



## Animal Behavior and Restraint


### Cattle




IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

## Cattle Characteristics


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



Just In Time Training 2010 Animal Behavior and Restraint: Cattle

## 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



Just In Time Training 2010 Animal Behavior and Restraint: Cattle

## Handling & Moving Cattle

- Utilize cattle's routine
- Avoid
  - Abuse
  - Loud noises, yelling
  - Isolating animals
  - Distractions
- Use slow, deliberate movements
- Balking

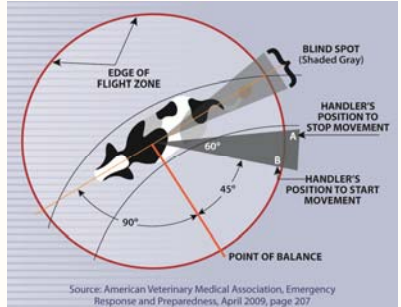
Just In Time Training 2010 Animal Behavior and Restraint: Cattle

## 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

Just In Time Training 2010 Animal Behavior and Restraint: Cattle

## Flight Zone




Source: American Veterinary Medical Association, Emergency Response and Preparedness, April 2009, page 207

Just In Time Training 2010 Animal Behavior and Restraint: Cattle

### Herd Flight Zone

- Same as individual
- Collective flight zone
- Move in slight arc, gradually tightening to obtain desired movement
- Take your time
- Ignore stragglers



Just In Time Training 2010 Animal Behavior and Restraint: Cattle

### Capture & Containment

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

Just In Time Training 2010 Animal Behavior and Restraint: Cattle


### 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

Just In Time Training 2010 Animal Behavior and Restraint: Cattle

### 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



Just In Time Training 2010 Animal Behavior and Restraint: Cattle

### Restraint

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



Just In Time Training 2010 Animal Behavior and Restraint: Cattle

### Special Considerations

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

Just In Time Training 2010 Animal Behavior and Restraint: Cattle

## 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

Just In Time Training 2010 Animal Behavior and Restraint: Cattle

## 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/B.Williams.html>
- Understanding Livestock Behavior  
*The Ohio State University Extension*  
[http://nashonline.org/static\\_content/documents/1704/d001709.pdf](http://nashonline.org/static_content/documents/1704/d001709.pdf)
- Cattle Handling and Working Facilities.  
*The Ohio State University Extension*  
<http://ohioline.osu.edu/b906/>
- Cattle Handling Safety in Working Facilities.  
*Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service*  
<http://nods.dashn.okstate.edu/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-4821/BAE-1738web.pdf>

Just In Time Training 2010 Animal Behavior and Restraint: Cattle



## 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, DACVPM



Center for Food Security & Public Health  
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY