

## Tips for Working Safely around Livestock

Planning ahead, maintaining facilities, and acting with knowledge of animal instincts can help reduce accidents and injuries around livestock.

- Always wear the proper [personal protective equipment](#) for the job<sup>1</sup> (e.g., steel-toed shoes, helmets, etc.).
- Be calm and deliberate around livestock; avoid sudden movements.<sup>1</sup>
- Avoid the animal's "blind spot." Approach from the front or side.<sup>1</sup>
- Avoid loud noises, and do not yell.<sup>1</sup>
- Assess your lighting situation, and avoid rapid changes from light to dark.<sup>1</sup>
- When working around livestock, always leave yourself a way out, especially when working in close quarters. (Many injuries are caused by a startled animal pinning the handler against some surface.<sup>1</sup>)
- Always use extreme caution around all male farm animals. While bulls account for only 2 percent of the cattle population, they are responsible for more than half of the fatalities.<sup>1</sup>
- Distribute feed in large, unpredictable patches to help avoid territorial behavior.<sup>1</sup>
- Plan ahead:
  - Label livestock handling areas to warn away visitors.
  - Design all facilities to allow workers easy access to and exit from animals, including emergency exit options.
  - Make sure to consistently and properly use restraining equipment.<sup>2</sup>
- Maintain equipment and facilities in good repair, and keep things clean and in order.<sup>1</sup>

- Are gates, fences, or pens in good repair?
  - Do aisles have any sharp projections?
  - Is restraining equipment useable?
  - Is an escape gate or path available?<sup>2</sup>
- Keep children and bystanders out of livestock handling areas.<sup>2</sup>

### Sources

1. Oregon State University Integrated Plant Protection Center (2009). Farm safety tip – livestock safety [online]. Retrieved October 22, 2009. From [http://www.ipmnet.org/tim/Farm\\_Safety/Farm\\_Safety\\_Tip\\_-\\_Livestock\\_Safety.pdf](http://www.ipmnet.org/tim/Farm_Safety/Farm_Safety_Tip_-_Livestock_Safety.pdf).
2. National Safety Council (2009). Livestock handling [online]. Retrieved October 22, 2009. From [http://www.necasag.org/pdf/Livestock\\_handling\\_updated.pdf](http://www.necasag.org/pdf/Livestock_handling_updated.pdf).

