

# TUBE FEEDING CALVES



## 1. RESTRAINING THE CALF:

- Position a standing calf between your legs and back the calf into the corner. Make sure you keep the calf head up.
- If the calf cannot stand but is still strong enough to swallow, position the animal on its sternum and hold the head up.



## 2. MEASURING AND INSERTING THE TUBE:

- Before you start, make sure to measure the length of the tube that should be inserted in a specific calf, which should be the distance between the calf's nose and the elbow (back of the front leg).
- Lubricate the tube.
- Make sure that the tube is empty. If passing the tube connected to the bottle/bag, ensure that the flow control valve is closed or the flexible tube/bag is bent.
- Slowly and gently insert the tube over the tongue in the direction of the back of the mouth. Once the tube passes through the throat, gently slide the tube down the esophagus until the length mark.
- The tube should pass smoothly. If you feel any resistance, stop immediately and check the tube's position.



## 3. CHECKING THE TUBE AND ADMINISTERING FLUIDS:

- To make sure the tube is inserted into the esophagus and not the trachea or windpipe, palpate the left side of the neck. If you feel the tube inside a firm structure with rings, you insert it into the trachea. Gently remove the tube and try again.
- If the tube is in the right place, make sure that the calves' head and neck are up to prevent aspiration of liquids. Start the feeding slowly and monitor the calf. If you suspect something is wrong or want to slow down the flow lower the bottle/bag.



## 4. REMOVING AND CLEANING THE TUBE:

- After all the fluid has passed down, bend the feeding tube before pulling it out. Make sure that the tube (and the flexible tube connected to it, if any) is empty before removing the tube. Lower the head of the calf and remove the tube towards the ground to avoid fluid aspiration.
- Rinse the tube feeder and wash it with soap and hot water. Use a disinfectant to rinse it again and hang it in the tube to let it completely dry before storing it until the next use.

