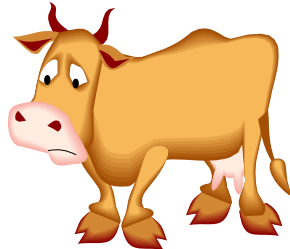


February Cattle Handling



Cow-Calf:

- Do not interfere with the birthing procedure unless a problem occurs.
- First time mothers are more protective of their calves than those that have had one before.
- When moving cows that have calves do not separate them, keep them together and they will be happier and easier to handle.
- Cows are most likely to charge when they have a young calf.
- If a child must enter a livestock pen make sure they are accompanied by an adult.
- Always have an escape route.
- If you are halter-breaking your animal, never tie it to yourself, a vehicle, or a moveable object.
- Cows have blind spots directly in front and behind, so approach from the side.
- Wear firm boots with stiff or steel toes to protect your feet from serious injury from being stepped on.
- When working closely with a cow to check on it, give it a vaccination, dehorn, etc. make sure that you put them in a proper handling squeeze to lessen the chances of injury.
- Learn how to identify the flight zone of a cow and how to use it to move or control the animal.
- Refrain from loud noises, this can spook the livestock.
- If a person is twisting the tail of an animal to get it to do something, make sure the tail is released after the animal has completed the wanted action.



Upset Cows:

- Upset cows can take 20 - 30 minutes to calm down again.
- Cattle can become fearful or agitated when separated from other cattle, so try keeping them in small groups or moving a couple at a time.
- Be aware that cattle kick forward first and then strike backwards.
- A cattle's instinctive reaction is to run when frightened, this can cause stampedes if they are in groups.
- Isolated cows often become stressed, and may be more likely to charge if they are approached.

Activities

Short Activity:

- Have everyone take a piece of paper and write down 5 rules about proper cattle handling or care. How many different rules do you end up with? Was anything important forgotten? Check your project manuals or other resources for answers.
- **Some examples might be:**
 - Remember to vaccinate your animal at the appropriate time.
 - Work out a proper deworming schedule for your animal.
 - Keep your animal's shelter free of hazards and well kept.
 - Proper feeding schedule.
 - Don't overcrowd pens.
 - Always have an escape available when working in close proximity.
 - Wear closed, hard toed boots when in close proximity.



Longer Activities or Safety Camp:

- Lead by example. Get someone in to show proper techniques on how to get a cow to do what is wanted in a proper and humane way.
- Break into 2 teams and play Jeopardy and have your topics be relative to cow handling (example topics include proper clothing, how to calm down a cow, proper handling techniques, cow trivia, and protect yourself).

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