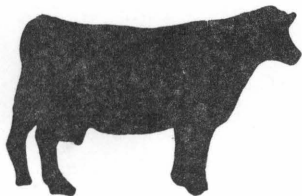


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# dairy guidelines

EXTENSION DIVISION VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA



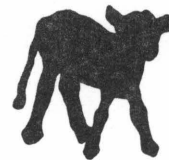
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THE CALF HUTCH

BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA



D. A. Hartman, Extension Specialist, Dairy 4-H  
W. R. Murley, Extension Specialist, Dairy Nutrition  
W. H. Collins, Extension Specialist, Agricultural Engineering

A calf hutch provides the essential features for housing a baby calf. They are: an adequate environment (minimal stress), a dry bed (wet floors are almost sure death), plenty of fresh air with no drafts, and a clean area free of contamination from a previous calf.

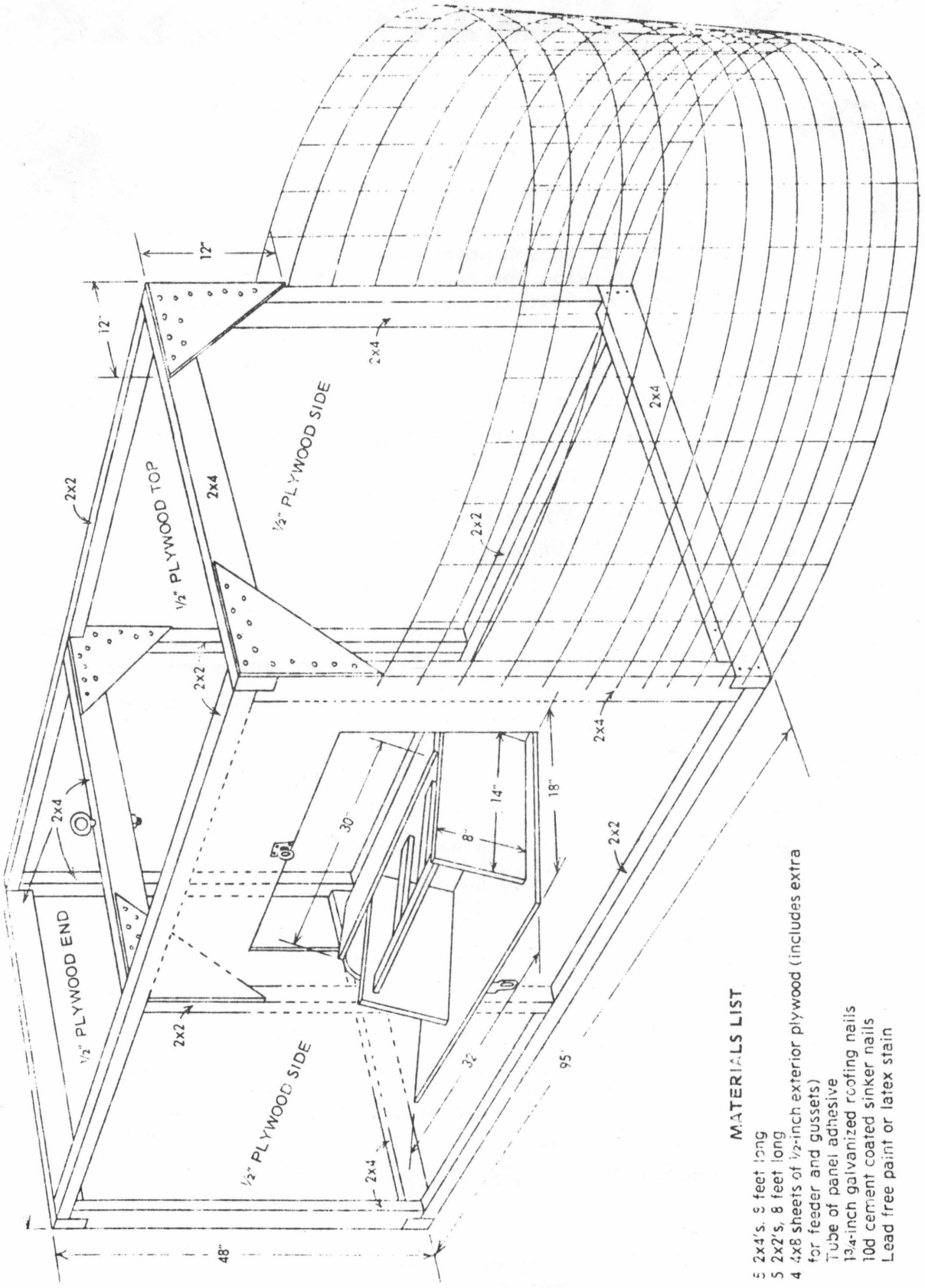
Calf hutches vary in size and design and they are simple structures. The example shown measures 4' wide, 4' high, and 8' long with a pen of approximately the same size in front. A hay rack and box for feeding calf starter may be constructed inside the hutch. The structure should be moved between the rearing of each calf or at least between every 2 or 3 calves to prevent a build up of organisms which may cause disease. The hutch should be placed on a 6" bed of coarse rocks or gravel to allow drainage of urine. If a good grass sod is available, it may be used. The hutch should be moved to a clean spot as needed. Do not locate in a surface drainage swale. The hutch should face the southeast to allow the sun to enter and provide warmth as well as aid in drying the bed. It is most important to bed the hutch very heavy with straw and provide a dry bed at all times.

Although rather peculiar, the calf must be placed in the hutch when only 3 to 4 hours old, (as soon as completely dry). They acclimate quickly then, even if the temperature is below zero.

Thousands of dairymen across the United States have been successful with their use. They do have the disadvantage of a greater labor requirement and the calf feeder is outside for feeding. Calf hutches serve well as temporary rearing facilities when regular calf housing needs cleaning and decontaminating.

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**MATERIALS LIST**

- 5 2x4's, 8 feet long
- 5 2x2's, 8 feet long
- 4 4x8 sheets of 1/2-inch exterior plywood (includes extra for feeder and gussets)
- Tube of panel adhesive
- 1 3/4-inch galvanized roofing nails
- 10d cement coated sinker nails
- Lead free paint or latex stain

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