Animal Behavior and Restraint

### Cattle Characteristics
- Prey animals
- Grazers
- Poor depth perception
- Panoramic vision: 310-360°
- Blind side behind them
- Keen hearing
- Curious

### Normal Cattle Behavior
- Herd animals
  - Will follow the leader
  - Will eventually group
  - Frightened by intruders
  - Anxious when isolated
- Isolated animals more dangerous
- Mothers will protect their young
  - Avoid separating cow-calf pairs

### Handling & Moving Cattle
- Utilize cattle’s routine
- Avoid
  - Abuse
  - Loud noises, yelling
  - Isolating animals
  - Distractions
- Use slow, deliberate movements
- Balking

### Flight Zone
- Animals are handled easily if flight zone is understood
  - Animal’s personal space
  - Indicator of possible threat
- Size of flight zone determined by
  - Tameness
  - Degree of excitement
- Move away from things in flight zone

---

Multi-State Partnership for Security in Agriculture; Center for Food Security and Public Health

June 2010
**Herd Flight Zone**
- Same as individual
- Collective flight zone
- Move in slight arc, gradually tightening to obtain desired movement
- Take your time
- Ignore stragglers

**Capture & Containment**
- Dairy cattle
  - Used to humans
  - Easily penned
- Beef cattle
  - Feeding practices aid in containment
- Range cattle
  - Horses should be used in corralling

**Capture & Containment**
- Makeshift corrals can be used
  - Runways and chutes can also be added
- Wire fencing should be avoided
- Chemical tranquilizers should be a last resort

**Behavior After Handling**
- Cattle adjust well if given proper feed, water, and shelter
- Extra caution should be taken with bulls
- Social order must be re-established

**Restraint**
- Squeeze chute
  - Portable cattle chutes with head restraint are most desirable
  - Head can be restrained with halter
- Lariat and halter
- Chemical sedation

**Special Considerations**
- Monitor cattle in conditions of high heat and/or humidity
- Winter weather requires special equipment
  - Heaters
  - Gritty, non-slip substances
  - Antifreeze
Safety

- Avoid Injuries from Cattle
  - Kicks
    - Cows kick with back feet
  - Crowding
  - Crushing
  - Can inflict injuries with head
  - Don’t bite
  - Will run over you if desperate

Additional Information

- Recommended Basic Livestock Handling: Safety Tips for Workers
  Temple Grandin, PhD
  http://www.grandin.com/behaviour/principles/principles.html
- Low Stress Methods for Moving and Herding Cattle on Pastures, Paddocks, and Large Feedlot Pens, by Temple Grandin
  http://www.grandin.com/R.Williams.html
- Understanding Livestock Behavior
  The Ohio State University Extension
  http://wadsworth.org/staff_content/documents/1706/d001705.pdf
- Cattle Handling and Working Facilities.
  The Ohio State University Extension
  http://ohiohogs.osu.edu/705
- Cattle Handling Safety in Working Facilities.
  Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service

Acknowledgments

Development of this presentation was by the Center for Food Security and Public Health at Iowa State University through funding from the Multi-State Partnership for Security in Agriculture

Authors: Shaine Devoe; Glenda Dvorak, DVM, MPH, DACVP