

Answer Link- Colorado State University Cooperative Extension's New Question and Answer Forum

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Colorado State University Cooperative Extension receives almost 2 million questions each year on everything from gardening to pet care, food nutrition and personal finance. To meet the constant demand for information, in June 2002, Cooperative Extension launched AnswerLink, a searchable website with answers to thousands of frequently asked questions. The site - www.answerlink.info - also allows people to send questions via the internet to CSU campus experts and Cooperative Extension agents throughout the state. The submitter will receive an answer via email within a period of approximately 3 days. He/She will also receive any updates made by a reviewer. These questions and answers then become a permanent addition to the AnswerLink database. In addition, AnswerLink features links to many of Cooperative Extension's standard educational information in the form of fact sheets, publications, columns, and news releases.

Through Cooperative Extension's small acreage funding, this past summer we were able to significantly add to the small and large animal health and husbandry section of the database. We were able to expand the Large Animals: Health & Care topics/sub topics from 29 to more than 75 questions & answers, as well several fact sheets. The Small Animals: Health & Care topics/subtopics we increased from a total of 7 to 48 available questions/answers and again several fact sheets. (As you will see some of these are not currently input as of yet due to the lack of reviewers at this stage.) Small animal topics included: vaccine recommendations for cats, dogs, rabbits, rodents, ferrets; pet licensure; behavior issues; orphan kittens and puppies; and dog and cat health questions. Large animal topics included: pot-bellied pig husbandry, vaccine recommendations for goats; caring for orphan lambs; West Nile Virus; calf scours; horse husbandry and health; foot rot; deworming; and freeze branding.

Here is an example:

Question

I was thinking of getting an orphan lamb for my kids. Can I feed it cow's milk? Is twice a day feeding enough?

Answer

Before bringing home an orphan lamb, make sure that it has received at least 7.5-10% of colostrum per pound of the lambs' body weight. Orphan lambs should be allowed to nurse their mother for up to six hours (if pulled from the ewe

because she was a triplet) or be supplemented with colostrum from a bottle or stomach tube. Orphan lambs should never be fed cow's milk. Milk replacers formulated specifically for lambs or goats' milk should be used for orphan or "bum" lamb. Calf milk replacer and cows' milk are unacceptable. The fat globules in lamb's milk must be homogenized, and calf milk replacer contains excessive amounts of lactose, which may cause severe scouring and death. The compositional breakdown for a high quality lamb milk replacer is as follows: crude protein - 22 to 24%; crude fat - 25 to 35%; crude fiber 0.5 to 1%; lactose 22 to 25%; ash 5 to 8%; Vitamin A - 20,000 IU per pound; Vitamin D - 5,000 IU per pound; and Vitamin E - 50 to 100 IU per pound. Because of the high fat content of milk replacer powder, it should be mixed in warm (not hot) water using a hand whisk. Once in suspension, it should be cooled and stored at 35-40 F. Cold milk at the time of feeding has been shown to reduce spoilage and results in frequent suckling of small amounts of milk replacer, which mimics a lamb's normal nursing behavior.

For the first few days of life, the lamb shouldn't get more than four ounces per feeding, six times a day. You can then gradually increase the amount and decrease the number of feedings per day. After two weeks, two or three bottles a day are plenty. Baby bottles work well for little lambs. Later, soda bottles with lamb nipples are fine. More than 12-16 ounces per feeding is likely to induce scours (diarrhea). Encourage bottle babies to eat grain, creep feed and hay as young as possible, so you can wean them early. Lambs can be weaned of milk feeding as early as when they reach 25-30 lbs. or when they are 35-40 days of age.

Cooperative Extension is CSU's link to the citizens of our 63 Colorado counties and a major part of CSU's outreach efforts as a land-grant university. CE's mission statement is "to provide information and education, and encourage the application of research-based knowledge in response to local, state, and national issues affecting individuals, youths, families, agricultural enterprises and communities of Colorado." AnswerLink is one more step to accomplishing this goal with the ability to provide information accurately and efficiently to the public 24 hours a day/ 7days a week. AnswerLink....information for the speed of life.