



Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service • Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

Making a Calf Blanket

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It is difficult to fit a dairy calf without using a blanket. The blanket keeps the calf clean and it also keeps the hair in good condition. The calf should be blanketed at least four to six weeks before the first show date.

Procedure and Materials

1. Secure burlap sacks, snaps, rings, and buckles.
2. Split sacks.
3. Lay sacks over the heifer's back.
4. Take measurements for blanket (Figure 1).
5. Make a blanket according to descriptions in Figure 2.
6. Follow the fitting instructions for the blanket and securing of snaps, etc. (Figure 3).
7. Follow steps for the proper removal of a blanket.

Discussion

1. Blanketing is not a substitute for brushing and grooming.
2. If the hair of the animal is long and coarse, the sacks may be doubled to make a heavier blanket. You may need several layers of sacks in the blanket when fitting for a spring show.
3. Always put the blanket on the shoulders first and pull it toward the rear.
4. Do not put a clean blanket on a dirty heifer.
5. Do not put a dirty blanket on a clean heifer.
6. Blanketed calves should be kept in a dark, cool, well-bedded stall.
7. Yearlings and cows should be kept blanketed during the day. They may be allowed to graze at night until about three weeks prior to show time.
8. Confinement day and night for three weeks prior to show day will accustom the animal to drink water from a bucket or tub and to be content under show conditions.

9. When removing the blanket from the animal, after unfastening all snaps and buckles, fold the rear 1/3 of the blanket forward. Lift the blanket gently upward and backward.

Questions

1. Why should I blanket my calf?
2. When should I blanket my calf?
3. Where should I keep the blanketed calf?
4. Are cows and heifers handled the same way when blanketed?
5. When should the blanket be made in double thickness?
6. Does blanketing eliminate all brushing and grooming?

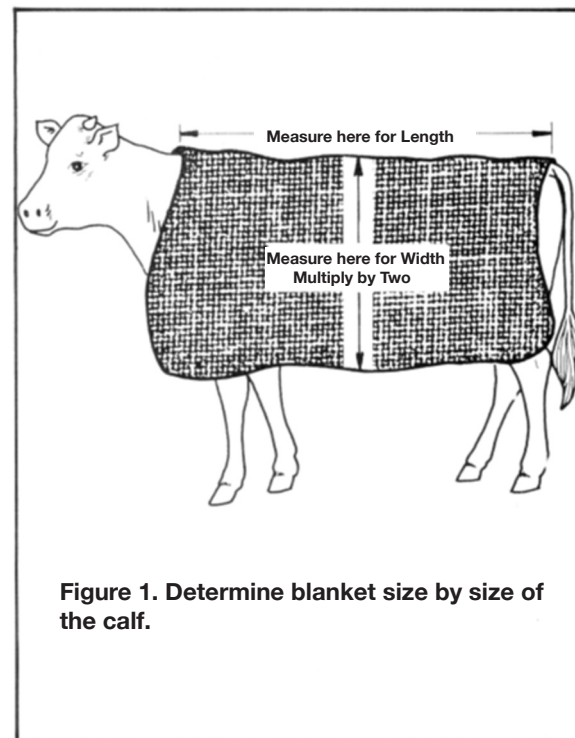
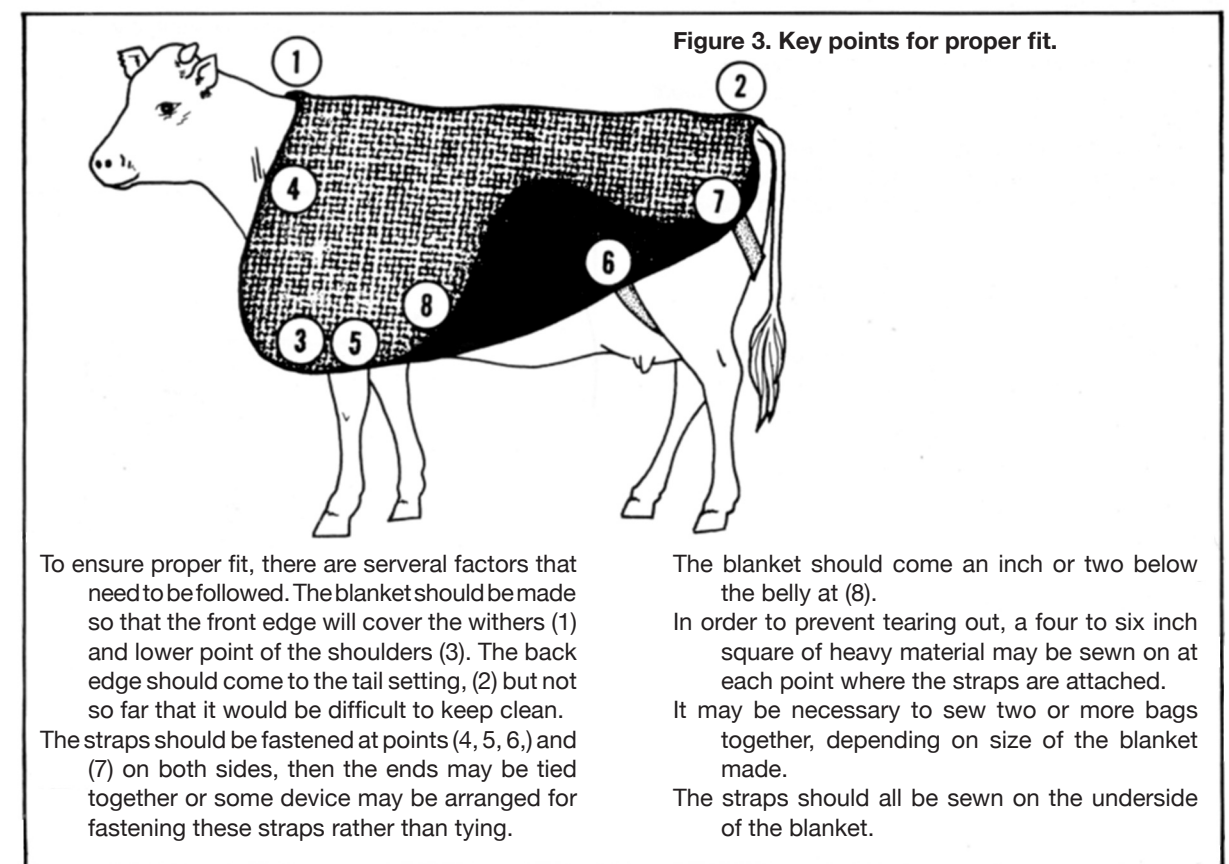
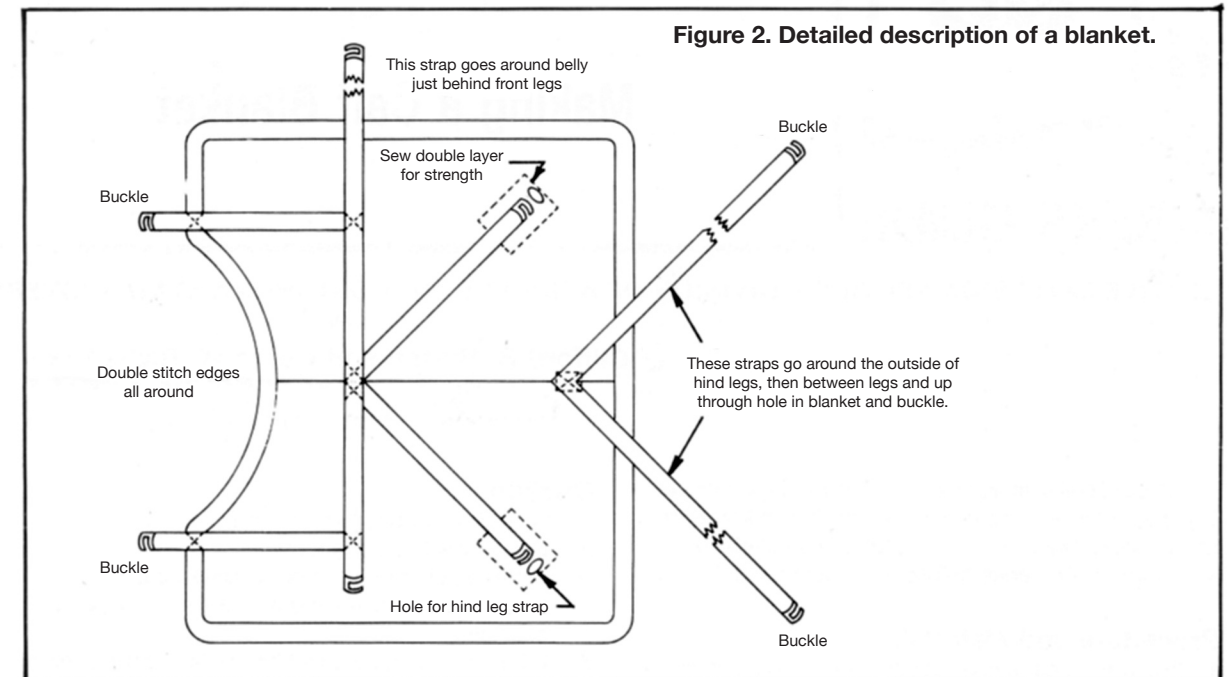


Figure 1. Determine blanket size by size of the calf.



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