

# UNIT : CATTLE HANDLING

## STAFF

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Unit is to highlight the need to handle cattle safely and minimize the risk to humans and animals.

Improvements in handling safety and efficiency can be made by changing aspects of the handling facilities and the behaviour of the handler and animal.

On completion of the Unit students will be able to describe the key features of a safe and efficient cattle handling system and evaluate and suggest improvements to existing systems and practices.

### KEY WORDS

The problems of poorly designed and maintained handling systems

Fundamental requirements – efficiency and work rate, avoidance of injuries to cattle and handlers, reduced stress and impact on animal welfare and meat quality

Key design features

- Location
- Light
- Floor
- Walls
- Gates
- Collecting pen
- Forcing pen
- Race

- Crush
- Sorting gates
- Loading ramp
- **Present clear exits**
- **Use non-slip flooring**
- **Guide animals forwards**
- **Avoid distractions**
- **Ensure human safety**
- Remain calm

## RESOURCES

EBLEX (2005) Beef Action for Profit 12 – Better Returns from Safe Cattle Handling

EBLEX (2009) EBLEX Beef BRP Manual 3 – Improving Cattle Handling for Better Returns

HSE (2006) Handling and Housing Cattle Agriculture Information Sheet No 35

SAC (2004) Modifying existing cattle handling systems to improve human safety Technical Note 564

SAC (2004) Recommendations for the design of new, safe and efficient cattle handling systems Technical Note 565

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

*Activity – ‘Spot the problem’ – EBLEX Beef BRP Manual 3 p10*