

Clémence's Column

Method of burning calves horns

The Blonde d'Aquitaine is a breed of cattle with horns. So if you want to raise animals of French descent, they will surely have horns.

Did you know that young animals have little sensitivity in the first 24 hours after their birth?

1st Method: I propose a simple, effective and inexpensive way to burn the horns at birth.

What you need: barber scissors that cut well, surgical gloves and dehorning paste. The best is Dr. Naylor's.

You must separate the calf from its mother so she does not lick the paste and the calf does not go rubbing against its mother because success depends on the paste remaining in place at least half an hour.

First of all, you must find the horns, use your fingers to locate the small buttons of the horns, it is not always apparent, there are always rosettes and the horn button is at the center of the rosette. With the pair of scissors cut hair carefully about the size of a nickel, where the horns are there is no hair, and then apply a thin layer of dehorning paste of the size of a nickel. Remember to wear your surgical gloves to do it.

If the calf is born in the morning, you can do it the same day and monitor it so it does not remove the paste. After about half an hour the job is done. To check, using a paper towel remove the excess and you will see like a burn. Do not put too much because it can bleed, if this happens apply Cornstarch to stop the bleeding then it will form a scab which will fall in the next two weeks. Eventually the hair will grow and you will have an animal without horns.

2nd method: If you have not done it in the first days following the birth there is another method, please note that the horn must not be out; you have up to three weeks for this method. Pick up a HORNSTIFT brand dehorning stick, the procedure is the same, cut the hair at the site of the horns. Moisten with water the horn buttons and dip the stick in the water, be careful not to wet too much. With the stick rub the horn button in a circular motion until the skin crumbles, it will make a white circle. You should not rub too much because there is a danger of bleeding.

With this method, you should ideally be two persons because the time you rub, the calf will struggle as it burns. If the application is done correctly the job is done, it will form a scab and you will have succeeded.

This method is more painful than with the paste but it works well too. You have to be careful, not to wet too much because it can leak and cause injury and flow in the eyes.

I hope this will help you and encourage you to inseminate your cows with French bull semen to have subjects with good musculature, A REAL BLONDE D'AQUITAINE.

Good luck and for more information you can contact me at 819 336.5503 (french speaking only).

I have been using the dehorning paste for the past twenty years and it is not expensive, with a bottle of paste you can dehorn about thirty calves, you can do the tattoo at the same time. The tattoo will grow as the ear grows so when he becomes an adult it will be more readable.



Wishing you success

Regards Clémence Landry

For the next issue, I will give you tips how to detect when the cow is in heat to maximize your chances of successfully inseminating her.

Translated by Maureen Landry