

those who have the imagination to develop soundly based schemes of benefit to unemployed young people and to the community.

P NEWELL

Country-side Liaison officer,  
Community Council for Wiltshire,  
Wynillanus, St Joseph's Place,  
Bath Road, Devizes.

## Early suckling needs supervision

**SIR**—Recent work at Somming Farm, University of Reading, supports advice given in "Answers to questions" (FW, Sept 15), about scours in home-reared calves.

We found that many of 82 calves watched during the first six hours after birth did not suck at all. Most heifers' calves sucked but 46 per cent of cows' calves had not sucked within this time.

All the calves which had not suckled were put to the teat at six hours and all attained serum immunoglobulin levels considered adequate to confer a high degree of protection against disease.

These results, which will be reported in more detail in *Research in Veterinary Science*, emphasise that it is essential to supervise suckling early in the life of the calf rather than to assume that it will take place unaided.

S A EDWARDS AND DR J BROOM

Department of Zoology,  
University of Reading,  
Whiteknights,  
Reading.

## Don't allow a rabbit revival

**SIR**—I have recently read an advertisement for electrified netting to deter rabbits from entering a green crop—apparently grass does not qualify. Surely, when there are so many rabbits, the time has come to resurrect the area's rabbit clearance society. Had farmers all over Britain kept their societies going, rabbits would not again be reaching nuisance proportions.

Some of us recall what rabbits can do. Was it 1953 when they roamed unchecked after the Government's

"Yes" for the Milk Marketing Board in the coming referendum. Recalling the chaos before its formation, one can see that it would be even more difficult to sell milk individually in these days of large companies. One can also see how difficult it would be to negotiate individual contracts. A free-for-all in the milk business would be a very dicey proposition indeed.

(MRS) MARGARET WAGGETT  
Penlan-Cemarth,  
Newcastle Emlyn, Dyfed.

## Let farm lobby speak on M-way plans

**SIR**—Twice in recent weeks you have carried reports on the effect of motorway plans on farmers whose land is to be bisected or whose buildings are to be demolished for proposed motorways.

In each instance the farmer fights alone at the public inquiry unsupported by his local NFFC branch.

I have for a long time been surprised to find that the NFFC, which is a strong and effective lobby in many political debates concerned with farming interests, has not taken a stand nationally against disruption to farm life, and loss of good agricultural land resulting from motorway construction works.

I do not wish to comment on the particular case of the M25, as I do not know the arguments involved. However, it is clear to me that an ever-expanding motorway network is now self-injustifying.

More vehicles, need more roads; more roads generate even more traffic; and so on ad infinitum. But the consequences of over-dependence on road transport in the future, assuming that energy supplies allow road transport free expansion, are terrifying to contemplate. Construction of more and more roads offers no solution. At best, it provides some local relief to the detriment of the environment somewhere else. And agriculture is paying a heavy price while this policy continues.

The NFFC and other farming bodies, as disinterested groups not



**FEED COMES** to the eaters at Mr C B Martin's Will Hall Farm, Alton, Hants, where student Ross Pashman (above) delivers hay to in-call heifers on exhausted grassland ready for the plough.

**EATERS COME** to the food at FARMERS WEEKLY's Marshcroft Farm, Tring, Hertfordshire. At the week-end self-pick customers harvested our King Edward potatoes at 2.5p a lb (£55 a tonne). Weekend takings average about £500.