

THE FEEDING OF BEEF CATTLE

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The foundation principles of the successful selection of feeds and the feeding of beef cattle depend upon the palatability, variety, nutrition and ease of digestion, and succulence of ration given. All these essentials of a well-balanced ration for profitable production must be included whether raising or purchasing food-stuffs.

The Feeding of Calves: The secret of the most economical beef production is a proper start in life for the beef calf. It should never be allowed to lose the baby flesh.

The Spring Calf.—If suckled, the beef calf had best be born in the spring and run with the dam on good, well-shaded and well-watered pastures. If the beef cows are to be milked, the calves had best be born in the fall—September to November—and reared by hand in suitable quarters. Spring-born calves, suckled, require little if any extra feed for some months, aside from their mothers' milk and pasture. When pasture becomes dry and very short, green feed and grain may profitably be fed to both the cows and calves.

Feed Fall Calves which are not sucking the cows as follows: Allow the calf to suck for the first three days. The mother's milk is absolutely essential for a proper start. Feed 8 to 10 pounds of the mother's milk for the first ten days divided into three or four feeds, daily, for the first few days.

Gradually change the whole milk ration to a mixture of whole milk and skim-milk and finally to skim-milk and a supplement. At one month of age, the calf should be receiving 12 to 14 pounds of skim-milk plus ground scalded flax-seed jelly, and should also be receiving a small quantity of whole oats fed in the manger, fine clover or grass hay, water, and a very small quantity of salt daily.

During the next four months, the skim-milk might be increased to 15 or 20 pounds daily and the flax-seed jelly gradually replaced in the skim-milk with a cream substitute composed of ground flax, 1 part; ground oats, 2 parts; ground corn, 2 parts, scalded and mixed with the skim-milk. This cream substitute may be increased to 1 pound per calf, per day, in the milk.

During these four months the whole oats should be replaced by a dry grain mixture composed of equal parts bran, rolled oats, and ground corn. Start feeding at four weeks of age at the rate of one-eighth pound daily, gradually increased to 1½ pounds at twenty weeks of age, when the skim-milk may be profitably discontinued and the grain mixture increased proportionately. Feed roots or a mixture of roots and silage and good fine hay, preferably clover; drinking water, and salt, regularly.

From five to nine months of age the grain mixture should be changed so that at the end of this period, they may be receiving 4 pounds daily of a mixture of bran, 2 parts; ground oats, 2 parts; barley or corn, 1 part.

From nine to thirteen months of age these calves, born in the fall, will be on pasture. In the shortage of pasture it will pay to supply green feed and grain. The above grain mixture is excellent for this purpose.

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