



RAISING “BOUGHT IN” OR ORPHAN CALVES, KIDS AND LAMBS

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Introducing animals from different places onto your farm can be a risk as they may bring in a disease to which your animals have had no previous exposure and therefore carry no resistance. The disease can therefore be spread to your own animals.

Animals brought in from outside areas should be kept separate from your own livestock for at least a week to make sure they are not sick. Be sure that the person you are buying from is a good stockman who will not sell you sick or weak animals that may die when they are moved. To lessen the effects of change, which is stressful, it is a good idea to inject each animal with a tetracycline injection according to its weight when moving it. This will help control pneumonia and gallsickness.

Transport

If you are transporting the young animal by vehicle, make sure it is not stressed by adverse temperatures or wet weather on the trip. Try not to move it on the back of an open vehicle, especially during cold/wet weather. Do not restrain animals by tying their legs with wire or rope. Rather put a calf into a feed bag with its head sticking out. A lamb or kid can be transported in a box with holes in it for air.

Housing

An animal needs to be housed in a **clean, dry and draught free** environment with access to sunlight and shade. Wet bedding or a damp enclosed environment with the smell of dung and urine will cause adverse health issues e.g. urine scalds on the skin and pneumonia. Animals need space to get up, lie down

and move around comfortably, they should not be left to sleep in mud. They also need company and to see and hear other animals.



FIGURE 1: *Young kids being bottle fed*

Feeding

Correct feeding of the young animal is vital for health and good growth. Ensure, if at all possible, that a young animal has had enough colostrum (first milk) from its mother before being taken away from her. Colostrum is vital in ensuring that the mother's immunity to diseases is passed on to her offspring. The offspring must drink the colostrum within six hours of being born. If this does not occur the youngster may be prone to numerous infections as it grows up. If the animal has not had colostrum, try to find some from another animal, or even better, keep some in the freezer to be used in these cases. Never put colostrum in a microwave or stove top to heat up. Let it thaw naturally and then warm to body temperature by placing the container in a bath of warm water. A calf needs at least 2 litres of colostrum

at its first drink and a lamb or kid about 200ml. The more colostrum the animal drinks in the first few days the better. A standard baby's bottle can be used for kids and lambs while a 2 litre plastic coke bottle with a latex teat works well for calves. Feed a calf 2 litres of full cream milk or a good quality milk replacer twice a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. A lamb or kid needs to be fed 600ml to 1.0 litre (depending on its size) of milk a day - split into three feeds per day for the first two weeks and then twice a day thereafter. Make sure the milk is clean and at body temperature when fed. Access to *ad lib* calf feed or lamb creep and water must be allowed from three days old. Take the water away from the animal when feeding the milk or it may drink the water after the milk and overfill its stomach leading to ill health.

Welfare

If an animal gets diarrhoea it must be fed electrolytes (available already made at your co-op e.g. Lectade, Diakur or Replensol) or home-made with 2 teaspoons (10g) of salt mixed with half a teaspoon (3g) of potassium chloride, 2 teaspoons (10g) of baking soda and 20 teaspoons (100g) of glucose in 2 litres of clean warm water – use this instead of milk for a day (“flat” coke is also acceptable but it must be have no fizz left in it). The animal may need antibiotics given orally or injected. If the dung is very runny it is good to give the animal kaolin powder in the electrolyte: a heaped teaspoon for a kid or lamb and two heaped table spoons for a calf. This will help to slow down the rate of passage of food through the digestive system. Dehydration can kill a young animal within 12 hours so it is imperative to treat a sick animal immediately. Keeping the bottle and teat clean and sterile between feeding is most important.

Weaning

A calf must be fed milk until it is eating at least one kilogram of calf meal a day. When weaning off milk first stop the evening feed of milk for a week then stop the morning feed. Do not move or stress the calf in any other way during this time and ensure it continues

to eat the calf meal. A calf can eat up to three kilograms of meal a day after weaning, depending on its size, and it will only really start to digest forage properly at three months of age. It is very important to keep feeding the calf well as it grows or it will be stunted and never grow to full size. A lamb or kid may be weaned after 8 weeks of age as long as it is still given a supplementary feed at a rate of at least 250g per day with plenty of good quality roughage for example Eragrostis hay. **Never** wean an animal when the weather is cold and wet. Rather wait until the weather is settled because weaning an animal is already very stressful without adding the additional stress of bad weather.

Endoparasites

Worms can severely affect an animal's growth performance and it is necessary to deworm the young animal regularly, especially in the warm months of spring and summer. A young calf on milk may suffer from milk tapeworm and ordinary tapeworm. They should be treated for this from one month to six weeks of age, especially if they develop diarrhoea. Diarrhoea containing fresh or digested blood is caused by coccidiosis. This is very dangerous to the animal and it must be treated immediately with a sulphur based drug available at the co-op (Sulfazine or Vecoxan oral or Norotrim injectable). After weaning, roundworms are the worm to worry about, but there are many remedies to dose the animal to keep them under control. Be sure to follow the dosage and instructions on the bottle. Worms usually cause diarrhoea or a pot belly on the animal. Goats can be dewormed according to a colour chart of its eye showing how anaemic it is (FAMACHA) however the owner needs training from an animal health technician in this regard.

Vaccinations

For female calves the most important vaccination is for contagious abortion (CA). For all calves a vaccination for botulism, anthrax and quarter-evil is very important. Consult with the local extension

officer, animal health technician, SPCA or veterinarian for help with a vaccination programme for your animals.



FIGURES 2 & 3: *Young weaned calves with supplementary feed*

Young goats and lambs must be vaccinated against pulpy kidney before deworming for roundworms. Deworm for milk tapeworm before weaning. Boost their immunity from their mother with Pulpyvax around weaning and deworm for roundworms. A month thereafter it would be advisable to vaccinate the animal with Multivax P and to do so annually for the life of the animal. Multivax P will help prevent the

animal from getting a number of diseases, one of the most important being pasturella or pneumonia. If you cannot get Multivax P at least vaccinate for pasturella and again for pulpy kidney (vaccine for pasturella only is also available and is cheaper). Follow the dosage given on a deworming bottle for dosing sheep. However, the dose for a goat should be based on the heaviest animal in the flock. A goat's metabolism is much faster than that of a sheep and they excrete the dewormer much more quickly so it does not work as well. Also use electrolytes (1.0l a day) if the young animal shows symptoms of a runny tummy or dehydration.

General rules

Young rams and bulls can be castrated by burdizzo at 3 months of age. A skilled animal practitioner should help as severe damage can result from this being done incorrectly causing a lot of pain and even the death of the animal. Females must not be mated when too young or too small as they will not recover to grow to full size and may well abort. Allow your animal to be exposed to a few ticks to build an immunity to tick borne diseases in the area. However, they should not become covered with ticks in such a way that their growth is affected. Spray or dip them to kill the ticks when there are too many on the animal.

Growing animals need better nutrition than fully grown animals that are not productive. Make sure you have the capacity to feed and medicate your animals before purchasing them. Your animals will cost you money to grow them. Be sure that you are prepared to spend that money before you become an owner.

“Young animal kit”: Before you start to raise young animals you need a basic kit including:

- Burdizzo for castrating
- Ear tag applicator, ear tags and pen to identify your animals
- Teats and bottles
- Washing up liquid to clean teats and bottles after each feed

- Milton to sterilise teats and bottles
- Electrolytes for sick animals
- Wound spray for open wounds
- Eye powder or paste for eye infections
- Dewormer to control tapeworms and roundworms
- Antibiotics- tetracycline and sulphur based injectables, syringes and needles (single use only for needles, syringes can be sterilised)
- Weigh band and thermometer
- Buy vaccines when you need them and make sure they are kept in a fridge.

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