



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

FACULTY OF  
VETERINARY MEDICINE

2024

# Impact

Report



**Bovine Health Fund**



## MESSAGE FROM

### Dr. Renate Weller

Dean and Professor,  
University of Calgary  
Faculty of Veterinary  
Medicine



*With our school expanding, so does our impact—more students gaining hands-on experience, more research pushing boundaries, and more opportunities to improve animal and human health.*

Change is on the horizon at the University of Calgary Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UCVM), and 2024 has been a year of preparation. With our incoming **class set to double in 2025**, we've been working hard behind the scenes to ensure our students have the space, resources, and hands-on learning opportunities they need to succeed. Our expanded facilities remain on track and on budget to open in September 2025, marking a major milestone for our faculty and the future of veterinary medicine in Alberta.

This year has also been full of exciting initiatives and partnerships. Our plans for a permanent **Community Care Clinic** continue to take shape, addressing the growing need for accessible veterinary care while giving our students invaluable real-world experience.

At the same time, our researchers and emerging scholars remain at the forefront of tackling some of the most pressing challenges in veterinary medicine—from antimicrobial resistance to zoonotic diseases to animal welfare. As our school grows, so does our capacity to make an impact. Doubling our cohort means more students gaining critical skills, more research pushing boundaries, and more opportunities to improve both animal and human health.

Your impactful support is more valuable than ever. Contributions to our animal health funds directly help us train the next generation of veterinarians and drive forward discoveries that make a difference. Thank you for being part of this journey—I welcome you to visit anytime, my door is always open.



## MESSAGE FROM

### Dr. Glenna Mauldin

Associate Dean,  
Clinical Affairs  
University of Calgary  
Faculty of Veterinary  
Medicine



*2024 marked an exciting opportunity for me to lead the meaningful initiatives funded through UCVM's Animal Health Funds.*

*These funds are not for one single large project, they allow us to start something. These are meant to be bridge funds that allow projects to start as dreams to become a reality.*

It is a true honour to see how these generous philanthropic gifts have impacted faculty, staff, students, animals, and research. I am aware of the vital need to promote and protect animal and human health and welfare through education, research, and service.

UCVM will only evolve into 2025, as we expand our Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) program, doubling student intake to 100 annually to meet the growing demand for veterinary expertise.

We also await the opening of UCVM's Community Care Clinic, which will offer students meaningful hands-on learning opportunities with small animals. This in turn will support vulnerable pet owners who are having to face heartbreaking decisions due to rising veterinary care costs, ultimately adding to strained veterinarians, bylaw services and shelters.

I would personally like to thank you for your support of the Health Funds. Your gift fuels the learning, innovation, and the meaningful work that helps UCVM make a lasting impact. Small and impactful funds!



**Drs. Jennifer Pearson and Claire Windeyer** are investigating the best methods for ensuring newborn beef calves receive the colostrum they need, particularly after an assisted birth. Calves that do not get enough high-quality colostrum in a timely manner are at greater risk of disease, slower growth, and even death. However, the most effective colostrum intervention strategies for assisted beef calves remain unclear. This research aims to fill that gap and provide producers with evidence-based best practices to improve calf health and survival.

This project is made possible by generous contributions to the Bovine Health Fund, which also supported fourth-year veterinary students in gaining hands-on research experience. As one student also shared, "Your support allows us to explore new protocols for calf care, improving calf health and advancing the industry. I'm truly grateful for the chance to gain research experience and work closely with the community."



## Effect of supplemental colostrum feedings on nursing behaviours & the transfer of passive immunity in assisted beef calves

**Principal Investigators**  
Dr. Jennifer Pearson  
Dr. Claire Windeyer



*"We thank the donors to the Bovine Health Fund for their support of our fourth-year veterinary students who are interested in clinical research. These gifts will enhance their opportunities to develop skills to investigate common problems producers face every day," said Dr. Pearson.*



Not only does UCVM support our next generation of Albertan Veterinarians, but we value international collaborations that bring new ideas and connections. **Dr. Karin Orsel** led an international research collaboration exploring how dairy producers make culling decisions. Supported by the Bovine Health Fund with additional funding from the Netherlands, the project brought Dutch students to Canada to study the Canadian dairy industry while networking with our faculty and students.

While securing research funding is often challenging, the strong interest from Canadian dairy farms—30 producers eagerly participated—underscored the importance of this work. By analyzing the factors influencing culling choices, the research aims to help dairy farmers make more informed and sustainable decisions. Beyond scientific learning, the experience also fostered lasting professional connections between students in Canada and the Netherlands.

*“We are incredibly grateful for the support that made this project possible,” says Dr. Orsel. “This collaboration not only advances research but also strengthens global connections in the dairy industry, ensuring a sustainable future for producers and their herds.”*

## Motivation & factors impacting culling in dairy herds

**Principal Investigator**  
Dr. Karin Orsel



# 2023 UPDATES:

Your support for projects funded through the Bovine Health Fund doesn't end with your gift. See where previously funded projects are today:

## 1 | Rapid on-site detection of respiratory pathogens & antimicrobial resistance using nasopharyngeal samples from live cattle

This project is advancing, with current efforts aimed at refining field techniques and enhancing user experience. Looking ahead, **Dr. Tim Olchowy** and team, plan to involve a computer science student to optimize bioinformatics processes and are preparing for field testing of new primers in 2025 to improve rapid on-site pathogen detection.

## 2 | Cook aspiration unit for U/S retrieval of eggs from the ovaries of live cattle

The **cook aspiration unit** has been successfully utilized for egg retrieval from cattle, serving both research purposes and as a vital training tool for veterinarians and students mastering the ovum pick-up procedure. As we prepare to double our cohort of students, this unit will play an important role in bovine veterinary medicine education.



*Conducting research that addresses issues of importance to our animal industries at the interface of animal and human health, we are coming up with innovative solutions and training the next generation of clinicians and researchers.*

For over 10 years, UCVM has worked to support a shortage of veterinarians serving Alberta.

As an internationally recognized and accredited provider of high-quality veterinary education, we are an acknowledged leader in comparative biomedical, veterinary and population health research.

Our research, graduate education and clinical training programs advance animal and human health — **where innovation meets community.**

Contact us to learn more:

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These projects were made possible by our 2024 Bovine Health Fund donors:

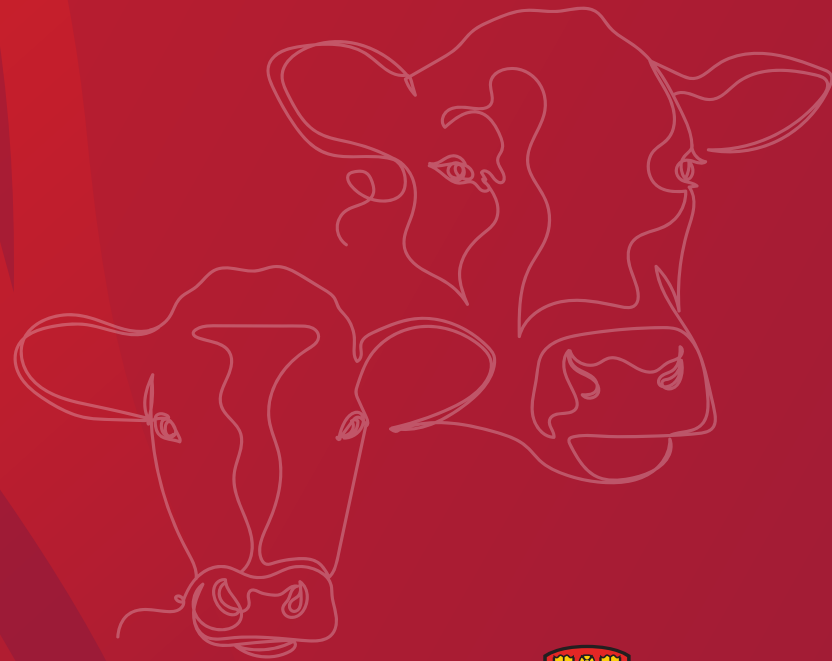
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