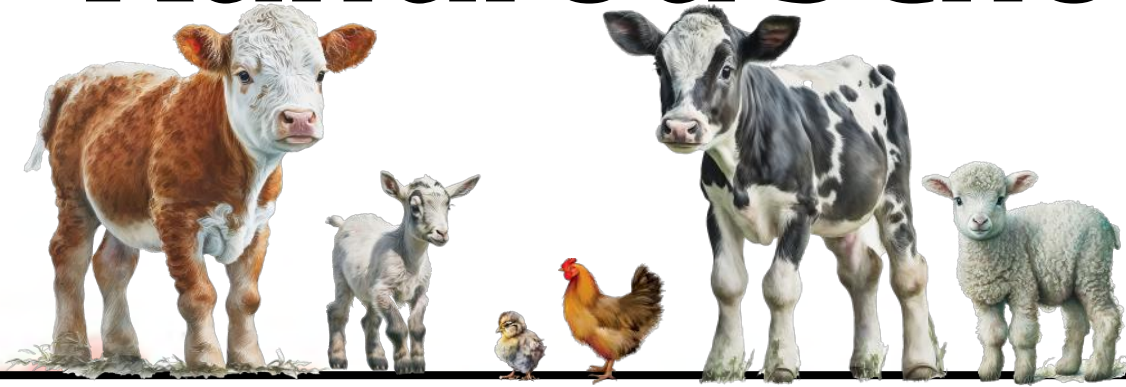




Kaharoa School



Ag Day 2025

Friday 17th October 2025



Helpful information

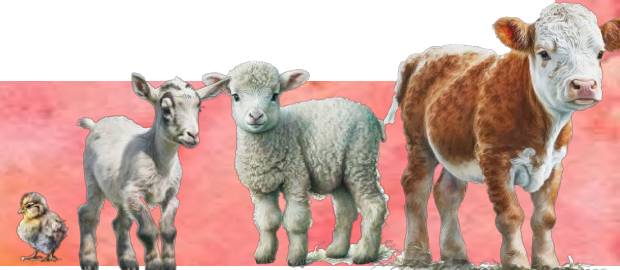
Selecting a lamb or calf

You've decided to exhibit a calf or lamb at your school's Ag Day. Before approaching a farmer to select an animal, you may need to check you have a few essential things.

Looking after your lamb or calf

Grazing / Feeding

Calves and lambs need safe, well fenced paddocks with shelter from extreme heat or cold, and clean water in a low trough which the animal can reach easily. Calves need good quality, fresh, long grass as they tend to nibble at the tips of the grass when they are very young. Watch your garden with lambs or kids as they will nibble anything, and many garden plants can be poisonous to your new pet!





Helpful information

Calves

It is preferable to have a personal feeder which allows you to feed the calf on your own so you develop a friendship with it. A bucket or mother udder (a handheld small bucket with its own teat) or, if you have more than one calf, a calfeteria which has multiple teats.

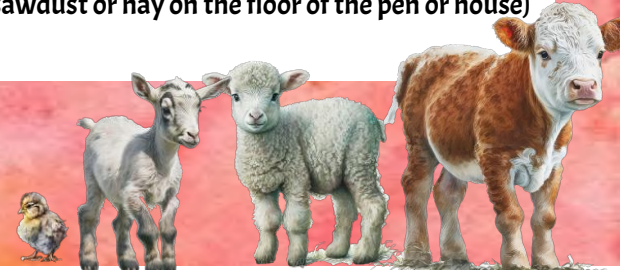
Lambs and Kids

A plastic 1.5 litre lemonade bottle is fine, with a screw on teat which are available at veterinary outlets and rural stores.

Time

Make sure you have time to look after your calf, lamb or kid, before and after school. You will need to allow at least 30 minutes, morning and afternoon to care for your pet. This is YOUR responsibility, not Mum and Dad's, so you may need to get up earlier in the morning and allow time in the afternoon. Your calf, lamb or kid will be dependent on you, for its food and shelter. You have become its foster parent, so you need to be there. It's a big responsibility, but one you will enjoy and get great satisfaction from.

Keep a constant eye on your calf, lamb or kid and if anything changes, get your parents to check it out. To avoid your calf, lamb or kid getting scours, make sure everything it eats out of is spotlessly clean. Also make sure its bedding is always clean (you may have sawdust or hay on the floor of the pen or house) – rake out any soiling regularly.





Veterinary Care

Dehorning

- Most calves and kids grow horns. When your calf or kid is very young, you will feel little stubs between its ears
- These are horn buds and need to be removed at 2 weeks of age. You may know a farmer who can do this for you with the rest of his calves or your vet can do it. It is best to discuss kid disbudding with the person you get the animal from or your vet.

Vaccinations (disease prevention)

- Talk to your vet about what vaccinations it needs to remain healthy. We recommend 2 injections, 4 weeks apart of 7-in-1 vaccine from 12 weeks of age.

Parasites: Internal & External - Internal parasites are “worms” and the calf, lamb or kid may need to be drenched for these once they start eating grass. External parasites, commonly called “lice” occur more often in calves and needs to be treated. Call into your vet clinic for advice on the best product for your situation.

Docking/Castration - Rubber elastrator rings can be used up to 2 months of age, but should ideally be used as young as possible. Ensure ring is of the correct size.

Zoonoses - Zoonoses is the name given to diseases that animals can pass onto humans.



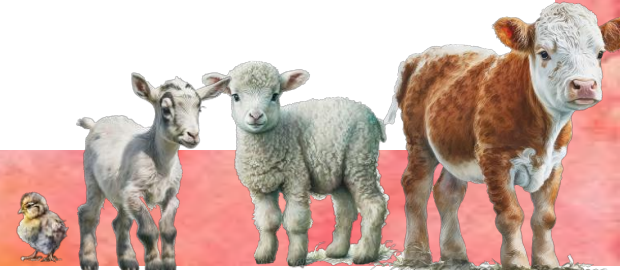


Keep a Diary

Remember to record the date when your calf, lamb or kid was born, when it came to you and the milestones, during its time with you – e.g. when you reduce the number of milk feeds in the day, when you supplement with meal or pellets and when you started to train it etc. We have created a diary page for you to pin up on your notice board.

Good hygiene such as handwashing and protective clothing will be sufficient in most cases to prevent picking up disease. Because they work with animals themselves, veterinarians are sometimes more aware and familiar with zoonoses than doctors so be sure to include your vet in the loop if you or your doctor are puzzled by symptoms. One of the biggest threats is leptospirosis – a very unpleasant long illness that can damage liver and kidneys and leave you feeling absolutely terrible. This is spread via infected urine and often the infected animal may be symptom free so you have no idea they are spreading it. Good hygiene is essential.

Another big threat is stomach and intestinal infections, particularly from sick animals with diarrhoea. During the calf/lamb/kid rearing season, be sure to always wash your hands, and avoid touching scouring animals.





Training

Talking

Always talk to your calf, lamb or kid and be their friend. They will respond to you and be your friend in return. The friendlier they are, the better they will perform for you at Calf Club. Tell it when it has done a good job, and don't forget giving it a rub or scratch.

Leading

When the calf, lamb or kid appears to accept the halter/collar, you can begin to teach it to lead. There are several ways to do this – you can pull and tug, or you can get an adult to help you tie a long soft rope into a big loop – big enough to fit around the bottom of your calf, lamb or kid, under its tail, with the rope coming over its back and through the loop on the halter. Now, when you pull the rope, the rope will come up under the tail and it will move forward. As it moves forward, the pressure under its tail stops, and so it learns to move forward. This way trains a calf, lamb or kid in a shorter time than any other method. You must never use a chain for leading. Basically, you are going to train your calf/lamb/kid to do three things on the lead – to walk forward alongside you, to turn when required and to stop.

Position when leading

You want your calf, lamb or kid to walk on your right, and for its head/shoulder to be alongside you. Your right hand holds the lead close to the halter/collar (around 15 – 25 cm from the side of their head), with the rest of the lead in your left hand so it's not trailing on the ground where you or your pet can walk or trip on it. Remember to never wrap the lead around your hand – this is very dangerous. You could be dragged if they get a fright and attempt to run away from you.

Turning

If you have followed the steps described above, you will have your calf, lamb or kid moving happily forward with you. Now you have to learn to turn it. Remember you are on the outside of it, when it turns, so you need to push its head towards the new direction as you begin to make the turn. The turns need to be very big at the start as your pet won't be use to this new movement.

Stopping

You also need to learn how to stop your calf, lamb or kid. This is done by a gentle pull on the lead and shouldn't be done suddenly. Let it know you're going to stop, by giving gentle tugs on the lead, and then a long pull. Fix your feet on the ground and lean back a bit so your pet feels your weight on the rope – don't give any hard, sudden pulls on the lead though as this would hurt their nose/neck. Remain still for a minute or more – the calf/lamb/kid only moving forward again when you decide to.





Training

How often and how long to train?

Start with a few minutes training each day. After each session, praise and pat your calf, lamb or kid. When it is happily going forward you can take off the “bottom rope” and just have your lead attached to the halter/collar. Training time should be fun, for you and them, so do train every day, but don’t train for so long either of you gets bored or tired. Don’t forget to give them praise when they do well. Calves, lambs and kids love hugs too!

Leading in preparation for Calf Club?

As a general rule at Calf Club, you will have to lead your calf, lamb and kid in a large square, walking it around pegs in the corners and doing a complete circle around one peg. You also have to stop them and make them stand still, so the Judge can look at it more closely (the layout and routine for leading may vary from school to school so check this out). Practise these movements – and don’t forget the “standing still” training.





Ag Day

A few days before ...

Keep training and keep it covered so its coat is as shiny as possible on the day. Tidy them daily leading up to Calf Club and try to keep it as clean as possible.

On the day

Your calf, lamb or kid will need to be transported to the Calf Club – this can be on the back of a ute, in a trailer behind the car or in a truck. Have all the gear you will need, ready to go.

- A water bucket so you can give them a drink at the grounds. This is very important! It is a long day for your pet and they must have access to water when they are not in the show ring.
- Some meal/pellets and a feeding container, so you can reward them after a good effort.
- A cloth and/or brush so you can spot clean if necessary, when you get there.
- Clean halter/collar and lead.

Remember you are on display as well as your calf, lamb or kid, so be sure that you are neat and tidy and enjoying yourself, because the Judges will be looking for signs that you are comfortable with, and care for your calf, lamb or kid.

Good Luck





Feeding Calf

Calf meal and hay

Your calf will grow quickly and begin to nibble grass and drink water. At around two weeks of age you will want to introduce calf meal and hay to its diet, so it grows well and stays in good condition. Meal is fed in the mornings, after the milk feed.

You will need a large flat bottomed feeder for the meal, which your calf can't push around the paddock. Although the supply of grass, meal and hay increases as your calf grows, it is still important to keep feeding milk as it ensures your calf will have a "bloom" on its coat when it competes at Calf Club.

For the first three or four days of its life, your calf should drink colostrum. Right from the start your calf will need feeding twice a day – in the morning before school and in the afternoon after school. If you live on a farm you can of course get cow's milk to feed your calf. Many of you will need to purchase calf milk

formula and mix it with warm water. It is very important to keep whatever equipment you use to feed your calf, completely clean

– calves can get a tummy bug called scours (diarrhoea) from dirty feeding equipment, so clean everything after feeding with hot soapy water and rinse thoroughly.

How much to feed

After feeding, your calf will look "full", its tummy will be round and it will be happy, not calling for milk. A common rule is 10% of body weight, so a 40kg calf needs 4 litres each day or 2 litres twice a day. It is important to mix powders to the correct levels, so make sure you read the instructions on the packet carefully.

Be sure to feed your calf at the same time each day, as it won't take long for it to know when dinner time is!





Covers & Halters - Calf

Fitting a calf cover

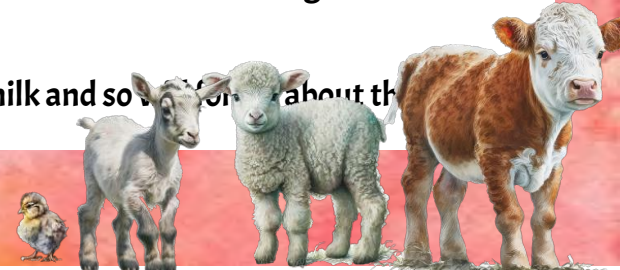
Calf covers serve two purposes – they keep your calf warm and dry and also flatten and polish its coat, preventing fading from the weather, meaning your calf will have a shiny coat when it gets to Calf Club. Calf covers are easily made from empty meal sacks – but first check that the sack is not made of plastic as

it doesn't "breathe". A light soft blanket sewn into the inside of the cover will ensure your calf is warm. Velcro straps sewn onto the front and back will allow you to remove it easily for grooming and will also allow for the increase in size as your calf grows. The ideal cover should cover your calf from its shoulders to its rear. Be sure to watch for rubbing.

Fitting a halter

Calf halters and leads can be purchased from your local veterinary centre or supply store. They are made of soft leather and can be adjusted to fit very small and large calves. Halters are only left on for around one hour each day, leaving it on longer would rub hair off. As soon as possible after your calf arrives, fit the halter. When fitted correctly, you should be able to fit two fingers between any part of the halter and your calf's skin. It should be firm if the calf pulls back.

The best time to put the halter on is just before feeding, when the calf is distracted by the milk and so not worried about the





Feeding Lamb/Kid

Most of the lambs and kids that become available for Calf Club are orphans. Usually the farmer will nurse them through the first few days and then they can be passed over to you. Make sure the animal is healthy with no diarrhoea and has been fed colostrum in the first 6 hours of life.

You may still need to help your lamb or kid as it learns to suck from an artificial teat for the first few days. For very young lambs or kids you will need to provide shelter such as a pen or an old dog kennel, especially for night time. For the first few days as you become friends, it will help to have a small area, so wherever you are in the pen, you are close to your lamb or kid. It can hear your voice and will soon begin to trust you. The best way to become friends is of course by feeding it. Right from the start your lamb or kid will need feeding at least four times a day. You may need Mum or Dad to help out with this while you are at school. If you need to purchase lamb milk formula, mix it with warm water. It is very important to keep whatever equipment you use to feed your lamb or kid completely clean – lambs or kids can get a tummy bug called scours (diarrhoea) from dirty feeding equipment, so clean everything after feeding with hot soapy water and rinse thoroughly.

How much to feed

After feeding your lamb or kid will look “full”, their tummy will be round and the lamb or kid will be happy, not calling for milk. It is important to mix powders to the correct levels, so make sure

you read the instructions on the packet carefully. Be sure to feed your lamb or kid at the same time each day, as it won't take long for it to know when dinner time is!

Weaning

Refer to the instructions on the milk formula packet for reduction of feeds. Eventually four feeds will be reduced to three, two and then once a day. Lambs or kids generally remain on once a day milk feeds until after Group Day.

Fitting a collar

Collars and leads can be purchased from your local veterinary centre or rural store. When fitted correctly, you should be able to fit two fingers between any part of the collar and your lamb or kid's skin, and it should not pull off, if the lamb or kid pulls back. The collar can stay on, but as your lamb grows, check the collar regularly and loosen it off as you need to.

