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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Cattle Handling Facilities Cut Stress

If you are in the cattle business I am sure you are well aware of the market, or at the very least you know it is not near what it was 8 months ago, or a year ago. With the market not as strong, this may be the opportunity to try to capture a better price through improved marketing.

I have stated this in the past, but it never hurts repeating it when it may improve your bottom line. When you plan to sell your cattle, it is always a good part of the plan to be in contact with the people you trust will get you the best price. In other words contact the manager of the stockyards where you sell your livestock prior to opening the back door of the trailer to unload them at the yards. If the manager of the yards knows what animals you have, the number of them, the sex, the approximate weight, and what vaccination program you have administered they may have buyers looking for just what you have to sell. Call in advance and give the manager time to work a couple of weeks or a month in advance.

With that all said, the vaccination program might just become more of a tool to increase the value of your calves in a market that is not as strong as it was. Your stockyards manager and your veterinarian can both be good sources of information on this matter.

So, if you are now thinking that you may need to do more vaccinations, how are your facilities? Are they in good working order? Do you need to modify or change things to reduce the stress on both the animals and yourself? The following addresses some of the issues with facilities. It appeared in a recent beef blog and was written by Dr. Ken McMillan DTN/The Progressive Farmer Contributing Editor. The Beef Blog comes from Dr. Phil Reed from Purdue on a daily basis. If you would like for me to forward the beef blog to you, send me a request to dugan.46@osu.edu

QUESTION: We need to rework our corral and get a new chute. Do you have any suggestions? Who makes the best chutes?

ANSWER: Asking who makes the best cattle chute is sort of like asking who makes the best pickup truck. Want to start a fight? Start talking about religion, politics or pickups.

A lot of this is personal preference. I prefer scissor-type headcatches, but others prefer pivoting, self-catching types. I really like chutes that squeeze straight inward rather than in a V shape. I think cattle just seem to do better with a light, equal squeeze.

Chute size and weight must be matched with cattle size. Don't buy more than you need, but be sure you get enough. There is nothing more stressful than trying to work large cattle in a chute that's too small.

The most common design flaw I see in corrals is the lanes are too wide. While corrals that are adjustable with crowding alleys are ideal, they are expensive. If this is not an option, alleys 28 to 30 inches wide are enough for most cattle. If you have really large cattle, your alleys may need to be a little wider, but you may have a problem with



calves turning around in them. Making alleys V-shaped can help with this, but when a cow or bull goes down, it can be difficult to get them up.

Alleys that gently curve take advantage of the natural tendency of cattle to circle, and solid walls also help keep cattle moving forward. A "crowding tub" with a crowding or sweep gate at least 12 feet long makes getting cattle into the chute much less stressful on man and beast.

GAP Training Opportunities

As I have announced earlier, the first GAP session for 2016 Tobacco Producers will be held on Feb. 25 at 1:00 in West Union at Frisch's. You need to call Barbie at the Adams Co. Extension Office to register at 544-2339. There will also be a session in Maysville at the Maysville Community and Technical College in the evening of Feb. 25 at 6:00 p.m.

I have additional dates that will be posted in the next couple of days, and will be in this article next week. The dates will be in March, and it appears that I will be able to offer one in the morning, one in the afternoon and one in the evening to hopefully work around everyone's work schedules. Please remember to call Barbie so we have space, as all locations have limited space.

Dates to Remember

- Feb. 8 Two hour Fertilizer and 3 hour Private Pesticide Re-certification at North Adams HS beginning at 5:00 p.m. Pre-registration is required by Feb. 1 at 378-6716.
- Feb. 18 Two hour Fertilizer and 3 hour Private Pesticide Re-certification at Southern State Community College in Hillsboro beginning at 10:00 a.m. Pre-registration required at 378-6716 by Feb. 12. Seating is limited.
- Feb. 22 Two hour Fertilizer and 3 hour Private Pesticide Re-certification at Southern Hills Board Office in Georgetown on Hamer Road beginning at 10:00 a.m. Pre-registration required by Feb. 16 at 378-6716. Ask for Cindy.
- Feb. 25 GAP for tobacco producers will be held at Frisch's in West Union at 1:00 p.m. Pre-registration required and seating is limited. Call Barbie at 544-2339.