Who is the dairy calf?

The dairy calf is a highly-sociable animal!

Dairy calves are shy and playful animals that love to play and socialise with their friends. Dairy calves can live on average 20 years, but are often slaughtered around 8 months of age in commercial production.



How do dairy calves spend their day?



What does the dairy calf want?

Good forage to learn how to ruminate

To learn by interacting

with a complex

environment

A comfortable, secluded

and warm place to rest

and sleep

To create bonds and

play with other calves

Easy access to water

2

To graze and choose what they want to eat

5

To be with their mum

Space to exercise and play

5

Good quality colostrum just after birth

To drink as much milk as they want

Sleeping and resting

Calves need a comfortable bed and prefer a secluded place to get quality sleep and rest.

Thermal comfort is also very important for their development.

Suckling

Calves will suckle a lot of milk. When they are with their mum they feed 7 to 10 times a day

Ruminating

Calves need access to plenty of good fibre at an early age to develop good rumen function

Grooming

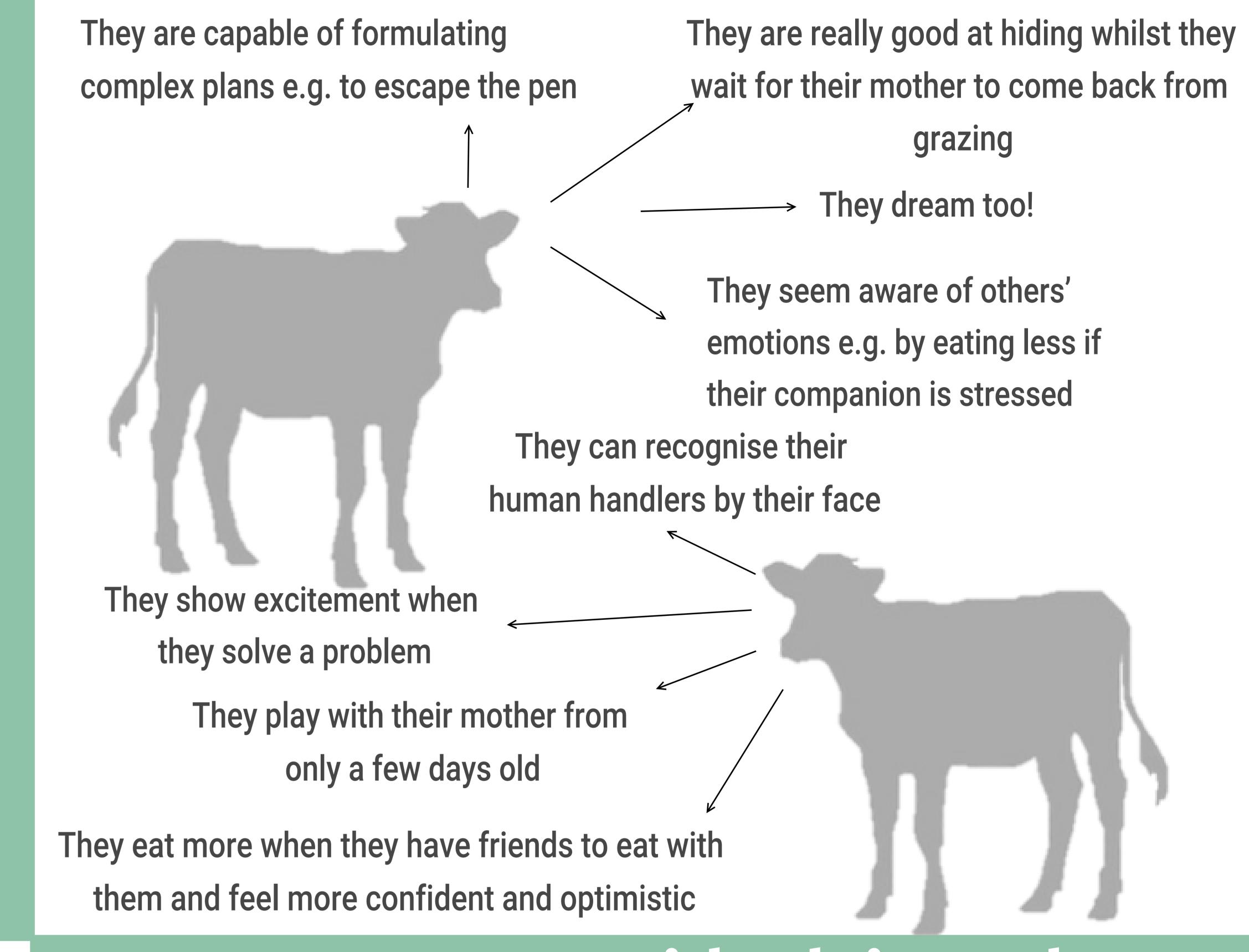
Mutual grooming increases group cohesion and self grooming increases comfort

Socialising and playing

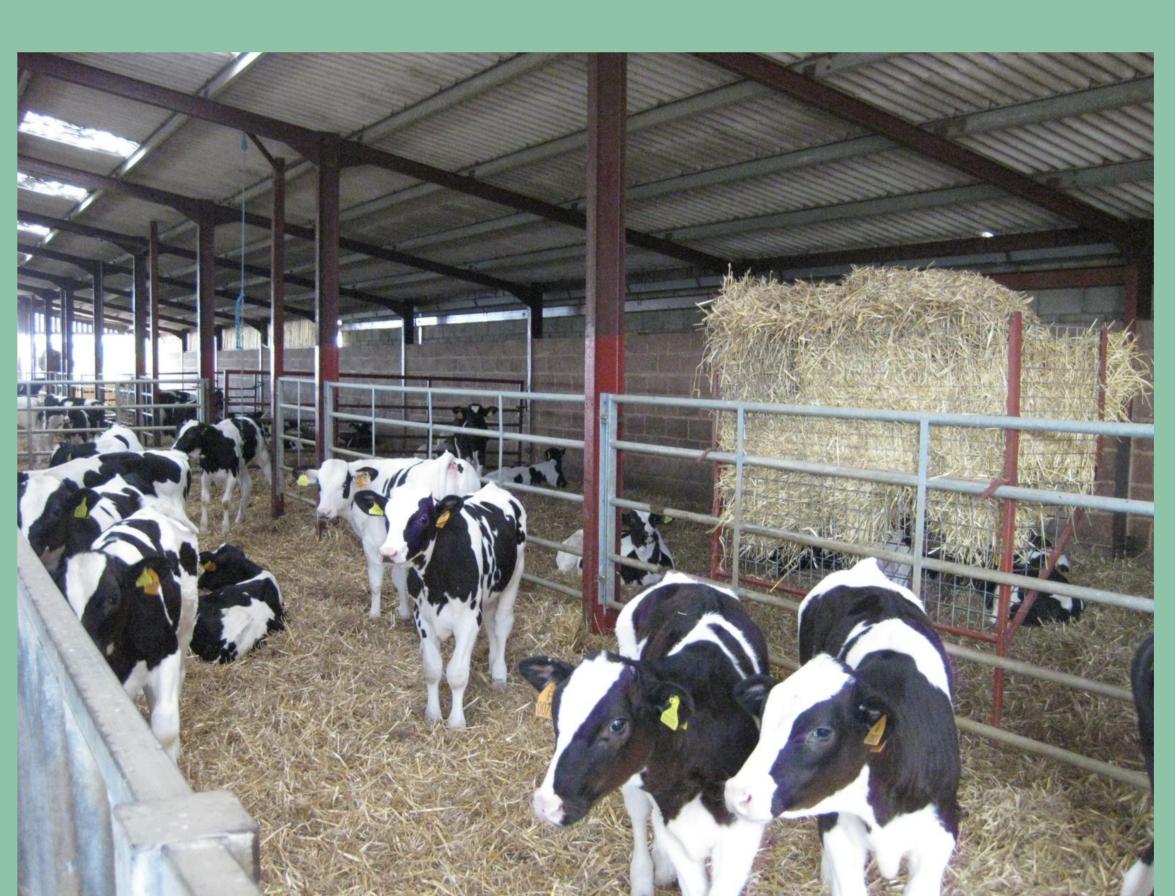
Calves use these interactions to learn and become confident

What do dairy calves think?

Dairy calves are intelligent animals and love to play!



How can we provide dairy calves with a good quality of life?



- No tethering
- Give them plenty of space in airy buildings without draughts
- House them with friends (at least in pairs) with comfortable bedding
- Avoid long live transport and encourage direct transfer from dairy to fattening farms

Diet:

- An appropriate diet, including an ad-libitum source of fibre
- Good quality colostrum must be provided within the first 6 hours after birth





Made with infogram