



The Lone Star

Agricultural Safety & Health Newsletter
Biological & Agricultural Engineering Department - Texas A&M University

Animal Safety

Objective:

Create an understanding of potential dangers when working/handling livestock. These dangers can lead to illness, injury and/or death.

After Lesson Student Should be Able to:

1. Identify hazards associated with livestock and describe circumstances that can increase their risk of harm.
2. Know safety procedures to follow when working around animals.
3. Understanding livestock characteristics and behavior.
4. Be aware of animal diseases that can be transmitted to humans.
5. Understand potential dangers when working with domestic animals.

Activity:

Contact a local veterinarian, area livestock producer or Extension livestock specialist. They should provide instruction procedures to meet the above objectives. The instructor should provide information for livestock handling procedures, protective gear, and animal diseases that are transmittable to humans. Possible demonstrations include:

1. Use a tame horse, pig or cow to discuss proper livestock handling.
2. Display and discuss protective gear that should be worn when working around livestock:
 - Rubber gloves for use if touching sick or wounded animals
 - Steel-toed safety shoes or boots to avoid foot injury
 - Leather gloves to avoid nicks and bruises to hands
 - Dust mask or respirator to protect lungs from airborne diseases
3. Make a chart of livestock diseases and parasites that are transmittable to humans.

Examples:

- Brucellosis
- Tetanus
- Ringworm
- Salmonella
- Leptospirosis
- Rabies
- Trichinosis
- Lyme Disease

4. Use boar skull to demonstrate sharpness of teeth

Discussion Points:

1. It is important to understand that every type of livestock animal has its own personality. One should always remember to respect livestock, and don't fear them.
2. Their senses also differ from humans. For example cattle, swine, and horses have different fields of vision.
 - Cattle have close to 360-degree panoramic vision. Horses and swine have a nearly 300 degree field of vision. A quick movement behind them may spook some animals causing them to kick, rear or bolt.
3. Animals have extremely sensitive hearing and can detect sounds humans cannot hear. Loud noises frighten animals and high frequency sounds may actually hurt their ears.
4. When mad or frightened livestock animals can unintentionally hurt humans (especially small children). Keeping this in mind it is a good idea that children stay away from livestock handling areas. Disturbed animals tend to bolt increasing the potential for serious injury.
5. Remember, animals respond best to a routine. Use a calm voice and deliberate movement.
6. Announce your presence before approaching an animal to avoid startling it.
7. Be patient. Never prod an animal when it has nowhere to go.
8. It is a good idea to have a planned escape route when working with animals in close quarters.