



Farm animal safety

Curriculum links:

- **Science** Living things
Environmental awareness and care
- **Geography** Human environments
- **SPHE** Myself
Myself and the wider world

Lesson objectives

To highlight the importance of staying safe around farm animals, particularly when animals are giving birth and looking after their young.

Teacher guidelines

90% of farm accidents involve an unsafe act. Livestock (farm animals) are the third most common cause of farm accidents in Ireland. It is suggested that the teacher revises the different types of farm animals examined in previous lesson plans as well as introducing pupils to the vocabulary and basic concepts of safety before starting the lesson.

Keywords and concepts introduced in Module 1:

tame dangerous pet touch chute newborn

All farm animals can be dangerous. You should ask permission from the farmer before approaching, petting or touching any of the animals on the farm.

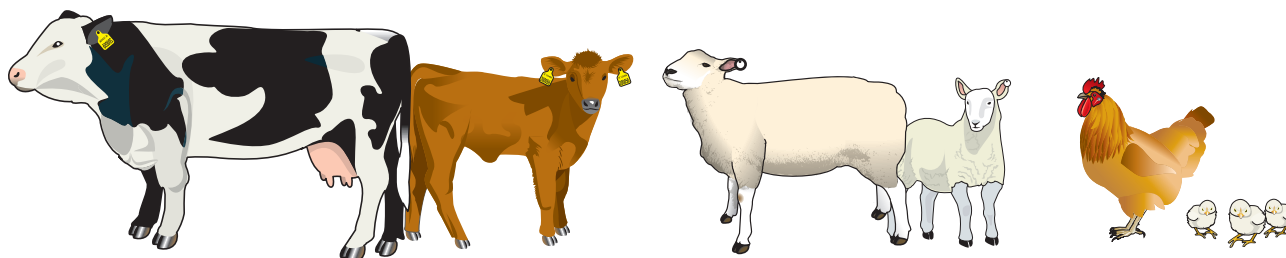
After revision of the above, teachers could discuss the more detailed information below.

Keywords for this lesson:

birth newborn protective chicks ducklings feeding

Animals, their young and how to stay safe around them

Farms are busy and exciting places with lots of animals. It can be very exciting when animals such as cows, sheep or pigs give **birth** to **newborn** baby animals. Young cows are called calves. Young sheep are known as lambs and young pigs are called piglets. We should not disturb or annoy new mothers on the farm. This can be a busy and worrying time for the farmer as he/she has to make sure that the animals are safe. He/she may have to help the animals if they are unable to give birth on their own. If you are lucky enough to see an animal giving birth, you must listen to what the farmer says. However, we should not approach these animals as new mothers are very **protective** of their young and they might attack, kick, bite or peck you. We should keep any pets like cats and dogs away from mothers and their young.

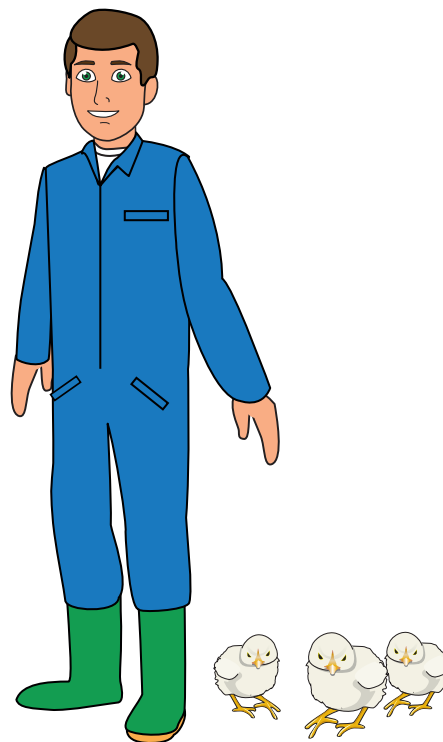


Handling of chicks and ducklings

Newborn **chicks** and **ducklings** are fragile creatures and we should be very careful when holding them as this may injure or frighten them. To pick up a chick or duckling we should place one hand under its tummy and place the other hand on top of it and hold it gently but firmly. Newborn chicks and ducklings may seem cute and cuddly but when handling them we must be careful not to squeeze them too hard or choke them. They are not strong enough to survive a fall so it is important not to drop them. Birds in general have hollow bones. Hollow bones are much lighter than regular bones and help birds to fly. They are also very fragile, meaning these bones break easily.

Feeding of young animals

Only feed farm animals if you have the farmer's permission and if you are supervised by an adult. Do not attempt to feed animals on your own. If you are **feeding** animals in pens, do not enter the pen. Feed the animal from outside the pen as they could knock you down if you enter their living area.



Suggested activities

- Photocopy the activity sheet on page 52
- Find out the names of other young animals found on the farm
- In art class, get the students to draw/paint 'animal families' (e.g. ram, ewe and the baby lamb)
- Ask a local farmer about the lambing season
- Investigate the lambing season in Ireland and create a poster using cotton wool to depict sheep and lambs. Discuss how we use wool and yarn as a natural resource
- Create a sequence chart highlighting the life cycle of a chick
- For extension material, see Modules 3 and 4

Learning outcomes:

At the end of this lesson, students should know that animals are potentially more dangerous when around their young. They should also know how to handle young animals.

Additional resources:

- www.agriaware.ie
- Check out Agri Aware's 'Once Upon a Farm' video on YouTube
- www.agrikids.ie



Farm animal safety

Name: _____

Date: _____

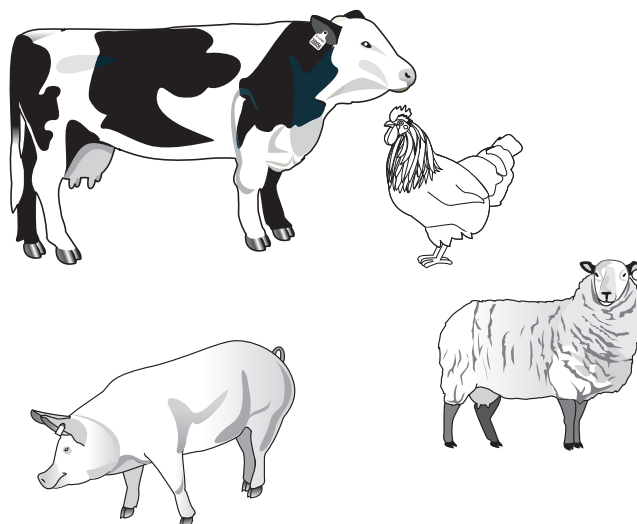
1 Write the correct word. Match the newborn to its mother

Pgteli _____

Lbma _____

Cfal _____

Ckhic _____



2 Join the words to make a sentence

Lambs are usually	it's mother by her bleat
New mothers can sometimes	called piglets
Newborn pigs are	born in the spring
A lamb knows	attack, kick, bite, or peck

3 Write True or False beside each sentence

Sometimes the farmer will help an animal to give birth _____

We should approach animals when they are giving birth _____

New mothers are very protective of their young _____

***To be used with teacher guidelines, page 24 and accompanying the Farm Safety DVD at the front of the pack!**