

Scotch Practice with In-foal Mares

Robert Graham, Simcoe Co., Ont.

In-foal mares should have light work right up to the day they foal. In feeding I always try to have them in as good condition as possible (not too fat) so that when foaling time draws near I can cut off some of the heavier parts of the ration, such as whole oats. From ten days before the time I think the mare will foal, I feed half rolled oats and half bran in a mash every night to keep the bowels open. My experience is that in whatever state you keep the mare's bowels before foaling, the foal's will be in about the same condition, age taken into consideration.

Being a Scotchman, I never dream of working mares when nursing. We in Scotland, although there is not one farmer in many hundreds but lives on a rented farm, never work nursing mares. If the mare foals in winter in many hundreds but lives on a rented farm, never work nursing mares. If the mare foals in winter in many hundreds but lives on a rented farm, never work nursing mares. If the mare foals in winter in many hundreds but lives on a rented farm, never work nursing mares.

BUTTER TO CLEAN BOWELS

Half an hour after the mare foals I give the colt fully two ounces of newly made fresh butter, with no salt in it. I give it in three pieces and push the first piece well back in its throat. I do not need to push in the next pieces, as the foal will hold up its head for more and suck it as a child does candies. Being free from all chemicals and on an empty stomach, the butter passes right through the bowels and the yellow secretion that kills thousands of foals annually by being retained too long will be passed in 12 hours. This ready passage saves all severe straining, navel rupture, etc. The butter does not purge the colt in the least, but oils all the intestines as it passes through.

There are times when I have to take away the black balls of dung from the rectum. I use the finger, well rubbed with fresh butter. The butter keeps away all irritation. I had a case last year of a foal where I called in two veterinarians, it being a valuable foal. There was a big black ball that blocked the whole passage into the rectum. The veterinarians tried all kinds of injections, but to no purpose, and left the foal to die. As a last resort after the vets left I made a lotion of half a lb. castile soap and half a lb. fresh butter in hot water, and injected that into the rectum. It worked like magic, and the colt is alive and well to-day.

ANOTHER SIMPLE REMEDY

Then there is the water trouble, for which I have never seen this simple cure to fail. Give a tablespoonful of whisky and a little pinch of saltpetre in a little of its mother's milk. It will soon act. Repeat the whisky and milk once or twice in two hours.

Navel ill is unknown to me. The loose box where I put the mare 10 days before foaling is well bedded and swept out every day with a good sprinkling of lime twice a week to kill microbes.

Cleanliness is one of the most essential parts of the work in caring for colts. Before starting to assist a mare to foal I give my hands a gentle smear with coal oil to kill any microbes that might happen to be on them. This insures safety when cutting the foal's navel. I never cut it with a knife. I always use a pair of clean, sharp scissors. In hot weather I paint the wound with iodine.

Some farmers may think all the foregoing a lot of trouble. It is not, however. It will come in the regular routine of the work, and if the mare and colt are not worth the trouble they are not worth the rearing. Any ordinary farmer has all the above simple ingredients in his house.

Foaling as I do 15 mares on an average annually, I have seen them come

in all different ways. As soon as I see that the foal is not coming right, I dig a hole two to three feet deep and stand the mare with her front legs in it. This takes away all her straining power against you. I keep her on her feet. In this position any intelligent farmer can straighten a badly twisted foal.

Of course, this method is impossible in some cases. If a foal happens to be too large and it is seemingly impossible to come through the passage, turn the mare on to her back. Once in this position one man can do what five could not do before—foal her quite easily, and thus save what would have been a big dead foal. When working with a mare on her back I do not go down on my knees, but stand up and pull upwards in an oblique direction.

KIND WORDS FOR FARM AND DAIRY

Time and space will not permit me to say any more at present. I hope some of Farm and Dairy's many readers may benefit a little from what I have said. I have been very prosperous since coming to this country five years ago, and



A Three-Year-Old Filly and Her Two-Weeks-Old Offspring

It is the common practice on some farms to breed well-developed fillies at two years of age and some breeders claim to have secured better results from two-year-olds than from fillies if bred as three-year-olds or older. Farm and Dairy would like to know what has been your experience in this particular. The photo here reproduced was sent to Farm and Dairy by Mr. E. F. Hicks, York Co., Ont., who, in the adjoining article relates his satisfactory experience with this filly and her foal.

I owe my gratitude to Farm and Dairy for the information it has given me towards the methods to follow in farming in this my adopted country.

Filly Bred at Two Years Old

E. F. Hicks, York Co., Ont.

The mare shown in the illustration on this page was under three years when the foal was born, the foal being just two weeks old when the picture was taken.

The mare had all the well-matured ensilage she would eat all winter together with some oat chop and oat straw, hardly any hay being fed. This ration was not expensive and gave excellent results in this case, the colt being very smart and strong from the start and has grown like a weed.

The mare weighs at least 1400 pounds and shows no ill effects because of having been bred at an early age. If mares can be just as successfully bred to drop their first foal at three years of age, returns come to hand more speedily.

Note.—What has been the experience of other Farm and Dairy readers in this connection. Is it advisable to breed fillies at 2 years old. — Editor.

When pear blight is discovered, cut off the limb about a foot below the diseased area and burn the wood that is cut off. Cut it off in the spring before you spray. Be sure to watch the suckers. If they become affected cut them off as the disease gets in early in the soft juicy branches.—L. Caesar, O.A.C., Guelph.

To the Blade that Hath Shall be Given

F. R. James, Middlesex Co., Ont.

"Short pasture is generally supposed to be good pasture if it is not too short. We are apt to think that the grazing is best when it consists of the short new shoots of tender grass. Remember, however, that rapidly growing grass is according to size of leaf. Grass may be kept so short that it can hardly grow. A grass blade half an inch long and an eighth of an inch wide has only one eighth the surface of one two inches long and a quarter of an inch wide. The bigger blade, all things considered, will grow eight times as fast.

"Notice how the corn shoots up when it acquires leaves big enough to serve as organs for rapid growth. Notice, too, how the plant with leaf difficulties stands still and fails to grow. The leaves are the organs of growth even more than the roots. Therefore, don't feed pasture too short. "When the lungs of the plants are too small, growth slows down. When the pasture gets so short that the dew falls to wet the cows' dew-

claws, take the losses off and feed them. The pasture will rally four times as fast if allowed to do so, when the blades are four inches long, as when they are two—because the four-inch blade is usually four times as big as the two-inch one. Leave the pasture its lungs."

The foregoing information I found in my favorite United States farm paper and it made me think of what Professor Day at the Guelph Model Farm told me some years ago while I was there on one of the June excursions to the college. We were out looking at the beef cattle and I noticed although it was late in June, the cattle were in pasture almost up to their knees. I said to the professor, "Isn't it a waste to have such long pasture for the cattle? They surely will never eat all of that now in another few weeks after it becomes hard and dry." Professor Day made reply to the effect that the long grass protected the soil and kept it moist and that on such a pasture there was much more new growth than there would be if the cattle had it eaten off close. He considered it good policy to have the grass in the pasture a good length throughout the early part of the season and later on as the pasture became dried, the cattle would find new grass starting low down and in eating this they would eat also a part of the longer, drier pasture and by the time fall came it was practically all gone.

I pass this on for the benefit of the readers of Farm and Dairy, many of whom in all probability believe as I once did that if they are not keeping the pasture pretty well eaten down there is going to be much waste. I know better than that now.