1. PURPOSE

To illustrate safe practices when handling and moving cattle.

2. RESPONSIBILITY

2.1 Casual, permanent and student staff.
2.2 Research staff
2.3 Veterinarian

3. GENERAL

3.1 Cattle can be moved efficiently if the handler remains calm and quiet and does not rush them or yell.
3.2 Behavior and temperament are influenced by:
   - Genetics
   - Past experience with humans
   - Leanness
   - Muscling
   - Bone size
   - Coat color
   - Environment

   3.2.1 Cattle are visual animals. They have a 300-degree range of vision. Their blind spots are directly in front and directly behind them. They have poor perception of depth with their heads up.

   3.2.2 Be aware of the area in front and to the side of the rear leg as they tend to kick forward and then back.

3.3 If frightened or distressed;
   3.3.1 Cattle will mill or circle if distressed.
   3.3.2 Their instinctive reaction to danger is to flee or fight, and therefore might charge or stampede.

3.4 Dairy cattle need to be handled with extra care as they tend to bruise and cripple more easily than beef cattle.

4. PROCEDURES

* IMPORTANT
Tail twisting to move cattle is PROHIBITED.

4.1 Announce your presence when approaching the animal.
4.2 In an alleyway or chute system, cattle should be worked in a head to tail sequence.
4.3 HANDLING AND MOVING CALVES:
   4.3.1 Handling:
4.3.1.1 Stroke the calf under the chin or on the withers to encourage a submissive posture.
4.3.1.2 Never stroke or pet them on the head. This leads to butting.
4.3.1.3 Calves should be handled and petted regularly.

4.3.2 Moving:
4.3.2.1 Several methods can be used to move a young calf;
   4.3.2.1.1 Place it in a calf cart.
   4.3.2.1.2 Lift and carry.
   4.3.2.1.3 Push it forward gently to continue to walk.
4.3.2.2 When the animal is too big to use the methods listed in 4.3.2.1, a halter can be used to move it. *(Refer to 4.4.2: Placing a halter).*

4.4 HALTERING:
4.4.1 Unplug the electric trainers.
4.4.2 Placing a halter:
   4.4.2.1 Always be attentive of the positioning of your fingers/ hands/ arms when haltering an animal in a stall/pen to prevent injury.
   4.4.2.2 Do not lean over the head of an animal when haltering.
   4.4.2.3 Always halter from the left side.
   4.4.2.4 When using a rope halter;
      4.4.2.4.1 Loosen the rope.
      4.4.2.4.2 Place the top piece over and behind the ears first.
      4.4.2.4.3 Drop the loop over the nose.
      4.4.2.4.4 Tighten and adjust the halter, placing the nose piece halfway between the eyes and the nose.

4.4.3 Removing halter:
   4.4.3.1 Wait until the animal's head is down and she is calm.
   4.4.3.2 Loosen the halter under the chin.
   4.4.3.3 Depending on the animal's head position and willingness to cooperate;
      4.4.3.3.1 Slide off the nose piece.
      4.4.3.3.2 Slip the halter over the ears while readjusting to avoid snagging and/or pulling out the ear tags.

4.5 LEADING CATTLE:
4.5.1 Sprinkle grit on the alley floors before moving cows to help prevent slipping.
4.5.2 Leading cattle should be done in teams of 2 whenever possible. The 2nd person assists the leader in the event trouble arises.
4.5.3 Always lead on the left side.
4.5.4 Never wrap the lead around your hand or your body.
4.5.5 Always maintain control of the animal.
   4.5.5.1 Never let the animal have an extensive lead ahead or behind you.
   4.5.5.2 Never let the animal lower her head.
4.5.6 If the animal refuses to move forward;
   4.5.6.1 Give some slack on the lead to remove pressure on the halter. If the animal still refuses to move forward;
4.5.6.2 Drop back to just behind her ear so she thinks she has the freedom to move forward; be prepared to step up beside her or ahead of her if she tries to take off.

4.6 Tying Cattle:

4.6.1 Always tie a slip knot.

4.6.2 Ensure the tie is short enough so that the animal cannot step over or become entangled in it but not so short so the animal cannot move its head.

4.7 Pasture:

4.7.1 Only Dry cows are put to pasture.

4.7.2 Cows are left to pasture in groups and never individually.

4.7.3 Cows with pasture experience:

4.7.3.1 Halter the animals (refer to 4.4.2. Placing a Halter) to lead the animal to and from the pasture.

4.7.4 Cows and heifers new to pasture:

4.7.4.1 Train in a small paddock with electrical fencing for a minimum of 2 hours prior to going to pasture:

4.7.4.1.1 Halter the animal (refer to 4.4.2) and lead her to the training paddock.

4.7.4.1.2 Training is complete once a few animals have been observed to touch the electric fencing, receive a light shock, and have calmed down.

4.7.5 Leading an individual animal to and from pasture:

4.7.5.1 To pasture:

4.7.5.1.1 Set up non electrified wires to act as a laneway.

4.7.5.1.2 Halter the animal (refer to 4.4.2) and lead to pasture.

4.7.5.2 From pasture

4.7.5.2.1 A nervous and uncooperative animal should be led back to the barn with one or two others so she has the security of being in a group. (refer to 4.7.6.2)

4.7.5.2.2 Set up non electrified wires to act as a laneway.

4.7.5.2.3 Halter the animal (refer to 4.4.2) and lead to directly to the barn.

4.7.6 Leading a group to and from pasture:

4.7.6.1 To Pasture:

4.7.6.1.1 Set up non electrified wires to act as a laneway.

4.7.6.1.2 In a team of four, lead the cattle to the pasture without being haltered:

- Person #1: Walks ahead to show them the path
- Person #2: Walks behind to move them down the path.
- Person #3 & #4: Walk on each side of the laneway to ensure there are no escapees

4.7.6.2 Returning from pasture to the barn:

4.7.6.2.1 Set up non electrified wires to act as a laneway.

4.7.6.2.2 Lead the group through the non-electrified wire lane (as per 4.7.6.1.2) and back to the small paddock where it's easier to catch.

4.7.6.2.3 Halter the animal (refer to 4.4.2) and lead to directly to the barn.
5. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES


6. REFERENCES


SOP REVISION HISTORY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>PREVIOUS VERSION</th>
<th>NEW VERSION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2021-Jan-15</td>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>MacDonald Campus FACC approved</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>