

Cattle Whispering:



Because it's more effective than shouting

For cattle, being transported is bound to be necessary within their lifetime, however, this is a stressful and novel experience for many of these animals.^{1,3,5} As prey animals, cattle can respond to stressors with a variety of fear-based behaviours that are potentially dangerous to both the handlers and the herd.^{2,4}

These behaviours can include:



The good and bad news is, we as humans have a huge impact on the occurrence of these behaviours, as good handling practices can significantly reduce instances of stress responses in cattle.^{2,4}

Positive Impacts



Negative Impacts

Voice

Use a calm voice when speaking; a little can go a long way.^{1,2}



Shouting and sudden, unexpected noises can cause cattle to panic.^{1,2}

Approach

Walk, don't run, and approach from the front to avoid spooking the cow.⁴



Cattle can be easily startled; if you approach from behind or from the side, they may not see you coming.⁴

Contact

Use the least amount of contact necessary to get the job done; try using a flag or gentle touches.^{1,2,5}



Cattle prods and hitting can get a cow moving but with greatly increased rates of stress responses.^{1,2,5}

Your actions make a difference, knowledge is half the battle.

Infographic created using piktochart.com

| Sources |

1. Bravo, V. M., Knowles, T. G., & Gallo, C. (2020). Transport, associated handling procedures and behaviour of calves marketed through Chilean auction markets. *Animals*, 10(11), 2170. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani10112170>

2. Ceballos, M. C., Sant'Anna, A. C., Boivin, X., de Oliveira Costa, F., Carvalhal, M. V. de L., & Paranhos da Costa, M. J. R. (2018). Impact of good practices of handling training on beef cattle welfare and stockpeople attitudes and behaviors. *Livestock Science*, 216, 24–31. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.livsci.2018.06.019>

3. Grandin, T. (1997). Assessment of stress during handling and transport. *Journal of Animal Science*, 75(1), 249. <https://doi.org/10.2527/1997.751249x>

4. Kosako, T., Fukasawa, M., Kohari, D., Oikawa, K., & Tsukada, H. (2008). The effect of approach direction and pace on flight distance of beef breeding cows. *Animal Science Journal*, 79(6), 722–726. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1740-0929.2008.00586.x>

5. Minka, N. S., & Ayo, J. O. (2007). Effects of loading behaviour and road transport stress on traumatic injuries in cattle transported by road during the hot-dry season. *Livestock Science*, 107(1), 91–95. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.livsci.2006.10.013>

6. <https://pixabay.com/photos/cows-curious-cattle-livestock-1029077/>

7. <https://pixabay.com/photos/cow-lick-tongue-head-cow-head-1715829/>

8. <https://openclipart.org/detail/325658/man-walks-a-dog-outline>

9. <https://openclipart.org/detail/300899/bull-3>

10. <https://openclipart.org/detail/281293/cow-head-silhouette>

11. Created using piktochart.com