

Safe Farm Futures

Junior

Part 2: Animals & You

AgriAware
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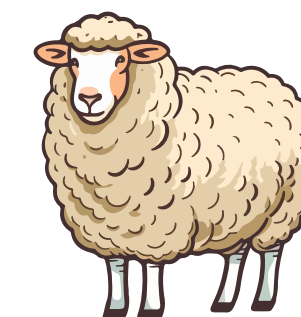
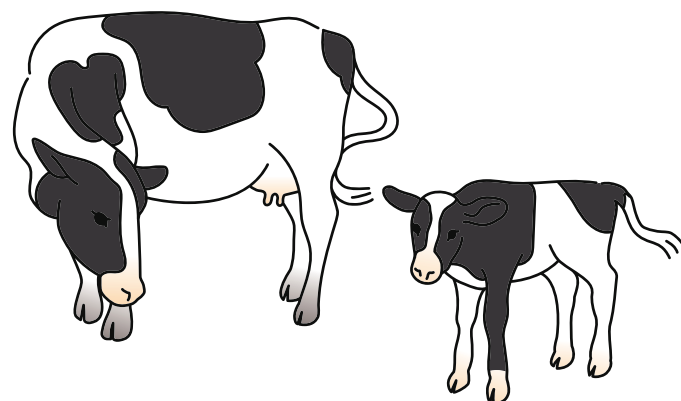
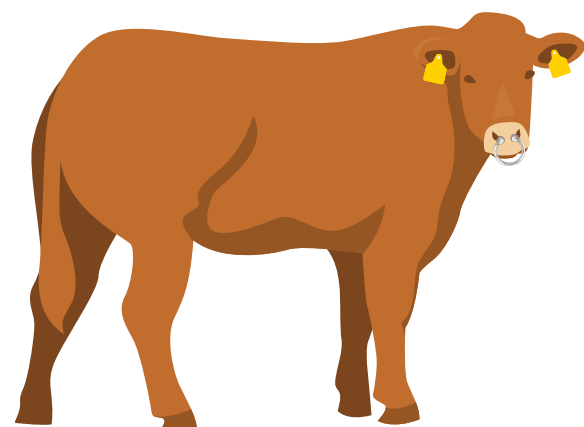
An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Teacher instructions: Work through the material below at your own pace. Animals & You is all about taking care around farm animals to ensure both people and animals stay safe. Many of these learnings are applicable to pets, strays and wild animals too.

Introduction

Animals can make people happy. Some people have pets in their homes. Others enjoy seeing animals in the zoo, in the park or even on the television. When it comes to farm animals, the first thing we need to remember is that they are working animals. They all have jobs to do. This means that they are different to our pets.

Suggested activity: Take a look at the animals below. What are their jobs on the farm?

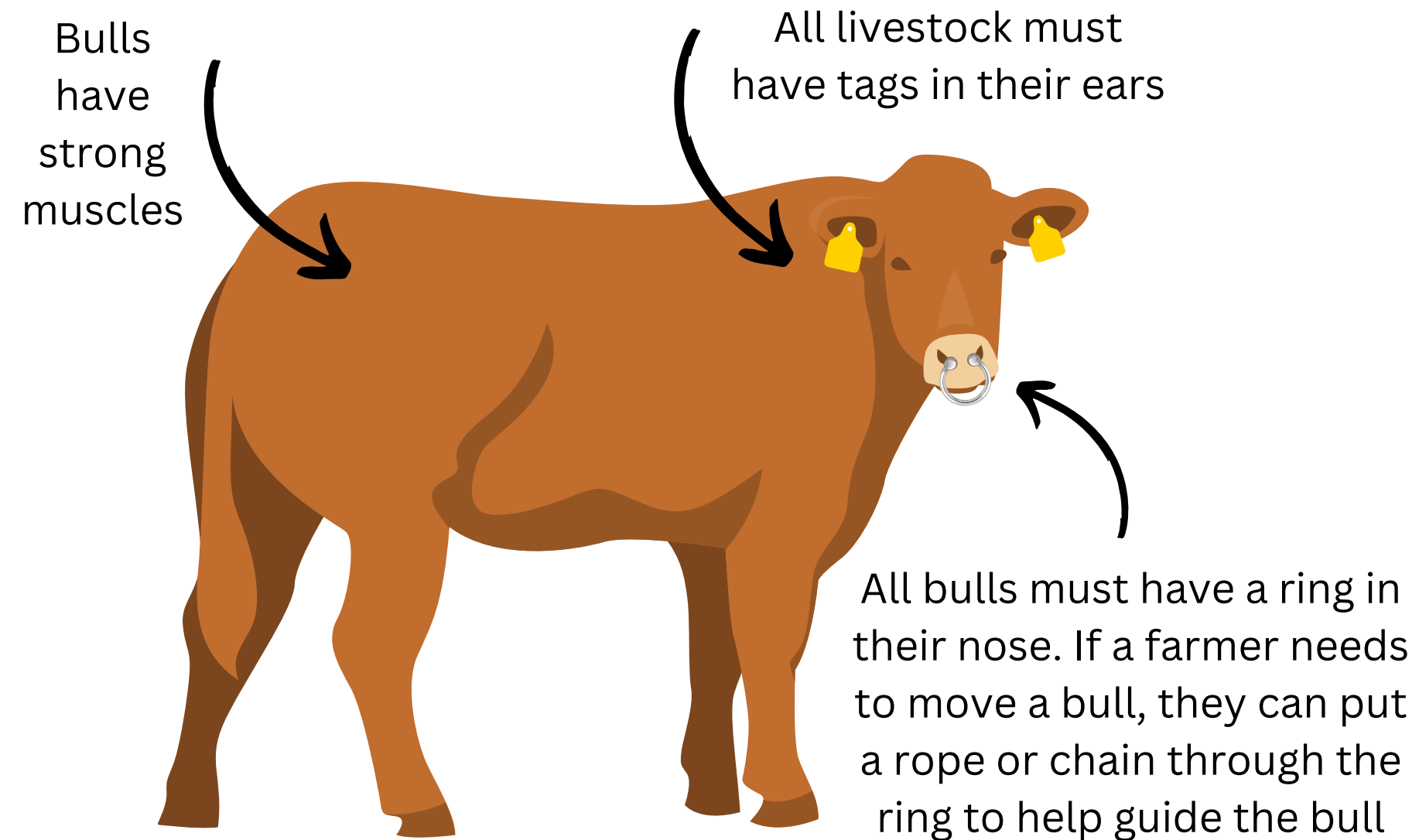


Living on a farm can sometimes blur the line between pet and livestock, but it's essential to remember that animals can be dangerous. As a guest on a farm, it's important to always be accompanied by a trusted adult. Keeping a safe distance from animals is the first step in keeping you safe. During Spring and Summer, cattle and sheep are typically grazing in the fields, while in Autumn and Winter, they are mostly indoors in sheds.

To ensure everyone's safety, let's take a closer look at how we should act around farm animals.

Beware Of The Bull

Bulls are very powerful and can run fast. Bulls can be outdoors in fields or indoors in sheds. Staying far away from bulls will keep you safe.



Questions to ask:

1. Why do you think the bull has a ring in their nose?
2. What kind of emergency situations might happen when around a bull?
3. Should children help when the farmer is working with the bull?



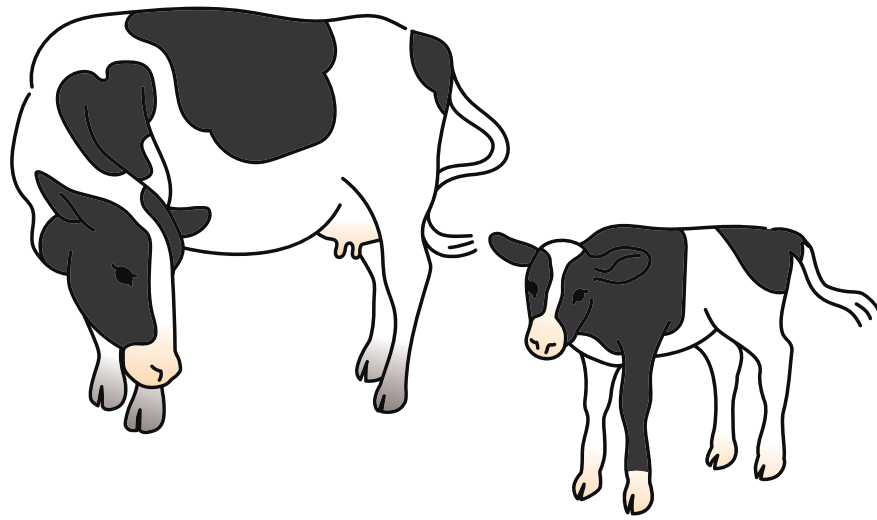
**Beware
of the bull**

A farmer must have a beware of the bull sign on their farm gate. This will tell any visitors to the farm or countryside that a bull may be close by.

People should never enter any field without permission from the farmer.

Suggested Activities

- Look at pictures of different breeds of bulls and notice how impressive they are. Common breeds in Ireland include Simmental, Limousine and Belgian Blue.



Taking Care Around Cows & Calves

Both beef cows and dairy cows will have calves once per year. They are very protective of their babies. Newborn calves are delicate and their mothers will do anything to keep their babies safe.

Farm Facts: Cows with a newborn calves cause more accidents on farms than any other animal, including bulls. Never approach a cow with a young calf.

When going to meet a calf, there are a few things you need to remember:



Stay quiet and calm



Only touch the calf if you have asked for permission.



Never climb over a barrier to visit the calf



Always wash your hands after spending time with animals

Suggested Activities

- Watch this video of calves being fed milk replacer on a dairy calf to beef farm in Tipperary.

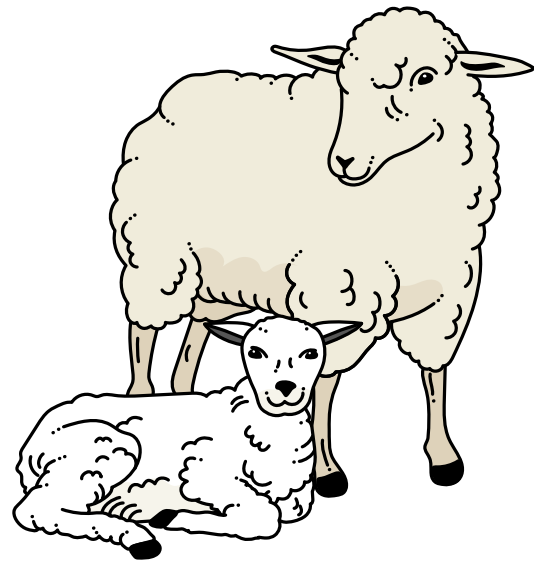
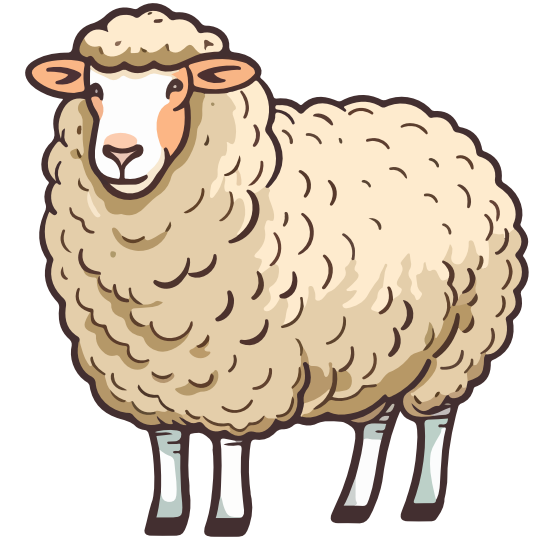


Feeding Calves

Sheep

Sheep can be tricky animals to work with. Farmers need to be very skilled to keep an eye on their sheep and they often use a sheepdog to help move sheep from place to place.

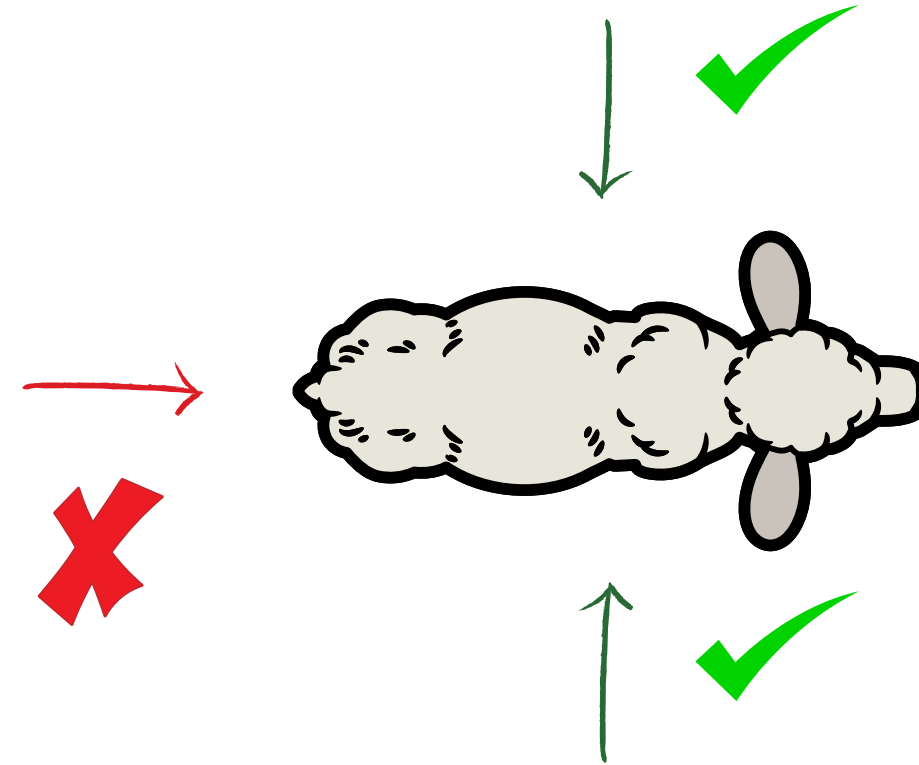
If you live on a sheep farm, you will know that one of the most exciting times of the year is when the lambs are born. If you are visiting a farm, it is important that you know how to safely approach a lamb.



Never approach a very young newborn lamb



Stay calm and avoid sudden movements



Approach a lamb from the front or from the side, but never from the back. Also consider this when approaching calves.

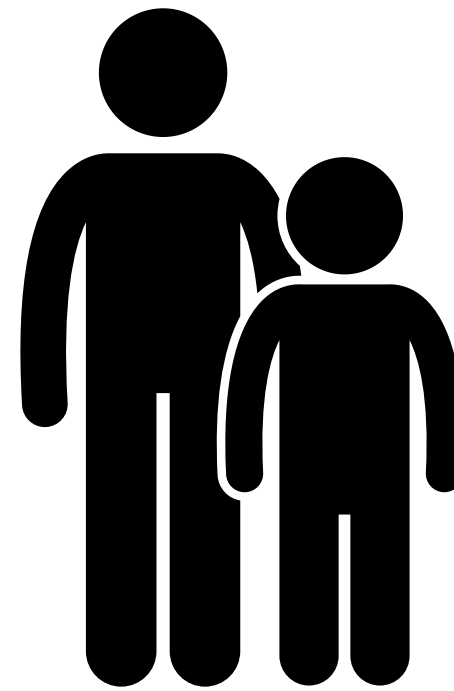
Suggested Activities

- Revisit the different names we use to describe the sheep family.
- Have a classroom discussion about the different products we get from sheep.



Poultry

Egg collection is a fun way for children to lend a hand on the farm. Many farmers and people with enough garden space, will keep hens for eggs. Before beginning an egg collection task, there are a few things to remember:



Step one: Eggs must be handled with care. Bring an egg tray or an egg basket with you to make the job easier.

Step two: Bring an adult with you in case you need extra help along the way. A step stool is also a smart choice.

Step three: Wash your hands after you have finished the job. Eggs can carry harmful bacteria.

Suggested Activities

- Carry out a research exercise on the types of eggs you can get from different kinds of poultry e.g. geese, turkey, quail.
 - Once you have conducted your research, you could try out different recipes using the eggs you have learned about.



Pets & Strays

On farms, working dogs are typically collie breeds. Collies are known for their intelligence and being easy to train. These dogs have been bred for generations to work alongside humans, assisting in a variety of tasks such as herding livestock and protecting homes and families. If you have a working dog at home, they will know and recognise you. If you are a visitor to a farm, it is better to stay away from any animal you do not know, including cats, donkeys and horses.

If you have permission from the owner, follow the below rules to safely approach an animal you do not know:

Move towards the animal slowly with your hand stretched out and your fingers tucked into your fist.

Let the animal come to you. If they are happy to be touched they will come closer.

Notice the animal's body language at all times. If they become restless or run away, never chase them.





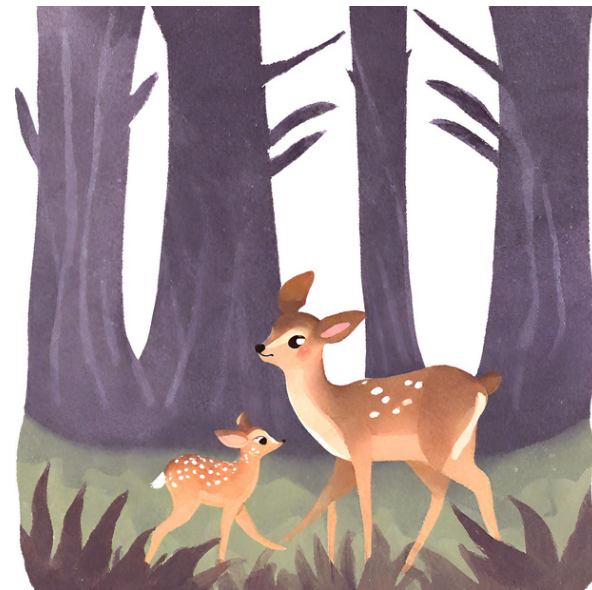
Wildlife on the Farm

While domesticated animals like cattle, pigs, and chickens are commonly associated with farms, wild animals can also make their homes on farms. This is especially true for farms that have forests near them, as these areas can provide shelter and food for a variety of wildlife. Some common wild animals that can be found on farms include deer, rabbits, foxes rodents and birds.

To keep wildlife and people safe, it is best to leave them alone. If you have any concerns with wildlife near you, reach out to a local expert group for advice.



Badgers make their homes under the ground in badger setts



Deer like to hide in the forest when humans are around



Some birds like to build their nests in trees

Some birds like to build their nests on the ground



Hedgehogs like to build their nests in piles of leaves and under hedgerows

Suggested Activities

- Make a list of the different types of wildlife you might find on a farm and match them to their homes.
- As an art activity, use recycled materials to make a model animal home.

Quiz - What's Going On And Is It Wrong?



Quiz - What's Going On And Is It Wrong?



- This child is alone in the calf shed.
- The child is also approaching the calf from the back. This can be very scary for a calf.



- The fence around the bull's field is broken.
- This is dangerous for the farmer and any visitors to the countryside.



- This child is trying to climb over the barriers to reach the lambs.
- There is no grown-up in this picture.



- This child is disturbing the robin nesting in the tree.
- We must leave wild animals alone so they we do not hurt them and they do not hurt us.