

Youth Livestock Safety for the Beef Project

4-H Lifeskills: Personal safety

Making decisions

Objectives:

Beef project members will:
Describe how you can be
injured while working with
beef show animals

Describe appropriate personal
protection equipment and
clothing choices for working
with beef show animals at
home and at shows

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Farm Safety. This project is funded by
USDA NIFA Award 2006-41521-03718 and
produced by K-State Research and Extension.

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Ebert, Youth Livestock Safety Beef Lessons,
Kansas State University, September 2010.
Kansas State University Agricultural
Experiment Station and Cooperative
Extension Service

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amended. Kansas State University, County
Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and
United States Department of Agriculture
Cooperating. Gary M. Pierzynski, Interim
Director.



Lesson 1: Take Good Care of Yourself

Overview

Livestock are involved in many youth injury incidents every year. Because of their size compared to the size of the youth who own and work with them, show steers and heifers can be particularly dangerous. This lesson is designed to teach about personal safety practices when working with beef animals. It should be used with other Beef Project materials.

Experience

Watch the video clip entitled "Take Good Care of Yourself" and work through the discussion questions at the end of the video. If you choose not to use the video, take turns reading out loud the information below; then move on to the discussion questions.

Take Good Care of Yourself

Safe working habits include protecting yourself, your animals, and others. The most common injuries from working with and/or showing steers and heifers are:

- Slips / Falls
- Muscle and/or back strain
- Cuts, scrapes, and bruises from being kicked or stepped on
- Blisters and burns from lead ropes or electrical appliances such as clippers

Less common injuries from working with and/or showing beef animals:

- Breathing problems from inhaling dust, animal dander, or chemicals
- Serious injury – such as broken bones, amputations, puncture wounds

Practice personal safety by using personal protection equipment including:

- Closed-toe shoes or boots – sturdy, leather, over-the-ankle fit with non-slip soles
- Gloves – Different jobs require different gloves
 - Leather gloves protect hands from rope burns while leading your show steer or heifer
 - Latex or rubber gloves protect your hands and forearms while washing, grooming, or doctoring.

Try This!

Practice safe lifting and carrying to protect your back.

Here's how:

Stand close to object to be lifted

Spread your feet wide enough to straddle the object

Squat, bending your knees and hips

Keep your head up and your back straight

Hold in your stomach muscles

Lift using your leg muscles

Keep the load close to your body with a firm grip

Turn your feet, not your back, in the direction you are going

- Long sleeves and long pants protect your skin from being exposed:
 - To too much sunlight
 - To dirt and dander from your show steer or heifer
- Safety glasses protect your eyes from hair clippings, dirt, and grooming products. When working in bright sunlight, try tinted safety glasses to protect your eyes from ultraviolet rays.
- Ear plugs protect your ears when using motorized equipment, such as the clippers or blower and when working in an enclosed area where noises are loud.
- Frequent hand washing protects your skin whenever you work with your livestock. Animals can easily and unknowingly spread disease to humans. Frequent contact with the animal's hide, dander, and feces – especially from washing and grooming tasks – creates an opportunity for disease to pass from your show steer or heifer to you. An example is ringworm in cattle.
- Learn first aid and keep a first aid kit in your show box and in the barn or building where you stall your show steer or heifer.

Do I Really Need Protection? – How You Can Be Hurt Working with Show Steers and Heifers

- The steer or heifer gets frightened and runs, jumps, or kicks.
- You slip, trip, or fall over things left laying around, on a slick walkway, in a pen, or on an uneven surface (such as in sand in the show ring or uneven surfaces in the cattle lot).
- You get kicked, stepped on, or tripped while leading, moving, feeding, or grooming your animal.
- You get a rope burn from the lead rope.
- Your fingers get pinched in a gate latch; you get poked by a wire, the blades on the clippers, or the teeth on the curry comb.
- You can strain muscles in your arms, legs, or back by carrying heavy show boxes or buckets of feed. Frequent washing and grooming can cause muscle strains from frequently repeated movements, as in the up and down, back and forth of clipping and combing.

Did You Know?

Ergonomists (scientists who study human body function) say the three worst problems for agriculture are: full body stoop (bending forward and down from the waist, as when picking up feed bags, buckets, or show boxes); lifting/moving heavy objects (greater than 15% of body weight, i.e. feed bags, show boxes, pulling on a show animal's lead rope); and repetitive handwork (as when you are washing and grooming).

How much is 15% of your body weight?

Use this simple formula.

Take your weight
times 0.15

For example, if you weigh
100 pounds, the most you
should lift is 15 pounds.

$$\begin{array}{r} 100 \text{ lbs.} \times 0.15 \\ = \\ 15 \text{ lbs.} \end{array}$$

Do the math for yourself to
calculate how many pounds
you can safely carry.

Your weight X 0.15 =
The heaviest load you
should carry by yourself

_____ X 0.15 = _____

The next lesson is about
beef cattle behavior.

Did You Know?

You are more likely to hurt your back when:

- Lifting more than 15% of your body weight
- Carrying a load more than 10-15 yards

Use wheels to help carry loads; such as a wheeled dolly, a feed cart, a wheel barrow, or a wheeled utility cart.

What Did You Learn?

With your project group members, discuss how you stay safe when working with your show steer or heifer.

Share

- How did you feel the first time you worked with your show steer or heifer?
- What do you wear when showing your steer or heifer and why?

Process

- How do you keep yourself and people helping you safe while working with your show steer or heifer?

Generalize

- Why is personal protection important?
- What other activities do you participate in that require you to protect yourself and how do you protect yourself?

Apply

- How can you use what you've learned in this lesson to help you in other activities?

Youth Livestock Safety for the Beef Project

4-H Lifeskills: Solving problems

Making decisions

Objectives:

Beef project members will:
Understand how animals react
in a variety of environments

Understand how to keep
yourself and others safe at
home and at public shows

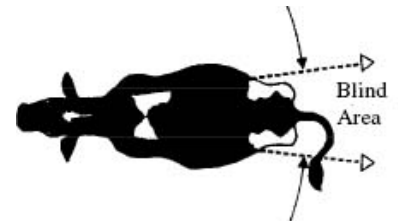
Experience

Watch the video clip
"Behavior Basics" or take
turns reading aloud the
information below. When
you're finished, move on to
the discussion questions.

Lesson 2: Behavior Basics: Getting to Know Your Beef Show Animal

To work safely with your show steer or heifer, you should have a basic understanding of animal behavior in general, and the behavior patterns of beef animals in particular.

- How an animal behaves is determined by genetics and experience. Show steers and heifers that are handled gently and quietly will have smaller flight zones and be easier to handle than animals that have been handled roughly.
- A steer or heifer that "spooks" easily must be handled differently than one that more easily adapts to changes. Handling differently means you should make changes slowly, watch closely as changes in location are made, and adjust handling methods accordingly.
- Your show steer or heifer may be calm at home in familiar surroundings, but may become agitated when taken to a different location with new, strange sounds, such as the county fairgrounds.
- Cattle have wide-angle vision, which means it can see behind itself without turning its head. Cattle will often shy away from shadows or puddles on the ground.
- Do your best to make the steer's (or heifer's) first experience in different surroundings a positive one. For example, when moving an animal to a new pen have a pan of feed waiting.
- Fear causes an animal to run away from whatever scared it. Animals can develop permanent fear memories that can never be erased. This means that if your show steer or heifer has a bad experience when loaded on a trailer for the first time, it may be difficult to load again.
- Animals are sensitive to high-pitched noises and are easier to handle when noise levels are low.



Source: Temple Grandin, Colorado
State University

When you understand how your animal might act in different situations, you can use that understanding to help make livestock shows safer for everyone – exhibitors as well as people who are watching the show. Keeping your show steer or heifer calm is a good start. Other strategies to keep in mind at the show include:

- Be aware of where others are at the show – the general public (in the stands and walking around) and other exhibitors.
- Move slowly to and from the show ring with your show steer or heifer. When you become excited or in a hurry, your show steer or heifer will sense the change in your behavior, which might scare it. Remember that fear causes an animal to run from whatever scares it.
- Get to know your show steer's/heifer's behavior patterns and help it adjust to its new surroundings.
- Do the best you can to keep away from crowded areas while leading your show steer or heifer at the fair. You may have to lead your show animal through crowded areas to get to the show ring. It's **your** responsibility to keep **your** animal under control. Most people don't understand how easy it is to scare a show animal, because it usually looks so calm and those who are familiar with animals often think they can't be hurt but we must remember – animals are unpredictable.
- Practice, practice, practice show day activities – at home and again when you get to the show. Practice haltering; leading on halter; leading to the show ring; leading in the ring with your show stick; tying and untying at the pen or stall; leading beef to and from its pen or stall; opening and closing gates; washing and grooming chores. Your show steer or heifer will be much more comfortable doing activities it has practiced before and it will be less likely to be scared of the show ring if it's been in it before the show.

What Did You Learn?

With your project group members, discuss how you stay safe when working with your show steer or heifer.

Share

- How did your show steer or heifer act the day you bought it?
- How did you feel the first time you led it?

Process

- How does your behavior affect the way your show steer or heifer behaves?

Generalize

- What can you do to make sure your show steer or heifer is ready for the show ring?

Apply

- List some ways you can show others what you've learned about animal behavior?

The next lesson is about safe facilities and equipment for your show steer or heifer.

Youth Livestock Safety for the Beef Project

4-H Lifeskills: Solving problems

Making decisions

Objectives:

Beef project members will:
Recognize how maintaining
equipment and buildings
affects personal safety and
the beef show animals

Understand how to keep
yourself and others safe at
home and at public shows

Experience

Watch the video clip
"Facilities and Equipment" and
work through the discussion
questions at the end of the
video. If you choose not
to watch the video, take
turns reading out loud the
information here; then move
on to the discussion questions.

Lesson 3: Facilities and Equipment

Keeping yourself and your show steer or heifer safe includes making sure buildings, pens/lots, and equipment are well maintained and in proper working order. The facilities you use to house and work your show steer or heifer should be well designed, strong, and safe for you and your animals.

- Keep buildings, alleys, and lots neat and tidy. Remember: Slips, trips, and falls cause many injuries when working with livestock. Make sure you have a place to put all your supplies, equipment, and feed and keep all of those items in their proper place. Clean up spills as soon as they happen. Don't allow manure or feed to accumulate in alleyways or chutes.
- Keep mechanical equipment clean and well maintained. Clean and sanitize grooming tools regularly, not only to keep them operating properly, but also to remove any organisms that can spread disease (such as ring worm).
- Inspect electrical cords on clippers and blowers often. Replace cords that have exposed wires.
- Use only electrical outlets have three-pronged receptacles; if outlets are located outdoors, make sure they are waterproof and have ground fault circuit interrupters to keep you and your show steer or heifer from getting an electric shock.
- Make sure there is good lighting for indoor and outdoor areas where you will be working with your show steer or heifer. Lighting should be bright and not create shadowy areas. Your show steer or heifer can get scared when it goes from a brightly lit area to a dark shadowy area.
- Keep fences, gates, doors, etc. repaired. Replace or repair equipment that doesn't work. Gates that are hard to open can cause muscle strains or can pinch you if you have to push hard on them and they open or close unexpectedly. Wire ties or nails poking out of fence boards can cause scrapes or puncture wounds.

Suggested Activities for Project Meetings

Set up a practice show at a project meeting to practice show ring safety.

Take the Beef Safety Assessment Quiz at www.ylsp.bae.ksu.edu

Evaluate the safety of your livestock facilities using the Safety Audit Checklist. Make note of potential dangers and work with your parents to correct the dangers.

Visit and evaluate project members' facilities with an eye on safety preparedness.

Suggested guest speakers: veterinarian, beef producer, EMT, doctor, or nurse

- Choose equipment that will help make working with your show steer or heifer easier. A grooming chute helps hold your animal while you groom it while allowing you access to all parts of the animal for grooming. A squeeze chute helps hold the show steer or heifer still while you administer medicines.

What Did You Learn?

Share

- What do you do with your buildings and pens to help you stay safe when working with your show steer or heifer?
- How do you care for your equipment to help you stay safe when using it to work with your show steer or heifer?

Process

- How does properly maintaining equipment contribute to keeping you safe?

Generalize

- Why are good housekeeping and proper maintenance necessary for personal safety?

Apply

- List some of the safety practices you do each day – in your home, at work or school?

This is the final lesson on show beef safety. Thank you and be safe!

Additional Safety Information

For Leaders and Parents

North American Guidelines for Childrens Agricultural Tasks (NAGCAT) Guidance

Ages 12-13 years – Youth should be constantly supervised by an adult when working with their beef project animal(s);

Ages 14-15 years – Nearly constant adult supervision progressing to intermittent (every few minutes) based on the individual's ability and successful demonstration that the youth understands his or her own limitations and animal behavior;

Ages 16+ years – Intermittent adult supervision progressing to periodic (check every 15-30 minutes) based on youth's ability to handle animal and successful demonstration of safe working habits and an understanding of animal behavior.

Tips For Including Youth With Disabilities: Making the Best Better

Learn all you can about the child's disability. Discuss with the child's parents the nature of the disability and how best to work with the child's limitations. You may also want to talk with other professionals who work with the child.

Involve the child in project meetings and events just as you would a child without special needs. Provide the same opportunities to develop life skills to all youth enrolled in the project. Everyone grows from the experience of "mainstreaming" a child with a disability. The 4-Her with a disability develops self-reliance and self-confidence by interacting as an equal with other project members. Project members learn that youth with disabilities are not much different than themselves – each has strengths, weaknesses, and unique abilities. Adult leaders and volunteers learn life skills for working with people with limitations. Everyone learns how to be more comfortable with people who are different than themselves.

When necessary, modify project activities to match the ability of the child. Modifications should be designed to meet the child's abilities, yet challenging enough for to improve his or her knowledge and skills. Not all activities need to be adapted. Promote participation instead of elimination. Never allow

Beef Safety References

National 4-H Cooperative Curriculum System, Inc. Beef Series, 2005

Working Safely With Cattle, Clover Safe Notes #3, 2006, University of California ANR and 4-H Youth Development, http://safety.ucanr.org/4-H_Resources/Clover_Safe_Notes_by_Project_Area/

Understanding Livestock Behavior, Agricultural Tailgate Safety Training, The Ohio State University Extension Agricultural Safety Program, <http://ohioline.osu.edu/atts/modules.html>

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to participants and reviewers for making this project possible. We couldn't have done it without you.

Jim Adams, K-State Extension 4-H Specialist

Steve Ballou and Deb Pryor, K-State Extension Communications

Robert Ebert, Auburn University Extension Youth Livestock Specialist

Hinrichsen Family, Pottawatomie County, Kansas

Riley County, Kansas 4-H Beef Show, M. Fink, A. Jones, and R. Berry,

Sheppard Family, Pottawatomie County, Kansas

Cheryl Skjolaas, University of Wisconsin Extension Farm Safety Specialist

John Slocombe, K-State Extension Farm Safety Specialist

modified activities to isolate the child who has a disability. The goal is meaningful inclusion.

In some cases, livestock show requirements may need to be modified. For example, a 4-Her in a wheelchair may need assistance from a fellow 4-Her to wash, groom, or feed an animal or in the show ring. Provide the opportunity for all youth to learn from experience. Pair abled 4-Hers (junior leaders or ambassadors) with the special needs 4-Her rather adults. Promote cooperation instead of competition. Practice at project meetings so all project members will know how to be of assistance.

Help the 4-Her set realistic, attainable project goals. Always include the 4-Her in goal setting and project modifications.

Be prepared to devote extra attention, time, and flexibility to the project. Remember to value each project member as an individual with unique and special talents.

Resources

National 4-H Curriculum Beef Series materials, 4-HCCS BU-08143, BU-08144, BU-08145, BU08146

Kansas Beef Project Curriculum, Level II, Safety With Beef Cattle

Online Youth Beef Project Safety Assessment, www.ylsp.bae.ksu.edu

NAGCAT Reference Sheets: Lifting; Working with large animals; Leading/grooming animals; Feeding hay to cows; Cleaning service alley; www.nagcat.org/nagcat/pages/default.aspx

National Ag Safety Database (NASD); <http://nasdonline.org>

A Perfect Fit: 4-H Involvement for Youth with Disabilities, Purdue University

Making 4-H More Accessible: Youth With Special Needs Leaders' Handbook, California 4-H Youth Development Program; www.ca4h.org/leadership/ambassador/03-04/CASA-Book.pdf

Inclusive 4-H, University of Wyoming, <https://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/wyo4h/Inclusive/intro.pdf>

SAFETY AUDIT CHECKLIST

This checklist will help identify potential hazards with your livestock handling equipment and facilities. Conduct the audit with your parents or project leader. Answer the questions by checking YES or NO. If the answer is YES, no further action is necessary. If the answer is NO, then a hazard may exist that should be corrected. Prioritize the level of risk represented by the hazard using the ranking terms of: Major, Serious, or Minor. Record the date the hazard is corrected and keep the checklist with your project records.

Priority Levels for Identified Hazards:

Major: Potentially life-threatening or serious injury potential; requires immediate action.

Serious: Injury or property damage possible; requires prompt action.

Minor: Not likely to cause serious injury or property loss; correct the hazard during the off-season or during down time.

ANIMAL HANDLING SAFETY	Yes	No	Level of Priority	Date Corrected
Are steps and walkways roughened to prevent slips and falls?				
Are walkways and aisles kept free of debris, manure, and feed?				
Are animal drugs and barn chemicals kept in a secure area in original containers?				
Are pens, gates, and fences in good condition, without protrusions?				
Do doors and gates open smoothly?				
Are there at least two exits from buildings?				
Do you make animals aware of your approach so as not to frighten them?				
Do you leave yourself an "out" when working in close quarters with animals?				
Are animals immunized as required?				
Is the grooming chute in good repair with a non-slip mat?				
Are electrical cords in good repair, no exposed wires?				
Is there adequate lighting in work and walking areas?				
Are all electrical outlets properly grounded with ground fault circuit interrupters?				
Are portable tools unplugged when not in use?				
Are faulty wiring and electrical equipment repaired or replaced immediately?				
Are extension cords used only for temporary work?				

ANIMAL HANDLING SAFETY (continued)	Yes	No	Level of Priority	Date Corrected
Is personal protective equipment available? (safety glasses, leather and rubber/latex gloves, and ear plugs)				
Do you wear sturdy leather boots, long sleeves, long pants, and gloves when handling animals?				
Are appropriate fire extinguishers located strategically for easy access in case of fire?				
Are fire extinguishers inspected regularly?				
Do you know how to operate a fire extinguisher?				

SAFE LIFTING AND MATERIALS HANDLING	Yes	No	Level of Priority	Date Corrected
Has everyone in the family received instruction on safe lifting techniques?				
Is the "bend your knees" rule always followed?				
Do you use assistance, such as a wheelbarrow, dolly, or wheeled cart, to move loads more than 10 yards or loads weighing more than 15% of your body weight?				
Do you check for a clear pathway before lifting and moving objects?				

FIRST AID / EMERGENCY ACTION	Yes	No	Level of Priority	Date Corrected
Do you maintain first-aid kits in the following locations:				
♦ Home?				
♦ Barn?				
♦ Pick-up?				
♦ Show box?				
Are first-aid kits periodically checked and replenished?				
Has anyone in your family received first-aid training in the last 3 years?				
Has anyone in your family received training in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation)?				

LIST YOUR OWN SAFETY CONCERNS	Yes	No	Level of Priority	Date Corrected