Montana Ag Safety Program

Livestock Handling Safety

- Work calmly, deliberately, and quietly around livestock. Utilize low-stress handling techniques.
- Livestock are herd animals and will likely become agitated or frightened under stress – particularly being removed from the herd.
- Work to establish routines.
- Understand and study the behaviors of the specific livestock being handled.
    - Learn to recognize common signs of agitation:
        - Raised or pinned ears
        - Raised head
        - Raised tailhead
        - Raised back hair
        - Barred teeth
        - Pawing the ground
        - Snorting
        - Widened eyes (whites of eyes visible)
- Always have an escape route when working in close quarters.- Be patient.
- Ensure the animal always has a clear place to go.
- Keep facilities and equipment in good repair.
- Many injuries related to livestock can be resolved by proper facility design and maintenance
- Stay alert and be aware of surroundings.
- Exercise extra caution around newborns. Animals can be very protective of their young.
- Recognize breeding age males can be more dangerous, especially when herd dynamic is changed. Use extra caution when handling.
- Handle livestock in smaller groups whenever possible. Avoid overcrowding alleys, tubs, pens, etc.

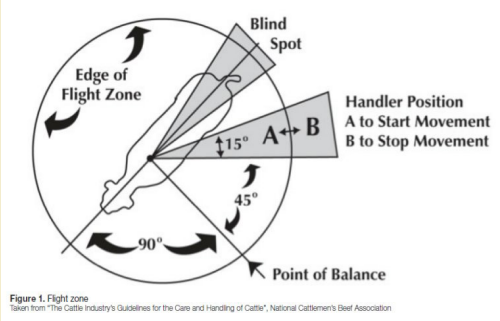

Figure 1. Flight zone
Taken from "The Cattle Industry's Guidelines for the Care and Handling of Cattle", National Cattlemen's Beef Association

Flight Zone, Point of Balance, and Handler Position in relation to cattle vision field.

Adapted from the Montana Agriculture Safety Manual and Livestock Handling and Confinement Safety Michigan State University Extension.

These safety rules have been written and provided to you for your safety. Your signature below indicates you have read and understand these rules, and further, that you accept the responsibility of always using good judgment to make workplace safety your number one priority.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Montana Ag Safety Program