

# **Assuring Quality: A program for youth livestock producers – Animal Handling & Carcass/Product Quality Activities**

Rotation Year 2 (Animal Handling & Carcass Quality – 2006) Activities

## **Animal Handling Activity 1a: Flight Zone**

### **Resources Needed:**

Hula Hoops **OR**  
15 Ft. Rope/String with end tied together

### **Background Information:**

One key element of animal handling is to understand an animal's flight zone or comfort area. When something enters that flight zone, the animal becomes tense and loses its comfort zone. The deeper an object or person enters the flight zone without allowing the animal to adapt, the more severe the animal's reaction becomes. It is important for us to understand the comfort or flight zone when handling livestock.

### **Procedure – Flight Zone**

- A. Divide youth into groups of four.
- B. Give each group a hula hoop or rope.
- C. Lay the hoop on the ground with the youth standing around/away from it.
- D. Have one youth step into the hoop. Talk about the hoop being their flight zone or comfort zone.
- E. Have a second person step into the hoop with the first person. Ask the first youth how it feels to have someone in their flight zone.
- F. Have a third youth step into the hoop with the first and second. Discuss how it feels as more people or objects enter the flight zone or comfort zone.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. How did it feel when someone else stepped into the hoop or your comfort zone?
2. What did you do when the other person came into your comfort zone?
3. What did you feel when more people stepped into the hoop or comfort zone?
4. Would an animal's flight zone (comfort zone) be larger or smaller?  
A: Generally larger
5. Does the size of the flight zone vary among different animals? Can you think of any examples?  
A: Yes: One example: show steers would have a smaller flight zone than a range cow that isn't around people very often.

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## **Premise and Animal Identification: Activity 6**

### **Resources Needed:**

Cups/Plastic Glass (One for each youth)  
4 Different Colored Label Dots (Enough total to have 1 per youth)  
Drink/Refreshments

### **Background Information:**

The United States Department of Agriculture will be implementing a National Animal Identification System in the near future. In addition, the Nebraska Department of Agriculture has implemented a voluntary Premise Identification System that assigns ID numbers to locations where livestock might be raised, sold, shown, or harvested.

The importance of these systems are a high priority to the livestock industry to ensure source verification, develop animal tracking, and implement a trace back system in cases of disease outbreaks.

Nebraska 4-H encourages all families with livestock to apply for a Premise ID at: [www.animalid.us](http://www.animalid.us). The following activity will help demonstrate the importance of the identification systems.

### **Procedure – Flight Zone**

The following instructions are good for up to 32 youth. For smaller groups eliminate some from each group as needed, but distribute across groups. Don't just eliminate all the "4's" or all the "1's".

G. Number Colored Labels as follows:

- a. Red Dots – A1, A2, A3, A4, B1, B2, B3, B4
- b. Blue Dots – A1, A2, A3, A4, B1, B2, B3, B4
- c. Yellow Dots - A1, A2, A3, A4, B1, B2, B3, B4
- d. Green Dots - A1, A2, A3, A4, B1, B2, B3, B4

H. Place one label on every glass

I. Use the glasses for refreshments

J. Divide the into groups as follows:

- a. Number "1"
- b. Number "2"
- c. Number "3"
- d. "A4"
- e. "B4"

K. Discuss that everyone has a unique ID that is placed on their cup that is similar to the NAIS proposal.

- L. Discuss how all animals are treated differently and have different production phases they go through, such as stockers, backgrounding, or commercial feedlot.
- M. Discuss what each letter and number stands for:
- a. **Colors** stand for the original herds: Red = Red River Ranch, Blue = Little Blue Farm, Yellow = Yellow Rose Ranch, Green = Green Acres Farm
  - b. **Letters** stand for A=Heifers, B=Steers
  - c. **Numbers** stand for the different ways the animals have been handled after weaning
    - i. "A1" have been weaned and are being fed at the Lil Red Grower Yard
    - ii. "B1" have been weaned, sold through the local sale barn and taken directly to the Husker Feedlot.
    - iii. "2" have been weaned, kept at home and shown in 4-H
    - iv. "3" have been sold through the local sale barn, fed at Lil Red Grower Yard, and sold to Big Red Feedlot to finish
    - v. "A4" have been kept as replacement heifers on the ranch
    - vi. "B4" have been retained and fed at Big Red Feedlot to finish
 (Optional Activity for step "G" would be have identified areas in the room for the local sale barn, Lil Red Grower Yard, Big Red Feedlot, etc.. Start in herd groups identified by colors and have youth move through the various location as stated above.)
- N. Now identify one individual ID that has tested positive for a disease that is of concern to the industry. (Utilizing an animal in the "3" group works best, see example below.)
- O. Discuss that this animal has been in contact with animals at different locations and that each other animal it has been in contact with could be affected.
- P. Trace the diseased animal back through the production phases and identify all other animals that could be infected.
- Q. Discuss the importance of having a Premise ID and National Animal Identification System in place to improve the trace back time and its importance in emergency situations.

### Example:

"Yellow A3" has recently shown sores on its mouth. Upon a veterinarian's examination, it was determined to have Vesicular Stomatitis (VS). This animal came from Big Red Feedlot a 20,000 head feedlot in Central Nebraska. Now all animals in Big Red Feedlot are quarantined, so all "3" and "B4" are affected. But, in tracing the animal's production cycle, "Yellow A3" has been at Lil Red Grower Yard where "A1" and "3" have also been fed, so "A1" are now added. All "3" individuals were purchased from the local sales barn on the same day that "B1" individuals were sold there, so now the quarantine involves all "B1". Now we need to find the original ranch where this animal was raised and that is the Yellow Rose Ranch, so all individuals with yellow dots are quarantined.

## Discussion:

**Vesicular Stomatitis (VS)** is a viral disease that primarily affects cattle, horses, and swine. VS occurs during the warm months of the year and causes blisterlike lesions in the mouth and on the dental pad, tongue, lips, nostrils, hooves, and teats. The blisters swell and break, leaving raw tissue that is so painful that infected animals generally refuse to eat or drink and show signs of lameness. Severe weight loss usually follows, and in dairy cows, a drop in milk production occurs. These drops in production become an economic concern for producers.

The previous example shows the importance of traceability when we face an emergency quarantine in the United States. With this group we started with one individual “Yellow A3” but added 11 more from the Big Red Feedlot (“3”, “B4”), 4 more from Lil Red Grower Yard (“A1”), 4 additional from the local sale barn (“B1”), and finally 3 more that were kept at the ranch, so 23 out of our original 32 head were affected. These are just the animals from these 4 representative herds. We must keep in mind the 20,000 head Big Red Feedlot, another 20,000 head from Husker Feedlot, plus 5,000 head Lil Red Grower Yard, then adding 1,500 head at the local sales barn and the remainder of the herd still on the ranch.

## Discussion Questions:

1. What is Premise Identification?  
A: Premise Identification is a voluntary program to develop a identification of locations that animals are raised or passed through (Example: ranch, feedlots, sale barn, veterinarian, fairgrounds).
2. What is the National Animal Identification System (NAIS)?  
A: NAIS is a USDA mandatory identification system in 2008 to identify individual animals. This identification will be with the animal through its complete life cycle.
3. Why is it important to have these identification systems?  
A: These identification systems are important to implement a animal tracking system that can follow where an animal has been throughout its life cycle. The systems will help track animals in case of emergencies, outbreaks or bio-security concerns.

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## **Premise ID Worksheet**

Directions:

1. This form allows you to apply for a premise identification number. Once you complete and return this form to the UNL Extension Office. Your request will need to be approved by officials at the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. (If property owner has applied for a premise identification number, you DO NOT need to re-apply)
2. The property owner information is the actual owner of the premise (land) the animals are on. (REQUIRED)
3. Youth or contact information is the owner of the livestock that is on this premise. (REQUIRED)
4. Preferred contact method refers to the best way you can be reached for additional information or where to notify you of the premise identification number.
5. Veterinarian information is optional. All you need is the Clinic name or the veterinarian's name that you have a working relationship with.
6. Facility information:
  - a. Location name will be for the premise where your livestock will be housed. This could be the same as owner's name. (Example: ABC Feedlot)
  - b. Facility mailing address is required if there is one for that location. Again, this may be the same as the owner's address. If no mailing address is available, you must have the driving directions from the nearest Nebraska town.
  - c. Location type check production unit if this is where your project is being raised.
  - d. Livestock type is required. Please check all species that apply to that location.
  - e. Legal description is required and can be obtained from property owner or your local USDA Farm Service Agency.
  - f. GPS location is optional. You can report the GPS location at the main entrance of that location.

Return this form to the UNL Extension Office. If the location has already applied for a premise identification number you will not be required to re-apply.