This leaf was printed in 1502 by Johann der Ältere Prüss, a German printer who worked from approximately 1480 to 1510. He was both a printer and a book dealer at Zum Thiergarten in Strasbourg. Little else is known about his work. The leaf discusses the care of farm animals, particularly cattle, and draws on a passage from Virgil's Georgics. This poem was his second major work, written before the Aeneid and after the Eclogues, and deals with all aspects of the farming life. The leaf begins with a brief quote from the third book of the Georgics (3.154-3.162), and the rest of the page is devoted to commentary by an unknown author. The third book is devoted largely to animal husbandry. This particular passage, quoted in the center of the page, is about the care of cattle.

The first line (Hunc quoque (nam mediis fervoribus acrior instat)) refers to the plague, which is discussed further in sections i-m of the commentary. Virgil says that the plague (the implied subject of instat) is worse during the midday heat. The next two lines (Arcebis grauido pecori :armentaque pasce/Sole recens orto:aut noctem ducentibus astris.) consequentially suggest that pregnant cattle should be grazed in the evening or early morning, so that they are not threatened.

The “plague” refers to the gadfly, which is a type of fly that pesters livestock and is similar to the horsefly. The flies are active during the heat of the day, as Vergil says. However, their significance is not only biological. The gadfly is also a mythological creature, created by Juno to harass Io. The commentator alludes to this, but does not tell the whole story:
After Juno realized that Jove had turned Io into a cow in order to hide his lover from her, she created the gadfly in order to harass Io and drive her away—in fact, all the way to Egypt (usque in Egyptum fugit). Now, not only Io, but all cows must fear the gadfly, and thus be grazed in the evening and early morning.

It is unclear why the commentator includes the chronology of kings of Sicyon. Sicyon refers to the region of Sicyonia, which is on the coast of the Gulf of Corinth, in the northern portion of the Peloponnesian peninsula in Greece. It is curious that Inachus is referred to as the twentieth king of Sicyon, because he is a river god and not a king. Perhaps the commentator means that Inachus ruled the Hellespont for this time, since this is already referenced (A. Inachus apud Argos primus regnauitannis quinquaginta). He fathered Aegialeus, or, as this text spells it, Egyaleus, who was the first king of Sicyon. He also fathered Io, whose story the commentator then tells, crediting Father Eusebius, a Palestinian ecclesiastical historian.

Going back to the kings of Sicyon, the commentator mentions Phestus and Polybus after Inachus. However, Polybus ruled immediately after Sicyon. He was the son of Sicyon’s daughter, Chthonophyle (daughter of the eponymous King Sicyon and Zeuxippe), and the god Hermes. Phestus came after Polybus and Janiscus (the complete list of kings of Sicyon can be found in Volume 1 of Nicolas Lenglet Dufresnoy’s Chronological Tables of Universal History). The commentator says that the kingdom began during Ninus’s rule of Assyria, which, according to Dufresnoy was from 2174 to 2122 BC. It is unclear what the commentator means by the
280,000th year of the world, but it most likely means 280,000 years from when the commentator believed the world was created. The commentator lists Zeuxipus as the last king of Sicyon, but this is not historically accurate. Zeuxipus ruled from 1256 until 1224 BC, when Agamemnon succeeded him. Since Agamemnon compelled Sicyon to submit to Mycenae, it is possible that the commentator considers Zeuxipus the last king because he was the last ruler of independent Sicyon.

The next sections of the commentary are labeled with letters that correspond to the notations in the Georgics quote at the top of the page. Sections i through m refer to the already discussed plague of the gadfly. Section n refers to the nuisance of gadflies in the heat of the day again. The commentator says that the recently risen sun gives the signal (*Sole recens orto significat statim*), presumably to bring the pregnant cattle in from the pasture in order to avoid the gadflies. He then mentions that is healthier to eat the peels of an unidentified fruit or vegetable (*Salustius coria recens detracta*), because they will otherwise form a glue, which one would assume is inedible (*veluti glutino adolescebant*). It seems likely that the commentator is suggesting feed for the pregnant cattle when they cannot be outside grazing.

Section o, the final section from this page, is much longer than the others. It is mainly a collection of information about raising calves. It refers to the fourth line of the Georgics quote (*post partum cura in vitulos traducitur omnis*), and thus discusses the attention that should be put towards calves (as well as horses and oxen, although Virgil does not mention this in the quote). The commentator discusses the feeding of calves, from when they are too weak to do anything but lay down and nurse on their mothers’ milk (*Lactentes cum matribus cubent. atteruntur enim quum*...
Next, the cattle are raised on green grass (Levandae matres pabulo viridi obiiciendo in praesepiis), and, after the autumnal equinox, are old enough to be fed with their mothers (Ab aequinoctio enim autumnali una pascuntur cum matribus). At this point, the calves are about five months old, since April is the month suited to birthing calves (Hoc mense vituli nasci solent).

The etymology lesson at the end (from In vitulos to the end of the page) is unrelated to the discussion of the care and raising of calves. It is difficult to ascertain the relevance of this part, beyond perhaps the names for species that the commentator is discussing the care of. We learn the word pullos as the name for young horses and cattle, but it is also the name for boys that are loved inappropriately in mythology. Given the commentator’s preoccupation with the mythology of Sicyon and Io earlier in the commentary, it is likely that he just wanted to bring more mythology to the discussion of farm animals.

While the commentary has a few ambiguities and possible misrepresentations of facts, it expands on the passage from the Georgics quite well and provides the reader with extra information about both agriculture and mythology. The layout is also particularly helpful, with the Virgil quote in the center and the footnote-type references throughout the passage. The illustration at the bottom is also a nice touch and provides a beautiful accent to the discussion of farming.