

by jok church



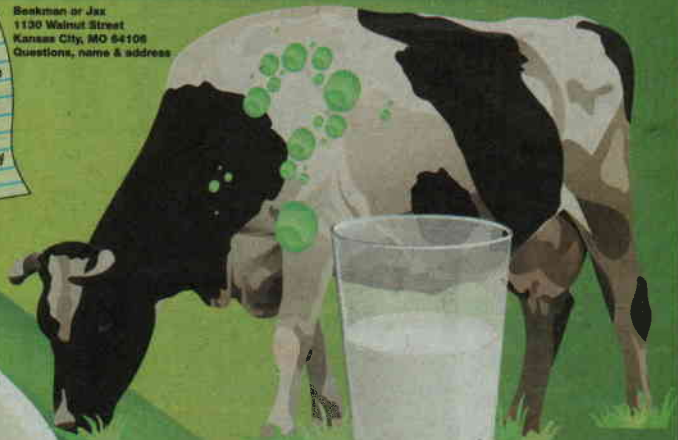
Google: rBGH or ruminant

Beakman or Jax
1130 Walnut Street
Kansas City, MO 64108
Questions, name & address

Dear Jax,

How can a calf have
a baby at only
15 months old?

Sydney Mills
West Berlin, New Jersey



Dear Sydney,

At 15 months old, a female calf is a cow.

Different animals mature (ma-TOOR) at different ages.

Some animals, like mice, mature in 4-8 weeks from birth, which means a mouse could have baby mice while celebrating its 1-month-old birthday.

Cows reach maturity in about 12 months. That's important to the dairy industry. To make sure a cow makes milk, it is kept pregnant its whole adult life.

Jax Place
Jax Place

Our cow-is how we like to think of a dairy cow, peacefully munching grass in a meadow. But that is not how most dairy cows are raised. Most cows have a number, and not a name.

Almost all dairy cows are raised in factories where they're fed surplus corn and soy – not the grass that is a cow's natural food. A cow is built to digest grasses, with a stomach divided into four parts, which we call being a *ruminant* (ROOM-in-unt).

Eating corn and soy and being crowded in a factory makes problems for cows.

Factory cows get more diseases, so they are medicated constantly. Their food includes drugs like antibiotics and hormones. They also get gas, which can hurt their 4-part stomachs. Factory cows live from 3-4 years before they die. Cows that eat grasses in meadows live and produce milk for up to 20 years. They're ones farmers name and don't number.

