

Animal Welfare - Moving

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/review the flight zone diagram - 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

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.

Point of Balance is the position in the flight zone where the animal switches the direction it moves as you cross the line. The point of balance can vary, but it's generally near an animal's shoulder. If you cross the flight zone in the front, it will move backward. Approaching from behind the point of balance makes the animal move forward.

Conducting the activity (DO)

1. Have the group break up into groups of two and identify themselves as either Volunteer #1 or Volunteer #2.
2. Volunteer #1 portrays the "animal". Have the volunteer stand with their arms outstretched, the volunteer's arms marks their point of balance.
3. Volunteer #2 portrays the "handler".
4. Have the handler start by standing at the animal's point of balance. Ask the "animal": How does this make you feel?
5. Ask the handler step in front of the animal's point of balance into the flight zone. What does the animal do? (The animal should back up or move) Ask the animal: Why did you move?
6. Ask the handler to move back to the animal's point of balance, then move into the animal's flight zone (don't repeat prior area).

What did we learn? (REFLECT)

- Ask: What happened when the handler stepped in front of the animal? What would happen if the handler stepped behind the animal?
- Ask: Where is the animal's point of balance?
- Ask: Are animal's flight zones the same? Why? Why not?

Why is that important? (APPLY)

- Ask: How do flight zones impact handler safety? Why do we need to take precautions to protect not only the animal but the handler?
- Ask: How do flight zones get impacted in the show pen?
- Ask: How can understanding an animal's flight zone be helpful when moving livestock?
- Ask: How does understanding flight zone and personal space help us when we communicate with others?

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).

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 103-104 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).