Low-Stress Livestock Handling

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Attitude Adjustment

• Old Attitude
I’m going to MAKE that animal do what I want

• New Attitude
I’m going to LET that animal do what I want
Attitude Adjustment

- Old Attitude
  That miserable cow broke back on me and went the wrong way
- New Attitude
  What did I do to cause that cow to react that way
5 Main Points

- Stop forcing stock
- Stop doing things that bother livestock
- Use handling techniques correctly
- It can take very little time to achieve a high level of control
- Low-stress livestock handling means that stock do not see us as predators
Flight Zone

Cattle can determine distance only directly in front

Flight Zone Edge

Movement

Point of Balance

Handler position to start movement forward

Cattle can't see you here
Don't pressure here for any length of time

Work animals between the X's on each side, don't work them between X's in front and rear.
Pressure-Release
Pressure-Release

- Livestock want to obtain relief from pressure first and foremost
- Applying and releasing pressure is how animals learn to become responsive and why they continue to respond well
- Pressure/release is how we keep them doing what we want for as long as we want
Pressure-Release

• Important in getting stock to understand that we aren’t aggressive and won’t force them

• Before animals will respond calmly and responsively to pressure, they must learn that pressure has a readily available release
3 Parts of an Animal

- Emotional
- Mental
- Physical
Pressure from the side
Sometime You Are Far Away
Sometimes You Are Close
Pressure from a position toward the rear
Slow Down Animals
Speed Up Animals
Walk Straight Lines
Curve In
Curving Out
Aim to The Front
Work In a T
Turning Stock by Pressuring the Hip

Desired direction

Hip moves away from pressure

Handler
Turn by Pressuring the Neck & Head
Cattle Behavior

Cattle who are used to being around other animals can become frightened and agitated when separated, becoming dangerous and difficult to handle. When appropriate keep animals together, they will be more calm and cooperative when in groups.
Cattle Behavior

Livestock with young exhibit a maternal instinct. Cows with young calves are sometimes more defensive and can be difficult to handle. The younger the calf the more the difficulty. If possible let calves stay close to the mother cow when handling.