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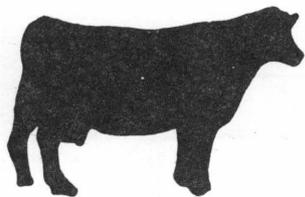
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dairy guidelines

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COLD CALF HOUSING WITH INDIVIDUAL CONFINEMENT

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A cold calf housing system that offers individual confinement has been thoroughly tested by experienced dairymen in Virginia. In principle, it is little different from several calf hutches placed side by side. It provides the essential qualities of calf housing; an adequate environment (minimal stress), a dry bed (wet floors are almost sure death), and plenty of fresh air with no drafts. It also includes the important feature of weather protection for the person caring for the calves and minimum labor for feeding and observation.

Figure 1 shows an over-all view of a cold calf housing barn. It may be constructed with as many pens as needed for your herd. A rule of thumb is 15 pens for a 100 cow herd.

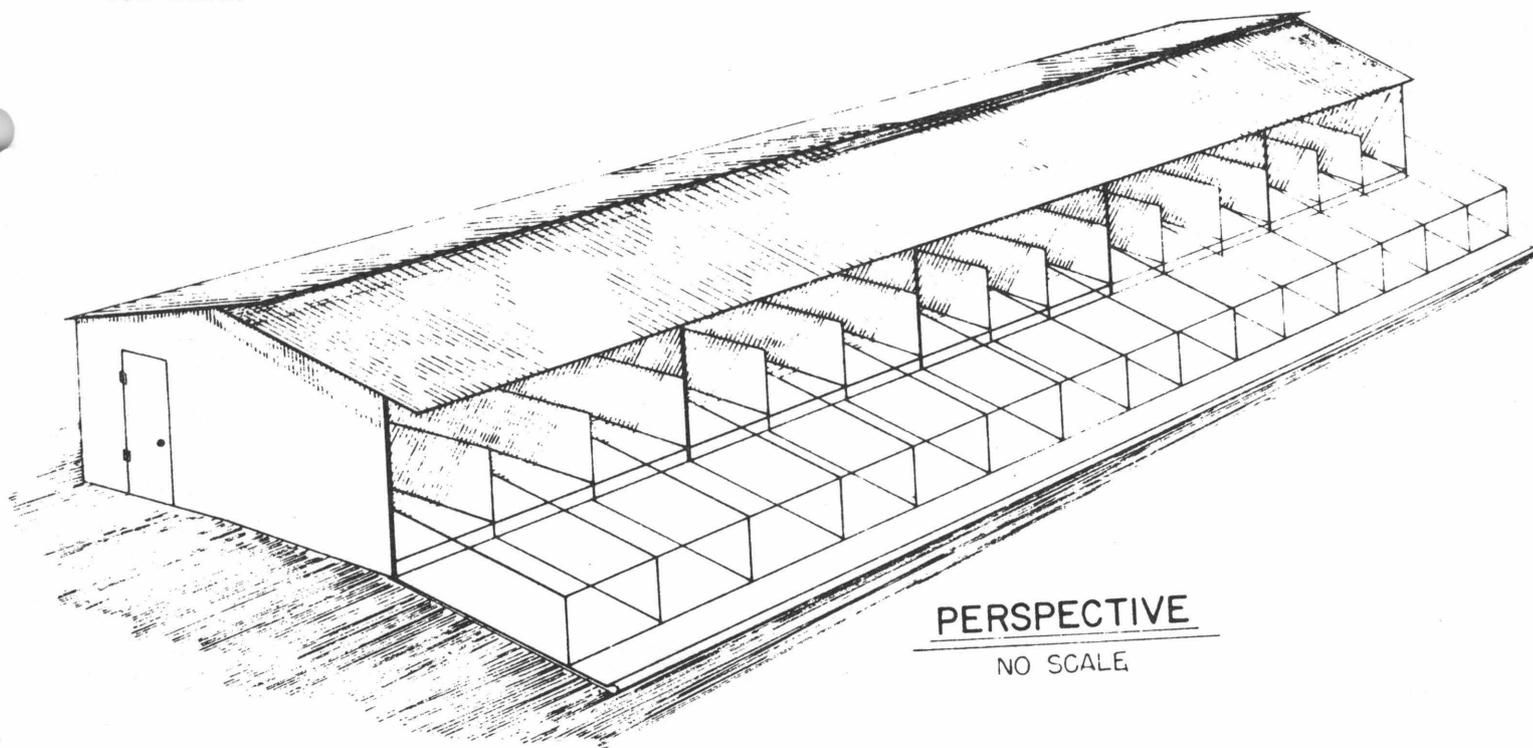


Fig. 1. An open-sided cold calf barn should face the southeast so calf can seek comfort zones and use sun for warmth and drying.

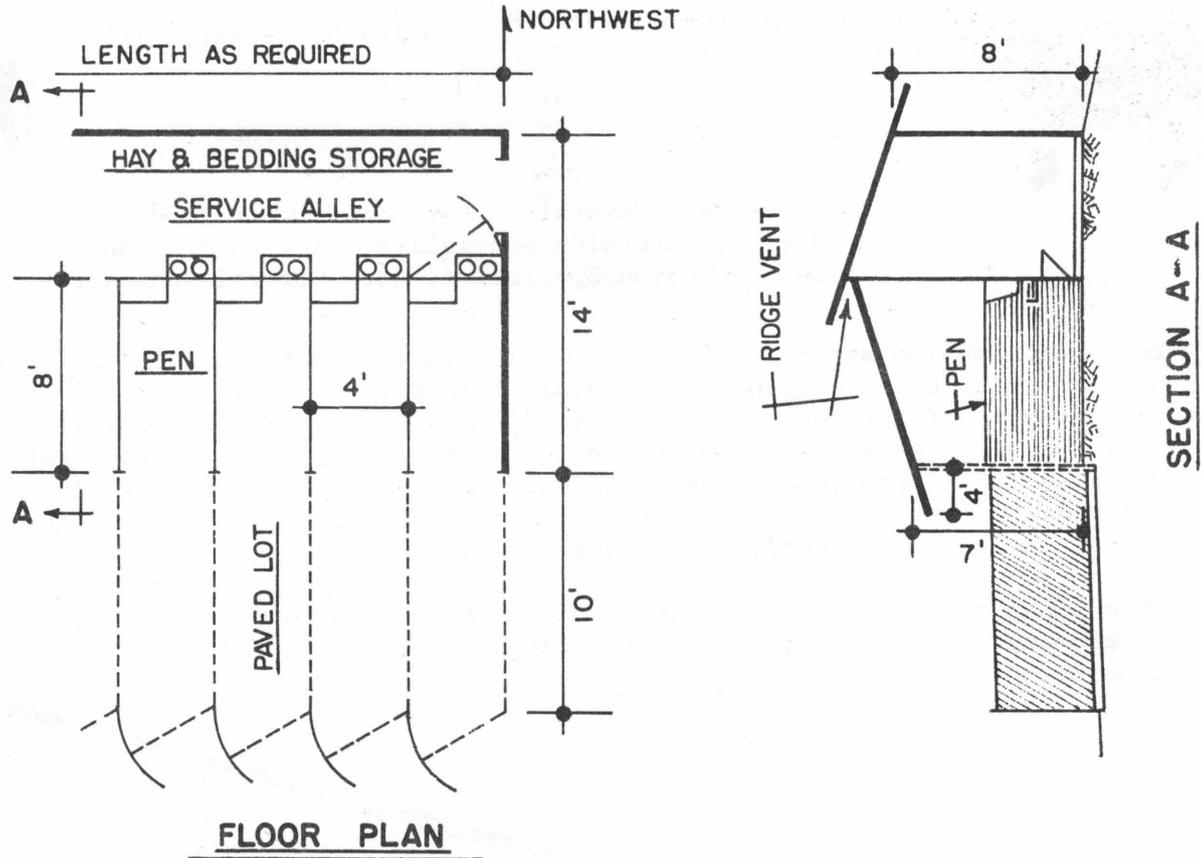


FIG. 2, INDIVIDUAL, EARTH-FLOOR PEN ARRANGEMENT IN AN OPEN-FRONT STRUCTURE WITH OUTSIDE LOTS

Figure 2 gives the measurements of pen size and layout. The calf pen should not be paved. This aids in the absorption of moisture, and thus when bedded, provides a warm, dry base that increases the calf comfort. The building should face the southeast, thus allowing the sun which prevails in Virginia most days in winter to aid in keeping the facility warm and dry. The roof extends 3 feet beyond the pen but allows the winter sunshine to reach almost to the back part of the pen. Calves will select a place in the sunshine and be quite comfortable on the coldest of days. It has been known for years that cold weather alone is not a detriment to success in calf rearing if the animal is dry and can move out of drafts. The exercise area, extending 8 feet beyond the pen, should be paved with concrete and slope away from the building.

A 4 to 6 inch ventilation slot is needed at the top of the back wall. This allows a flow of fresh air without a draft on the calves.

A hay rack and grain box is placed in each calf pen next to the service alley which allows for convenience of feeding and feed storage as well as inspection of the calves.

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