

The Rearing of Young Farm Animals

ORPHANS CAN BE RAISED SUCCESSFULLY BY HAND

GOOD care and management and a sufficiency of suitable feed ensure sound constitution, rapid growth, and resistance to many diseases in young farm animals. This article by J. Mullins, Veterinarian, Department of Agriculture, Masterton, deals with the rearing of animals up to weaning and some of the troubles which commonly occur. With the present emphasis on the production of food to ease Britain's plight, every animal possible should be reared and special mention is made of orphan animals, which, with careful attention to treatment, should be able to be reared by hand fairly successfully.

WITH the exception of the dairy calf, all farm animal progeny are nurtured and nourished by their own mothers for at least a few months before being weaned. Nature's method normally gives best results with the least trouble, but to fit in with dairy farming economy the calf is taken away at birth or very soon afterward and reared by hand.

Rearing of Orphans

Occasionally the young of other farm animals are left motherless (lambs frequently so), when a decision must be made whether to rear them or not, which will doubtless be influenced by a number of factors and, at least in the case of foals, by their breeding. A well-bred orphan foal is, of course, well worth the trouble involved.

The milk of the mother animal is specially secreted and constituted for

its own young but is also suitable for the young of its own species in general, so for rearing orphans nothing can equal the foster mother. But except in the case of the orphan lamb the securing of a foster mother is usually impossible, so the task of hand rearing with modified cow's milk has to be undertaken. At first food must be given frequently and in small quantities, the amounts fed and the intervals between feeds being gradually increased. The following table shows the composition of animals' milks and gives an idea of the modification of cow's milk necessary to suit the orphans of other farm animals, the foal being the main consideration:

	Water	Mineral matter Per cent.	Protein	Sugar	Fat
Cow	87.2	0.7	3.5	4.9	3.7
Mare	89.0	0.6	2.7	6.2	1.5
Ewe	80.8	0.9	6.5	4.9	6.9
Sow	81.0	1.0	5.9	5.4	6.7



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Orphan animals must be given food frequently and in small quantities at first, the amounts fed and the intervals between meals being gradually increased.

The milk fed must be fresh, at body temperature, and if possible from a T.B. tested cow.

For an orphan foal cow's milk (preferably of low test) may be modified by adding one-third of the volume of water, plus 1 tablespoon of sugar (not cane sugar) to every pint of the mixture. A little lime water may be added with advantage—about 1 fluid ounce to the pint. About $\frac{1}{4}$ pint of this mixture may be fed hourly for the first few days. After about a week



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