



OTAKIRI COUNTRY SCHOOL AGRICULTURAL DAY GUIDELINES

Calves

Choosing the Calf:

The calf must be born on or after the 15th July. Choose your calf no later than 14 days after birth. It is better to select one which has clean fine skin and is healthy and quiet.

Some helpful hints:

- The child should always feed the calf. Leading, handling and grooming at feeding times develops the friendship between you and your calf.
- Do not over feed your calf. Scouring can result.
- Always talk to your calf in a friendly manner.

Know the Calf:

If a real interest is taken, the child will find out more about the animal. The name and pedigree (if any) of the parents, it's birthday, food quantities and types, housing and diseases are things of interest one will ascertain. So often in competition more extensive knowledge will result in a higher placing.

Presenting the Calf:

Here are some points to remember before presenting the calf in the ring.

- Ensure that halters and leas are clean and shiny.
- Clean ears, tail, hooves and under chin.
- Wash off any signs of manure.
- Give a last brush to smooth the coat and remove any loose hair, particularly under the belly.
- Look neat and tidy yourself.

Grooming the Calf:

Regular brushing maintains a clean coat and healthy skin. Commence as soon as you get your calf by rubbing over the calf's body with your hands while it is drinking. At the sign of loose hair, brushing should commence. Two brushes, not nylon, are preferable – one semi stiff, the other soft. Additional useful equipment, comb and curry comb. Never PLUCK, TRIM or CLIP the calf. Once or twice before calf club, a wash in fine calm weather may be necessary. Use lukewarm water to which has been added a mild shampoo or soap, (animal only). Wash all over with an absorbent cloth being careful to keep soapy water out of the calf's eyes and ears. Remember to wash thoroughly hooves, ears and under the chin where dried milk is likely to stick. After this wash, one thorough rinse with clean lukewarm water should be given. In a sheltered, sunny spot, rub dry with a cloth or towel and brush the coat to restore the hair to it's correct direction. Re-cover the calf before nightfall.

Initial Training:

Teach the calf to "tie up" and to relax at the end of the rope fastened to a fence (never leave unsupervised). Gain the calf's confidence by standing or sitting with it, talking to and petting it. Let it know that you are it's friend and it will not be long before it accepts you completely. When you start leading it do not be impatient. Hold the lead approximately 200-300mm away from the calf's head with the right hand, fingers uppermost. Allow for a loop between the hands and with the left hand hold the rope, knuckles uppermost.

Commence training with a short lead. The right hand is the steering wheel and brake. Just a slight pressure with a forward or backward motion will start or stop the calf. Always walk by the shoulder of the calf and soon it will learn that your pace is the speed at which to travel. Do not release the right hand. Most creatures learn quickly and leading soon becomes an accepted habit. Do not fool or run with the calf – this could be dangerous. All control should be made by the right hand on the lead.

Leading Competition:

Of the events comprising the Calf Club programme, the leading competition is perhaps the most important. It demonstrates a bond of understanding between animal and child, of confidence and trust built up by constant association and training. The reaction of the animal to the child reflects the work and effort sustained over a period from selection to showing, and the competition, whatever its form, is to evaluate and measure the success of this partnership.

A successful round of the leading course means a great deal to the child. It is the only event in which both animals and child may be seen working together as a team and the only event that gives **the lie to the over – zealous parents who may be inclined to make too great a contribution to the rearing of the calf.**

The following notes are intended to give guidance to the child, the club supervisor, the administrator and the judge. This will be followed by brief comments on the types of leading competitions which may be used for competitive purposes.

- The ring is the LOOP SYSTEM.
- Size of ring is 15m x 15m
- The child leads around the outside of the 1st peg, stops at the correct position between the 1st and 2nd peg, does a clockwise loop at the 3rd peg, before moving up to the line. (**see diagram at end**)

Type Competition:

There are 3 sections for type competition, Jersey (all female), Friesian (all female) and Beef/Bull breed (all beef calves and males).

Child Effort Competition:

Judged on the effort the CHILD has put in, how much they know about the calf, how well they have brushed, cleaned the calf etc.

Calf Cover:

An adequate cover for the calf is easily made from a clean sack. Methods of making covers could be discussed at one of the club meetings. The cover benefits the calf by keeping it warm during cold weather. Remember to remove the cover on hot days. It also helps to loosen and remove winter hair, keeping the calf's coat fine and free from lice.

Lice:

Infection by lice, causes a rapid decline in both the general health and bloom of the calf. During grooming, look for lice on the neck, brisket and between the front legs. If discovered early, these small black creatures may be easily eradicated using a proprietary lice powder from the vets. Read the manufacturer's directions carefully before application.

NAIT Identification Tags:

ALL Calves must have a NAIT identification tag in their ear. No tag – No entry.

LOOP SYSTEM

