

Weaning the Foal

T. R. James, Middlesex Co., Ont.

Preparations for weaning the "colt" should be made many weeks before it is to be actually separated from its dam. One of the first things to do in the way of preparation is to halter break the foal. This is not a difficult thing to do if it is undertaken early in its life, and the earlier it is begun the easier it will be. Another thing in this preparatory course is to teach the foal to eat grain. This can best be done by feeding grain to the dam in a shallow box placed on the ground or floor where the foal can easily reach it. The little fellow will see its dam eat the grain and following her example will begin to nibble at it. Once it has got a taste, it will be on hand to get it's share every time the dam is fed.

The best age to wean is five months, but if one has plenty of cow's milk, and it is desired to wean the youngster sooner, it may be weaned at four months or even earlier. In case the foal is weaned early and milk is fed it should be diluted with water and sweetened with a little sugar.

SEPARATING DAM AND FOAL

When well halter broken and taught to eat grain, weaning can be done without checking its growth appreciably. One of the best methods, when convenient, is to place the dam and foal in adjoining box stalls with a small opening through which they get their noses together. Discontinue the grain ration of the dam. Feed

her only dry hay and water her often but sparingly, in order to prevent the secretion of milk. For the first four days after separating, allow the foal to suck three times a day. For the next four days, twice a day, morning and night, will be often enough to let it suck. After this let the foal suck once a day for two or three days and then do not allow it to go near the dam again. If two stalls are not available, use two open stalls which adjoin, but see that an opening is made between them through which the dam and the foal may get their noses together.

To tie the foal a good stout ring should be placed on each side of the stall and a rope or tie-strap should go from each to the foal's halter. These rings should be high enough so that there will not be any danger of the foal stepping over either rope when the head is lowered to the floor. A large, light and well-ventilated box stall without feed box, water pail or manger is the safest place for a foal during weaning. The youngster can be led out to water at frequent intervals or a bucket can be placed in his stall for him to drink out of and be removed when he is finished. Feed should be given in a shallow box placed on the floor, the box also being removed when he has eaten.

THE GRAIN RATION

The grain ration for the foal when being weaned should consist of ground or whole oats, preferably the former, two parts to one part of wheat bran. Begin with a light ration and increase daily until the foal is eating from three to six quarts of the grain ration. For a good-sized foal four quarts of oats and two of wheat bran, daily, divided into three feeds will be none too much.

Feed the foal well cured hay, the best and earliest cut hay available. Feed only as much as it will eat with a relish, but feed often. If there is plenty of cow's milk to be obtained teach it to drink sweet skimmed milk. Most foals easily learn to drink milk but some refuse. To such begin by wetting oat-meal with milk, making the mixture thinner each time until soon the colt will be drinking clear milk. A lump of rock salt or a salt brick should be placed in the stall where the foal can help himself whenever he wants to. Exercise is absolutely necessary in order to insure the foal's well-being. As soon as weaned, the youngster should be given a paddock or pasture to run in when the weather is good so that his limbs may be developed in proportion to his body. Keep the feed box and the stall clean. Look after the feet and by the use of a rasp keep them from growing irregularly or getting too long.



Barley Harvest at "Dunais" Farm, the Barns in the Background

Leaders in agriculture have long taught that were the information available, but applied to farm practice, production would be enormously increased. Business men are quick to recognize the value of advanced farm practice and readily apply what they learn to their farms and country homes. Mr. Barlow, Cumberland, a Toronto business man, whose country home is in Durham Co., Ont., is making a distinct success of his 40 acre farm. The silo, alfalfa, a carefully planned four year rotation, and intensive cultivation, are a part of his farm.

Some Features of a Well Kept Competing Farm

In these days when dirty farms are common, it is a pleasure to find one that is practically free from noxious weeds. Such a farm is that of Mr. W. C. Shearer, of Bright, Ont., who is well known throughout the Province of Ontario as a successful farmer and Farmers' Institute speaker. This farm is located on lot 2, concession 11, Township of Blandford in the County of Oxford, and is entered in Farm and Dairy's Prize Farms Competition. It consists of 95½ acres, the balance of the lot being sold to the G.T.R. Co. The land has sufficient roll to readily carry off surface water. The soil is a good clay loam.

HEDGES AND TREES.

The visitor cannot fail to be impressed with the fine hedges along the road and lane leading to the house. Beside the public road soft maples have been planted. The same kind of trees adorn each side of the lane leading to the house. In the lane these trees meet overhead. They have been trimmed out so that to one standing at one end and looking to the other the lane looks not unlike a tunnel. It reminds one of the world-famed drive between Paris and Versailles in France.

This farm has been conducted as a dairy farm for many years. Mr. Shearer's father made cheese on his own farm before the establishment of a co-operative cheese factory in this section. Mr. Shearer's barns are large and commodious. Water is installed in front of the stock, being pumped by a windmill from a well into a tank, then regulated by a float valve as it passes into the basins. Cement floors, and a ventilator leading through the roof are a part of the stable.

SILAGE FOR SUMMER FEEDING.

There are two silos on the place. One is used for storing silage for the summer. A litter carrier is in use in the stable. A rack lifter in the barn hoists the grain and hay nearly to the roof and reduces the labor of unloading materially. Ample storage room is available for implements. These are all kept safely under cover. Ice in abundance is on hand for cooling the milk which is sent to the Bright Cheese factory. The cows kept are for the most part Holsteins, a number of them being registered and are very fine individuals.

The farm dwelling is a comfortable one. It is built of concrete. A neat well kept lawn adorns its front. Mr. Shearer's place was noteworthy for being free from noxious weeds, for its neat fences and gates, and, for the absence of sticks, stones or other rubbish lying around the buildings, lanes or fields.

RURAL MAIL DELIVERY

Mr. Shearer is fortunate in living on a route where Rural Mail Delivery is enjoyed. He gives Farm and Dairy much credit for bringing this about through its special series of articles bearing on this question. As he sits on his verandah he can see the mail carrier deposit his mail in the box, and in another minute he is enjoying his daily paper. Mr. Shearer also has a telephone, which keeps him in touch with his neighbors and with the business places in that section of the country.

A five year crop rotation is followed on Mr. Shearer's farm, land being one year in hay, one year in pasture, one year in grain, one year in corn or roots and one year in grain that is seeded with clover. Mr. Shearer has been successful in growing the finest crop that the Ontario farm produces. He has seven bright, healthy boys, the oldest fifteen, who are an honor to their parents.—H.G.

Corn promises to be an abundant crop. It is now being grown extensively. Silos are not to be seen in the same proportion to the fields of corn. Could there be a better investment and a better time to erect a silo than after harvest of the present year? Cement silos are favorites with many. They are permanent and indestructible buildings. Cement can now be purchased for about 40 per cent. less than it could a year ago. In view of the movement on the part of a number of cement manufacturing companies to form a merger, cement is not likely to be so cheap another season. Where gravel and small stone can be obtained convenient, the present would seem a favorable time to build.—H. Johnson, Middlesex Co., Ont.

It is always good practise to let the calf have the milk of its dam. If this is not possible it should be fed on the milk of the same cow for a few weeks till its digestive system becomes strong enough to digest less carefully prepared food. The food of the cows from which the milk is taken should also be carefully looked after. Musty or heated hay, rotten roots, the drinking from stagnant pools or from any other source of impure water should be avoided, as milk produced from such sources is quite unfit for feeding to young and delicate animals.—Dr. H. G. Reed, V.S., Halton Co., Ont.

Our alfalfa seeding of last year sown with one bushel of barley per acre is making a showing that does the heart good. We have 12 acres now and are clearing 15 more this year. We intend to have lots of it on the policy that it's not possible to have too much of a good thing.—R. E. Gunn, Manager Dunrobin Stock Farm, Ontario Co., Ont.

If you have any difficulties in the care of your orchard or garden send enquires to the horticultural editor of Farm and Dairy.