# **Occupational Health and Safety Working with Calves**

When working with calves/young cattle, you should be familiar with the following safe practices and potential health risks:

### **Physical Injury**

Bites, scratches, and kicks are potential hazards associated with research animal contact. They may be prevented or minimized through proper training in animal-handling technique. Personnel working with large domestic animals might sustain crushing injuries when the animals kick, fall, or simply shift their body weight.

## **Staying Healthy**

Wash your hands after animal handling and use. The most common way to contract a zoonotic infection is to place the infectious material directly in your own mouth. Always wash your hands after handling an animal or anything has no allergies at all. The most effective way to control and prevent allergies is to minimize exposure to the allergens.

### Campylobacteriosis

Organisms of the genus *Campylobacter* have been recognized as a leading cause of diarrhea in humans and animals in recent years. Numerous cases involving the zoonotic transmission of the organisms in laboratory animals have been described. Young animals readily acquire the infection and shed the organism. Young animals often are implicated as the source of zoonotic transmission. The organism is transmitted by the fecal-oral route via contaminated food or water, or by direct contact with infected animals.

*Campylobacter* produces an acute gastrointestinal illness, which, in most cases, is brief and self-limiting. The clinical signs of *Campylobacter enteritis* include watery diarrhea, sometimes with mucus, blood and leukocytes; abdominal pain; fever; and nausea and vomiting. Unusual complications of the disease include typhoid-like syndrome, reactive arthritis, hepatitis, interstitial nephritis, hemolytic-uremic syndrome, febrile convulsions,

## Colibacillosis

*Escherichia coli* is a normal component of the flora in the large intestine of warm-blooded animals. The pathogenic strains, which cause enteric disease, are grouped into six categories. These categories differ in their pathogenesis and virulence properties, and each comprises a distinct group of O:H serotypes.

In terms of zoonoses, the most important category is the enterohemorrhagic, which is also the most severe. Cattle are considered the primary reservoir for the enterohemorrhagic group. The principal etiologic agent of this colibacillosis is *E. coli* O157:H7.

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