

NORMA'S NOTES FOR AG DAY – PART 2

Buying your animal

Buy from a reputable farmer rather than saleyards. This applies to calves, lambs and kids.

Calf must have had at least 4 litres of colostrum - ask the farmer to give you some with your calf purchase. Lambs and kids - 2 litres. Any colostrum will be fine (from cow, ewe or doe)...there is also a commercial powder called Start Up if none other is available. Colostrum is the first rich milk which travels through the digestive system and offers both nutrients and immunity to bacteria and disease.

They should appear healthy and bright - shiny coat, navel should be dry and cord shrivelled, etc.

Set up your warm dry shelter with clean water always available. Have teats and bottles ready (small plastic soft drink bottles fit lamb and kid teats and are safe for children - larger ones for later - keep a couple of spare teats just in case of damage). Calves will need either a hand-held feeder or a small calfeteria. Try not to feed from a bucket, as suckling is more natural for the calf.

Feed an electrolyte on arrival to calves - a commercially made up one, or 2 litres of warm water mixed with 3 tbs glucose and 2 tsps salt. Lambs and kids should be offered small amounts of warm water. Introduce powdered milk gradually...READ the directions carefully on the bag...follow the recipe exactly.

Keep all feeding gear very clean and feed at the same regular times every day. Calves will need 2 feeds daily, lambs and kids will require 4 to begin with...before school, lunchtime, after school and before bed. This can be reduced to 3 in a couple of weeks and then to 2 at 8 weeks old.

Calves will need a soft halter and lead rope, plus a calf cover (for a shiny coat and warmth). Dairy kids may benefit from a cover as well. Lambs and kids require a leather dog collar and leash...try to buy a plain leather one...no heavy ropes for little hands to cope with and maybe drag on the ground while leading...no bling - judges do not like this at all!

Soft brush for grooming calves and dairy kids. Lambs and fibre kids MUST NOT be brushed as this ruins their wool or mohair.