



SHOW SOLUTIONS

Spring show calf hair care

February 2020

By: Dave Guyer

Spring hair care is of the utmost importance when looking ahead and planning to be successful at summertime shows. We often get caught up in the fit job of our animals, but before you can fit them, you must have hair to work with! As such, the proper management of that hair is critical.

The importance of proper shampooing and conditioning

The rinsing and washing process removes natural oils from the skin and hair, which, unfortunately, dries them out. While it's common to use dish soap to wash your cattle, I would not recommend it; dish soap strips grease off of dishes and will do exactly the same to an animal's skin and hair. Think about what would happen if you used dish soap on your own hair — it probably wouldn't work out so well. For these reasons, it is very important to use a good pH-balanced shampoo and to ensure that you're putting oils back into the hair with conditioner or sheen. Always keep your calf in the barn when using oils because oils will collect dirt and heat. My suggestion is to rinse your calf every day, wash them with soap two to three times per week and work some oil and/or sheen into their hair every day after rinsing. You should then blow dry their hair and finish with more sheen or oil.

In the late winter and early spring months, some of you will have trouble with dry skin and hair, so good skin and hair management is especially critical at this time. Be sure to keep your calves dewormed and deloused during this time of the year because, let's face the facts, we all fight calves trying to rub hair off in the spring. If you are showing in the spring and lose sleep at night wondering if your calf is out there rubbing his hair off, like many of us do, be sure to hotwire your trees, fences, feed bunks, etc. Do not give them the opportunity to ruin what you've worked so hard for.

From rough to show-ready

Spring is also the time of year when you will start seeing hair turn brown and die, resulting in hair loss. It can be easy to lose interest in your calf when this is happening. Of course, we all want to walk out to the barn and see a show-ready calf every day, but that's just not reality. As you prepare them to look their best on show day, you will endure many ups and downs in the weeks and months prior. You must keep in mind that this timeframe is very important for the outcome of the summertime show. Whether you like it or not, that old hair needs to come out in preparation for new hair to grow.

So, here's the bottom line: show your calf as much as you can, but when they start losing hair around March or April, go ahead and get it out so you can start focusing on the new hair in preparation for your summer county or state fair. You can get the old hair out by simply continuing to brush and work it out, or you can choose to slick that old hair off in order to grow new hair. However, as previously mentioned, you must work through the rough stages,

Continued on next page ----->

WWW.SHOWWRITE.COM

Part of the **Alltech** Feed Division





SHOW SOLUTIONS

and when you slick one off, your calf will look rough — just keep working through that and be patient.

Many of you ask about hair growth supplements like [Hide and Hair](#). A product like this can help with the development of a solid hair coat — but that doesn't mean it's okay for you to quit working on it. You must also put in the elbow grease of frequent rinsing, combing and blow-drying!

Always remember: it takes a minimum of 90 to 120 days of using an everyday routine hair care program with your project to get it ready for the target date. Summertime success involves putting in a great deal of hard work long before the show. Don't let your competition outdo you by showing up unprepared. Keep this in mind: the work you put in today, tomorrow and in the days to come will be instrumental in determining your future success!

For more tips on how to be successful in the show ring, please visit www.showrite.com or contact a Show-Rite representative.

WWW.SHOWRITE.COM

Part of the  Alltech Feed Division

