		Relative Humidity (%)											
		30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85
Temperature (°F)	100	84	85	86	87	88	90	91	92	93	94	95	97
	98	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	93	94	95
	96	81	82	83	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93
	94	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91
	92	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	85	86	87	88	89
	90	78	79	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	86	87
	88	76	77	78	79	80	81	81	82	83	84	85	86
	86	75	76	77	78	78	79	80	81	81	82	83	84
	84	74	75	75	76	77	78	78	79	80	80	81	82
	82	73	73	74	75	75	76	77	77	78	79	79	80
	80	72	72	73	73	74	75	75	76	76	77	78	78
	78	70	71	71	72	73	73	74	74	75	78	76	76
	76	69	70	70	71	71	72	72	73	73	74	72	75
		Temperature Humidity Index (THI)											
		Normal <75			Alert 75-78			Danger 79-83			Emergency >84		

# Building Your Own Calving Kit

- ▶ Ear tags and tagger
- ▶ Halter and rope
- ▶ Disposable Ob/Breeding Sleeves
- ▶ Disposable gloves
- ▶ Stainless steel bucket (Plastic can crack, develop holes)
- ▶ Lube (squeeze bottle for easier handling)
- ▶ Disinfectant (Nolvasan or Chlorhexidine)
- ▶ Clean Ob chains and handles or Nylon Calf Strap
- ▶ Flashlights with extra batteries (Batteries drain faster in colder weather)
- ▶ 7% tincture Iodine for dipping the calf's navel
- ▶ Bottle and lamb nipple in case you have to feed the calf
- ▶ Stomach tube feeder
- ▶ Alarm Clock
- ▶ Towels or hair dryer in case you need to dry the calf

## Recommended Sources:

- Valley Vet: [valleyvet.com](http://valleyvet.com) (usually ships within 1-2 days)
- Southern States Cooperative
- Tractor Supply



# Personnel – Who's Helping Calve?

## ▶ Who's your vet?

- ▶ Make sure you have a good relationship with your Vet
  - ▶ Veterinarian – Client – Patient - Relationship (VCPR)
  - ▶ Keep their number handy in your calving kit

## ▶ Who's helping you calve? Calving is a tough time to introduce new faces

- ▶ Do they know where you keep your calving supplies? Do they know how to use them?
- ▶ Are they familiar with your farm's set up – designated calving area, where gates are?
- ▶ Are they familiar with your cattle? Are your cattle familiar with them?