

# Animal Welfare - Handling

Rikki Ruiz, Extension Educator

## Goal (learning objective)

Youth will learn how to move livestock safely by using animal behaviors (blind spot, flight zone and point of balance).

## Supplies

None

## Pre-lesson preparation

- Study the flight zone diagram available at:
  - Understanding Flight Zone and Point of Balance for Low Stress Handling of Cattle, Sheep and Pigs available at: <http://www.grandin.com/behaviour/principles/flight.zone.html>
  - Youth Beef Quality Assurance Program Manual for the Pacific Northwest (Chapter 1, page 5) available at: <https://pubs.wsu.edu/ItemDetail.aspx?ProductID=14995>
- Read/review lesson

## Lesson directions and outline

Ask the youth to share the meaning of a flight zone or personal space. Have them share examples.

Share the following information with the youth:

Understanding animal behavior can help prevent injury, undue stress, and physical exertion for both animals and their handlers.

Animals have natural instincts which may be used to one's advantage when they need to be moved. A key to moving livestock safely is utilizing the animal's blind spot, flight zone, and point of balance.

Flight zone is the distance you are from an animal before it moves away. It is similar to what humans refer to as "personal space". If someone enters your personal space, you tend to move away far enough to feel comfortable again. If you enter a livestock's flight zone, it will move away until it feels comfortable again.

## Conducting the activity (DO)

1. Divide the room into groups of two and have each person stand, facing each other approximately 15 feet apart.
2. Have each person take one step towards each other and stop.
3. Ask: Do they feel comfortable at this distance?
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 until one of the pair feels uncomfortable.
5. When both participants have reached a point to where they both feel uncomfortable, have them discuss the variance in space between them.
6. Have each group report back:
  - a. How much space is between them?
  - b. How they feel about the distance?
  - c. Do both members feel uncomfortable at the same distance?

## What did we learn? (REFLECT)

- Ask: Why is it important to work with your animal?
- Ask: Do animals have larger flight zones if they are not use to people? What can you do at home to work with your animal?
- Ask: Are animal's flight zones the same? Why? Why not?
- Ask: How does stress impact an animal's flight zone?

### Why is that important? (APPLY)

- Ask: Why is animal safety important? How does this impact Quality Assurance?
- Ask: How can understanding an animal's flight zone be helpful when moving livestock?

### Resources

Grandin, T. (2015). *Understanding Flight Zone and Point of Balance for Low Stress Handling of Cattle, Sheep, and Pigs*. Colorado State University. Available from: <http://www.grandin.com/behaviour/principles/flight.zone.html>

Kinder, C.A., Glaze, J.B., Church, J.A., Jensen, S., Williams, S., and Nash, S.(2008). *Youth Beef Quality Assurance: Program Manual for the Pacific Northwest*. PNW593. University of Idaho, Oregon State University Extension, and Washington State University. Available at: <https://pubs.wsu.edu/ItemDetail.aspx?ProductID=14995>

Ohio State University Extension. (2011). Working Safely with Livestock. *Beef resource handbook* (pages 4-1 through 4-5 and 12-2 through 12-3).

Ohio State University Extension. (2008). Working Safely with Goats. *Goat resource handbook* (pages 31-34, and 159).

Ohio State University Extension. (2011). Working Safely with Sheep. *Sheep resource handbook for market and breeding projects* (pages 103-105 and 136).

Ohio State University Extension. (2000). Working Safely with Swine. *Swine resource handbook for market and breeding projects* (pages 14-1 through 14-2 and 24-2).