

COW HANDLING

Level 3

| Topic | Training & information Content |
|-------|--|
| 5.1 | Dairy Cattle Breeds and Breeding |
| 5.2 | Breeding program for a dairy farm (medium & large) |
| 5.3 | Conformation, Type classification and judging |
| 5.4 | Cow handling |
| 5.5 | Milk production recording |
| 5.6 | Heat Detection |
| 5.7 | Artificial Insemination |
| 5.8 | Pregnancy Diagnosis |
| 5.9 | Fertility Management |
| 5.10 | Cows with abnormal discharge |
| 5.11 | Fertility disease recording |
| 5.12 | Calving recording |
| 5.13 | Use of Key Performance Indicators |



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1. You will learn about (learning objectives):

- How to properly assess the behavior of cows
 - Cows have their own body language, so our job is to understand that language well. With this knowledge it is much easier to get cows to do what you want without use of tools that are "unpleasant for the cow".

- How and when to treat a cow in some unusual situations
 - There are a number of tricks that you can use for actions necessary for the cow. We should mainly think of veterinary procedures.

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2. Basic knowledge about cattle/cow behavior

What upsets cattle

- Being hungry and or thirsty
- Loud noise e.g. shouting
- Being hit or beaten
- Being chased
- New environment
- Painful/new objects nearby
- People in their personal space, especially their head
- Sickness or injury



What keeps cattle calm

- Silence
- Stroking
- Talking quietly to animals
- Gentle low sounds
- Familiar people
- Working in a confident way
- Regularity

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3. Facts about a cow

Facts

- She always will look first with here left eye
- She reacts 7 times slower than humans
- Her top speed is briefly 52 km/hour
- A cow is most comfortable walking at a speed of 2.5 km/hour
- She has a blind spot in front of her (highly sensitive) nose
- She hears between 23 and 35000 hertz, humans hear between 20-20000 hertz.
- Her character is genetically determined for up to 15%

For you to know

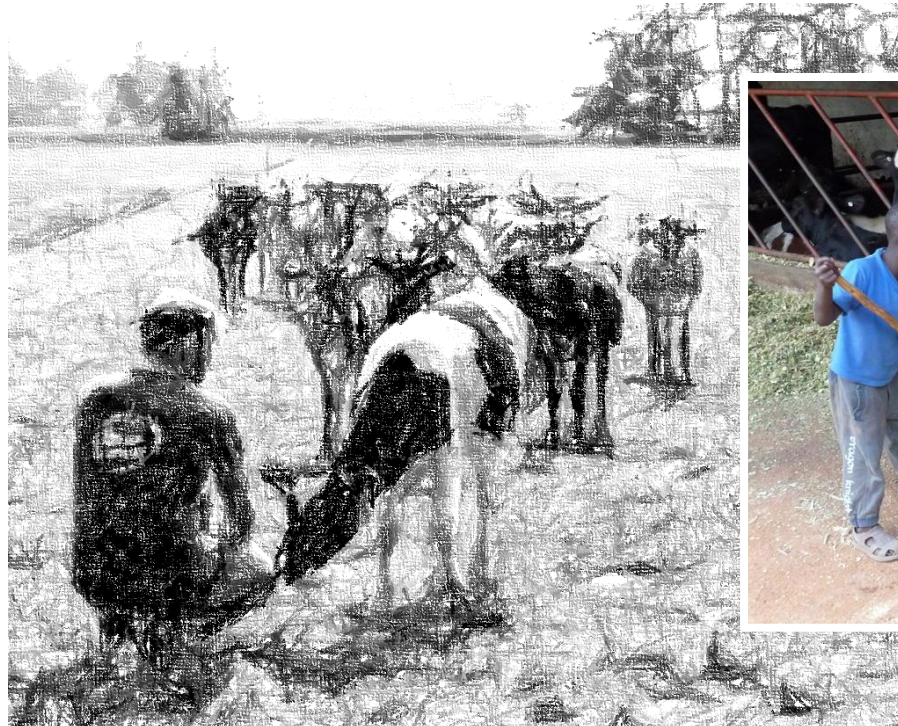
- Cows will respond slowly upon what you want them to do
- Cows don't like running
- She doesn't see what you see
- Do not shout and/or yell , she can hear you very well
- A cow's bad character is 85% determined by management



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4. Socializing with a cow

Note: The socialization phase with humans must take place from day 0, otherwise the calves will run wild with time.



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5. Keep Calm and Move Cows Statements

5.1 Golden Rule number 1

When you want to move a cow from A to B very quickly, do it very slowly.



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5.2 Golden Rule number 2:

Have patience, the cow is always right.



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5.3 Golden Rule number 3:

When moving cows, be **PALS**



PALS.

Be **P**atient

Consider the **A**ngle of your approach

Think about your **L**ocation relative to the cow

Slow the **S**peed of your movements

Cows know where to go !!!

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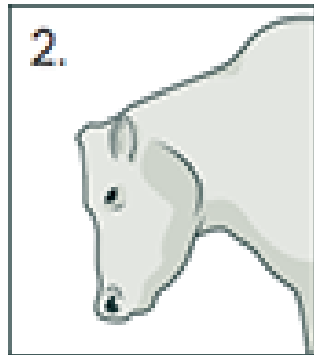
5.4 Golden Rule number 4:

Recognize **danger** signs

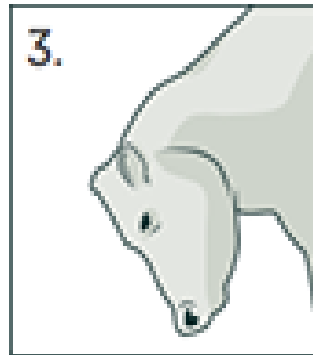
Most important Danger signs to look out for:



1; Neutral position



2; Slightly antagonistic position



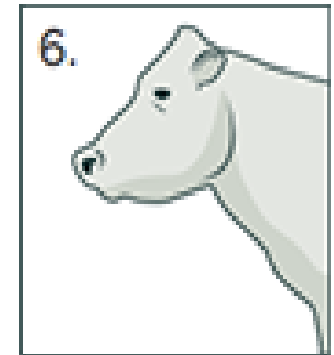
3; Highly antagonistic position



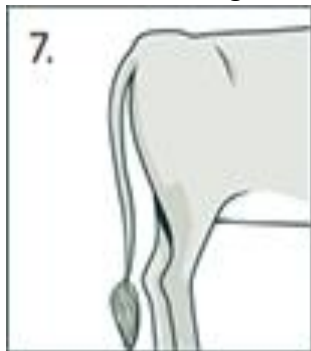
4; Confident approach



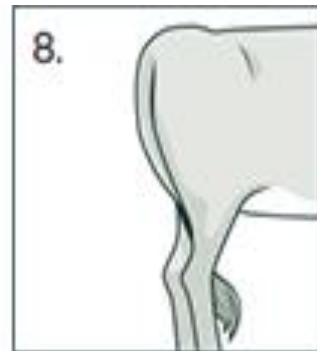
5; Submissive approach



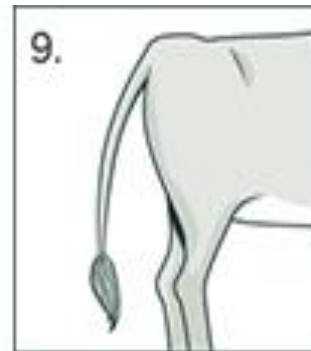
6; Alert before flight position



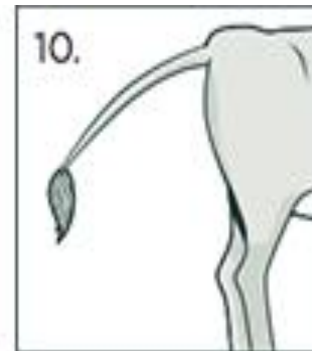
7; Grazing and/or walking



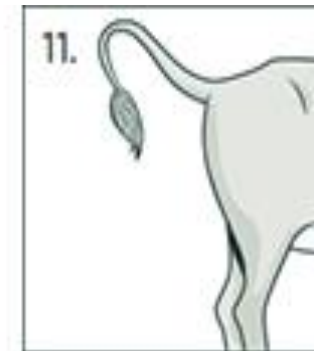
8; Cold/ill frightened



9; Threatening curiosity/ sexual excitement



10; Galloping



11; Kicking or playing

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5.4.1 Example of danger sign

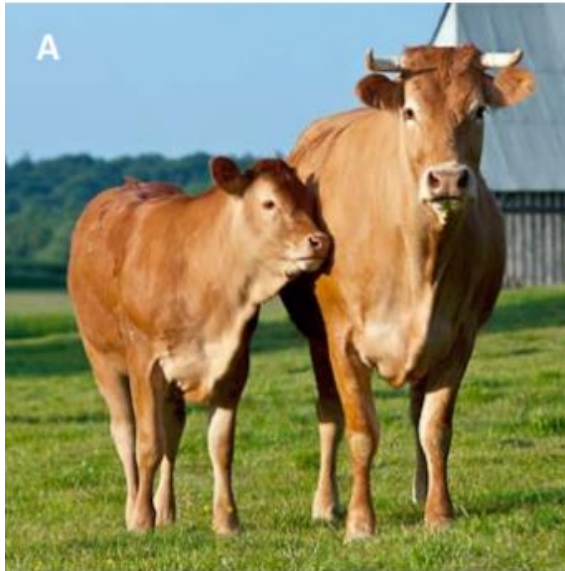
Alert before flight position



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5.4.2 How cows communicate

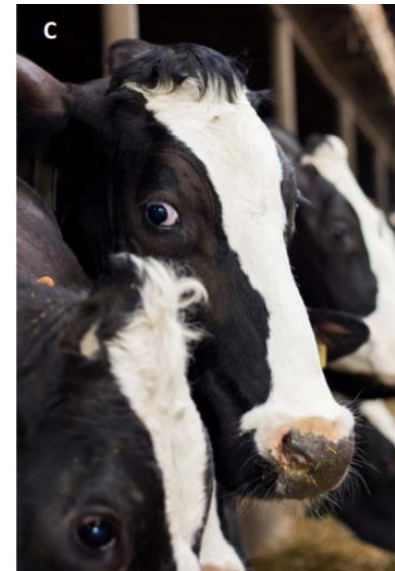
- Cows communicate with their body language



A= Alert



B= Relaxed



C= High % eye white
emotional &
temperament



D = Curious



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5.5 Golden Rule number 5:

Cows have good memories

- Memories, will stay in their mind for a very long time
- Cows can very well remember how they were treated and by whom
- Gentle treatment, especially when animals come into a stressful situation, will pay off in the future.



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5.6 Golden Rule number 6:

Cows are color blind for red and blue

Tip;

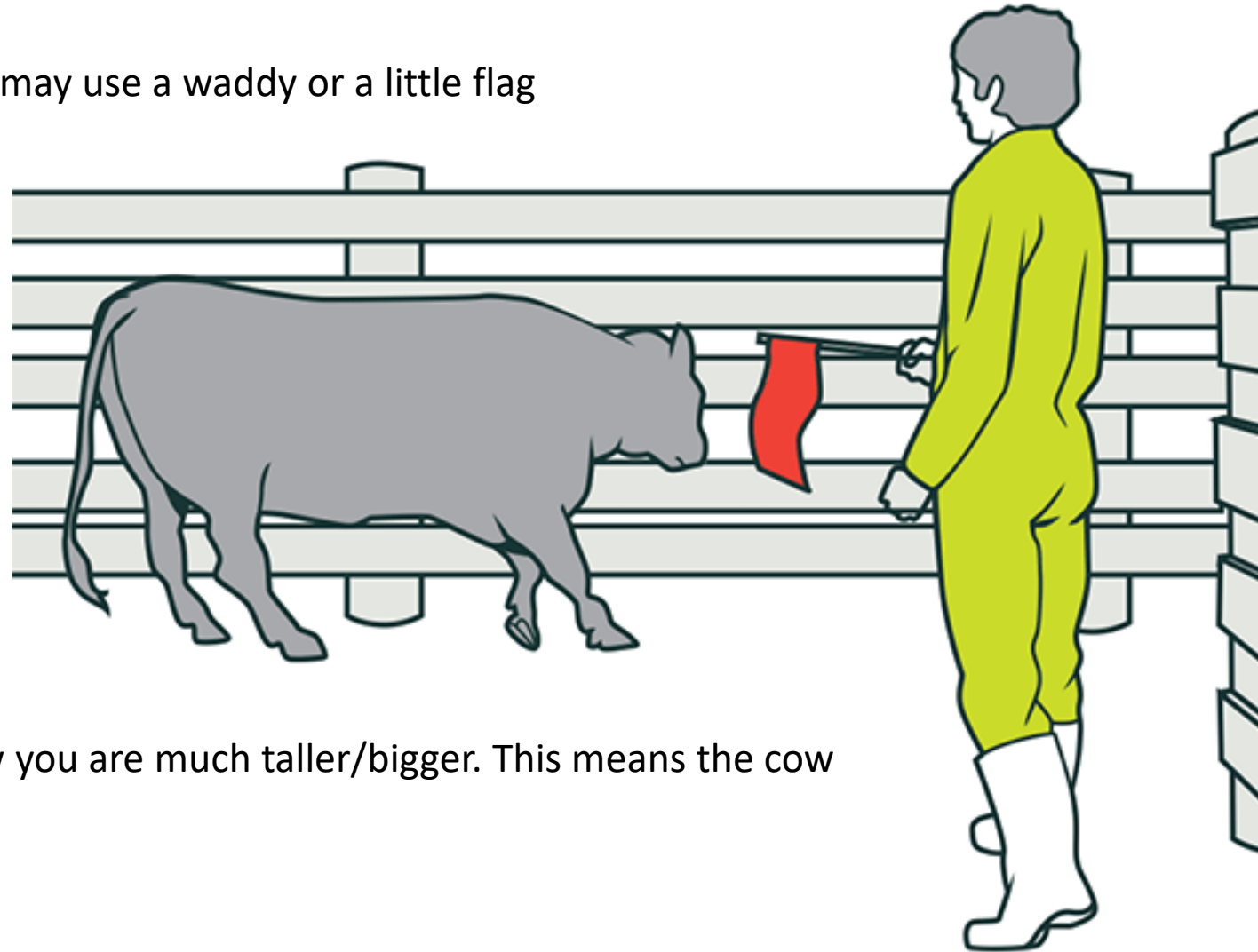
- Visitors like Artificial Insemination (AI) technicians and Veterinarians should wear dark clothes (no white skirts/coats) when they come near the animal
- Cows do recognize light colors like yellow and white, unusual for farmers, but very common for Vets and AI technicians



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6. Making Contact with cows

- In some situations you may use a waddy or a little flag

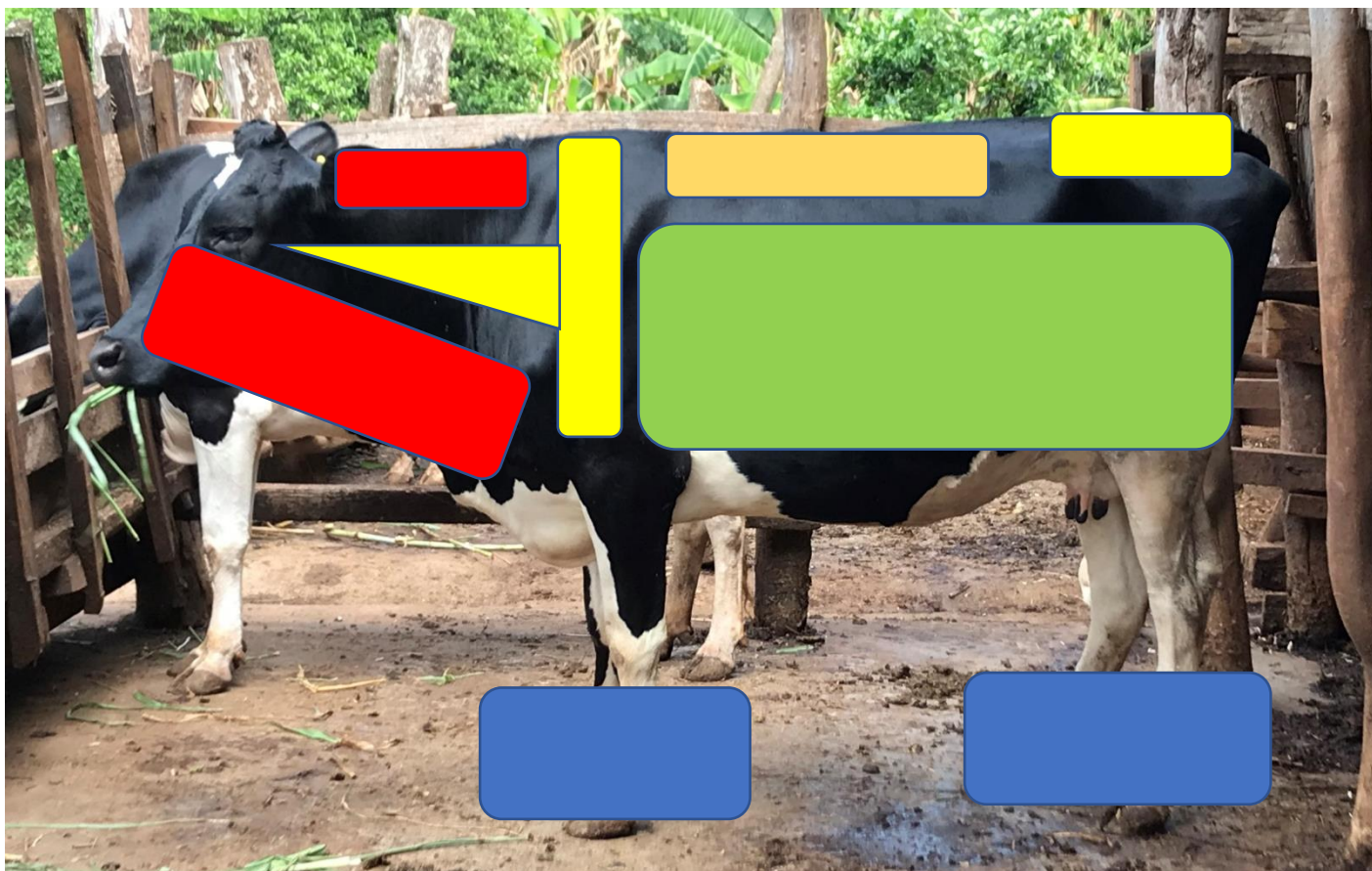


- In the eyes of the cow you are much taller/bigger. This means the cow respects you more.

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6.1 Human Contact

- From the illustration below, human contact can easily be made by stroking the cow's neck and back.



Systematically licked

Very often licked

Often licked

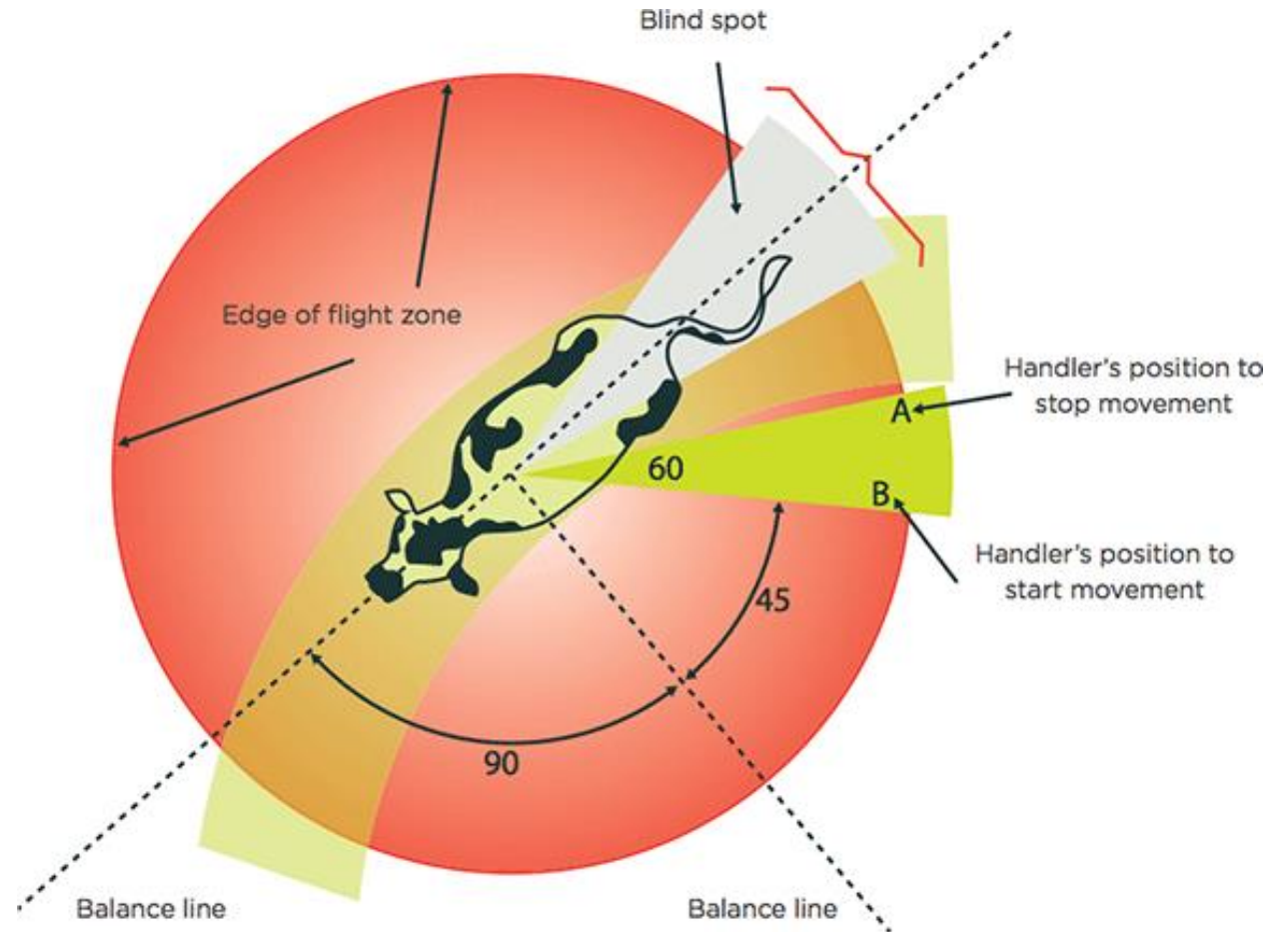
Seldom Licked

Never licked.

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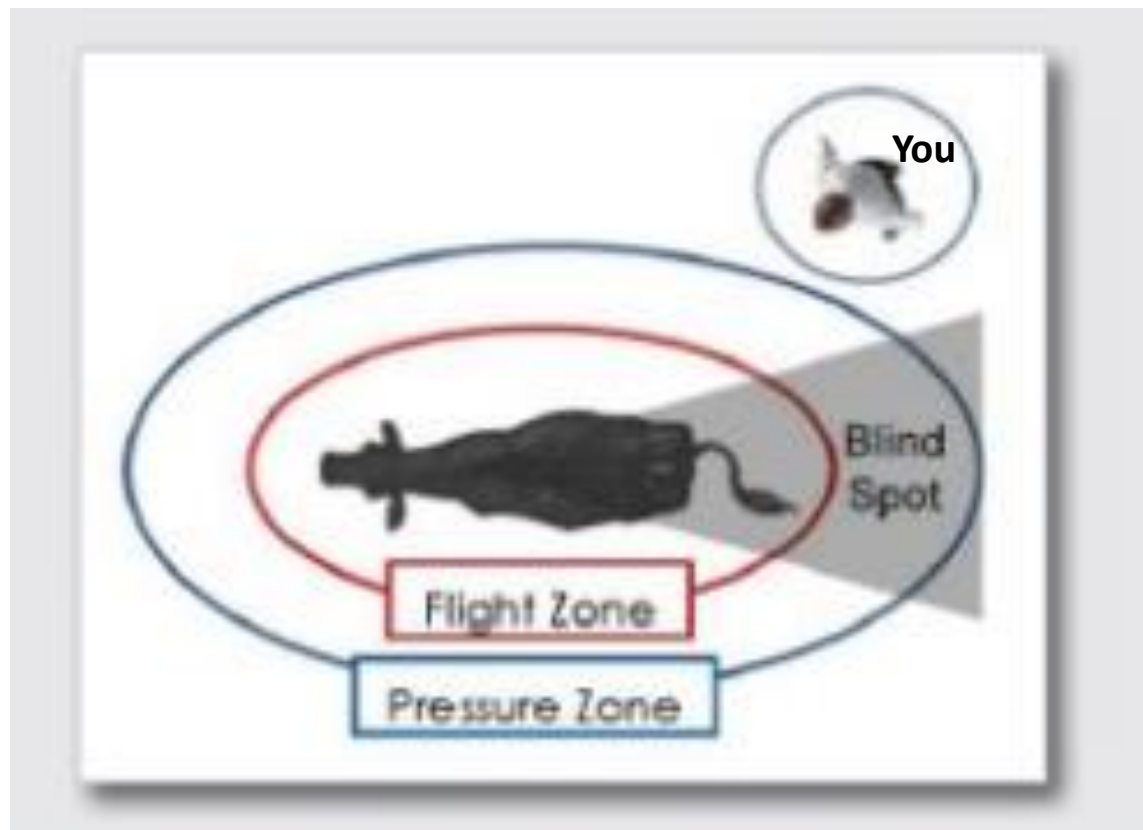
7. Flight Zone in Cows

- Flight zone means how close you can come before the cow starts moving
- While entering the flight zone, the cow will start moving
- Blind spot means a position where cow can't see you
- Your position in relation to the balance lines dictates whether the cow moves either forward or backwards



Cow Handling (Level 3)

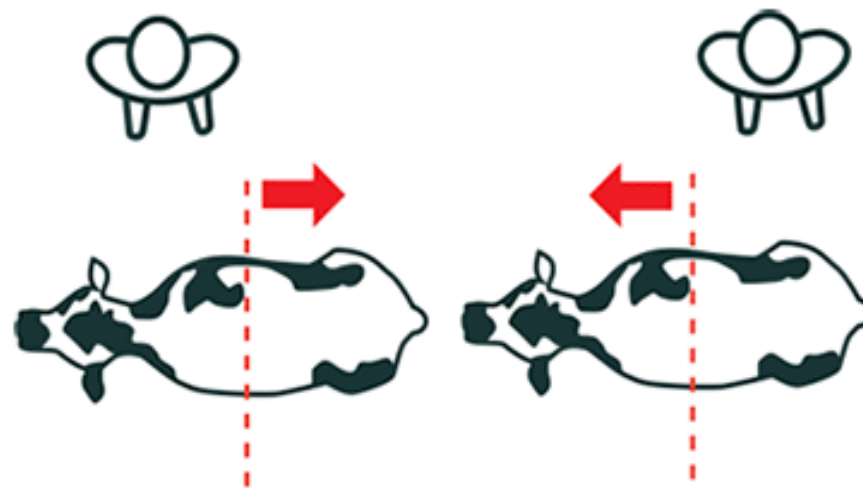
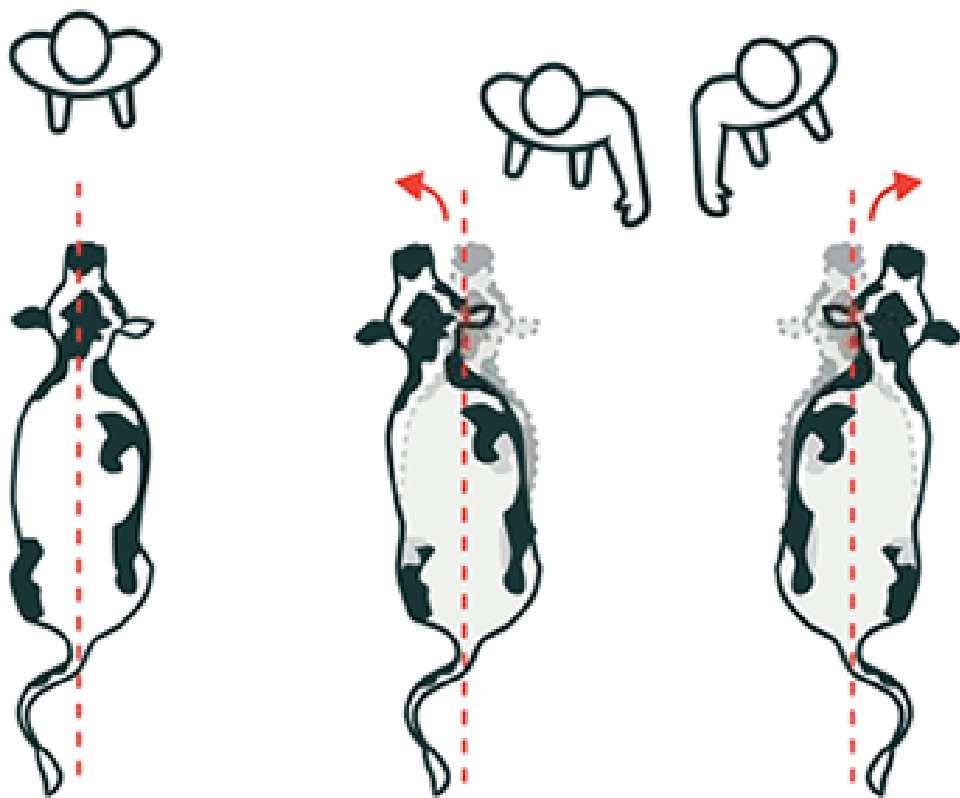
8. How to get a cow moving...



- Start the cow movement by slowly approaching the her pressure zone
- Give the cow some time and space to react to you
- Walk at a speed that keeps you away from the cow's flight zone
- Flight zones vary depending on individual cows
- The angle at which you approach a cow will influence the direction she moves.

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8.1 Understand the cow's movement behavior



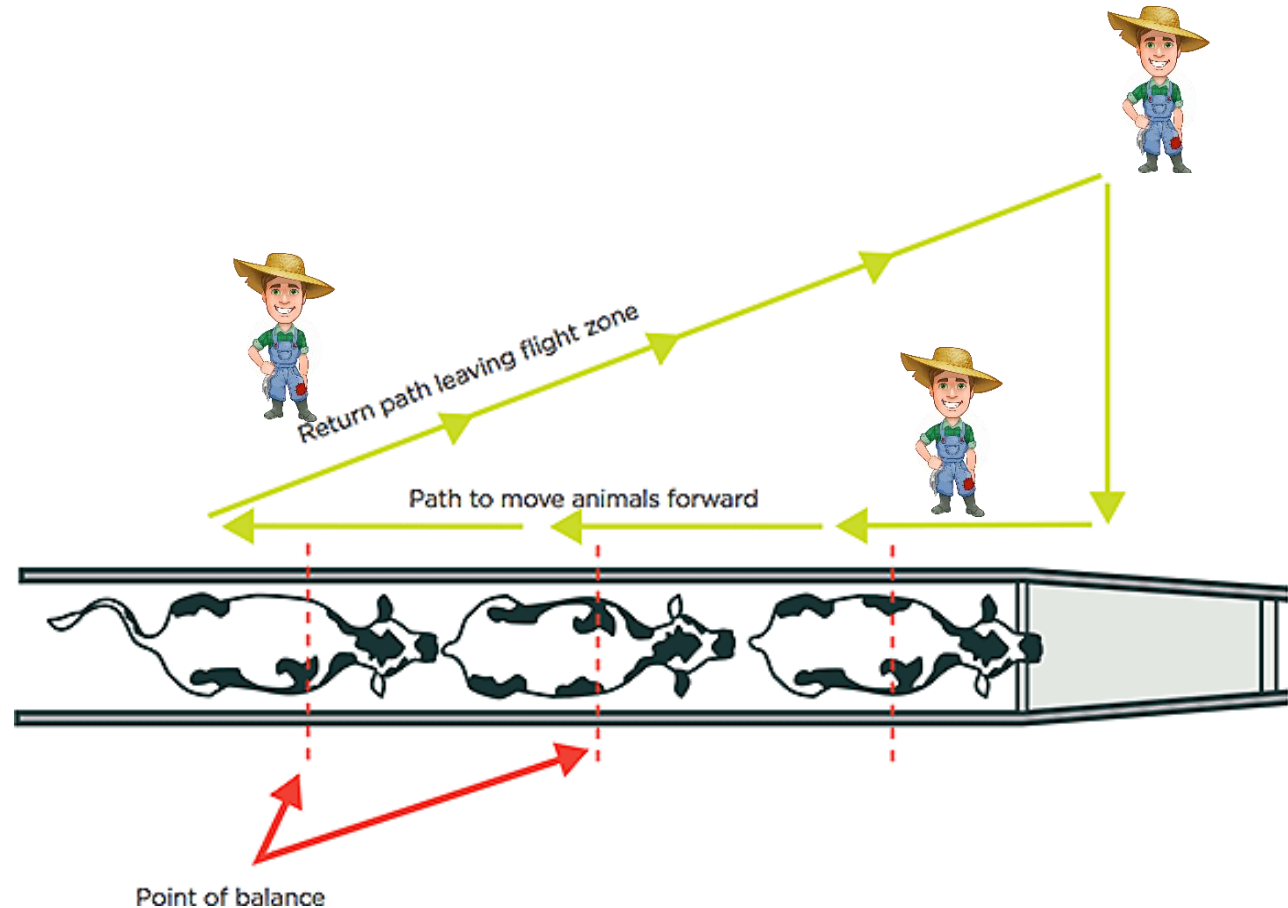
- Look at the balance lines (dotted red), where you are and what cow is doing

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8.2 Working with cows through a crush

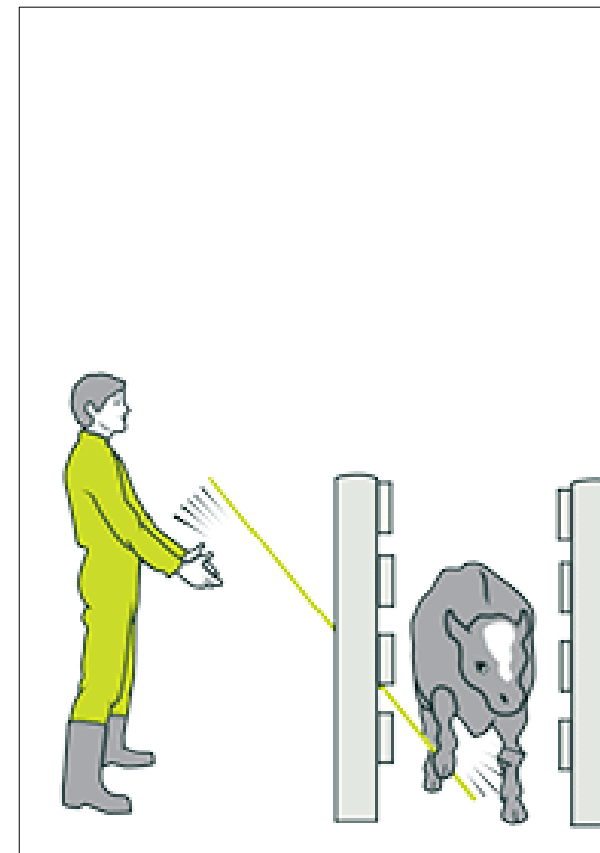
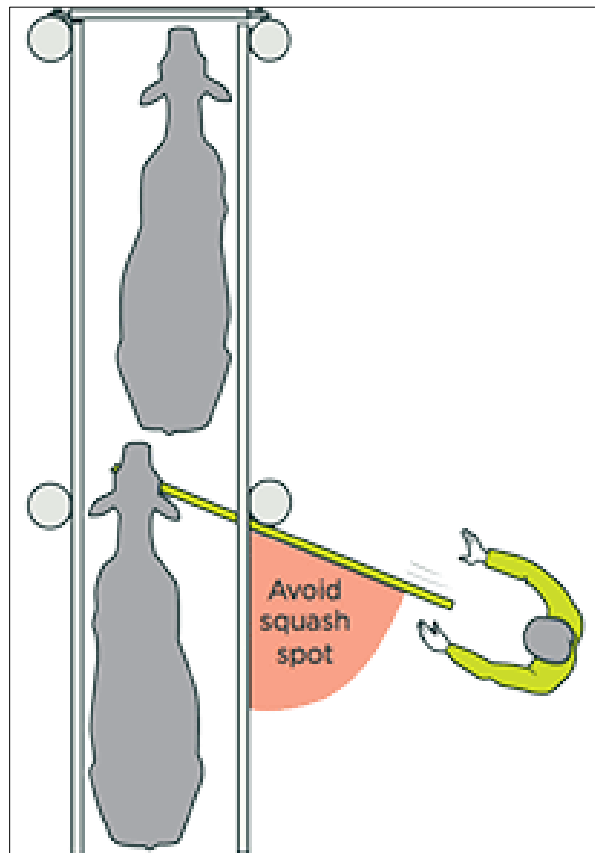
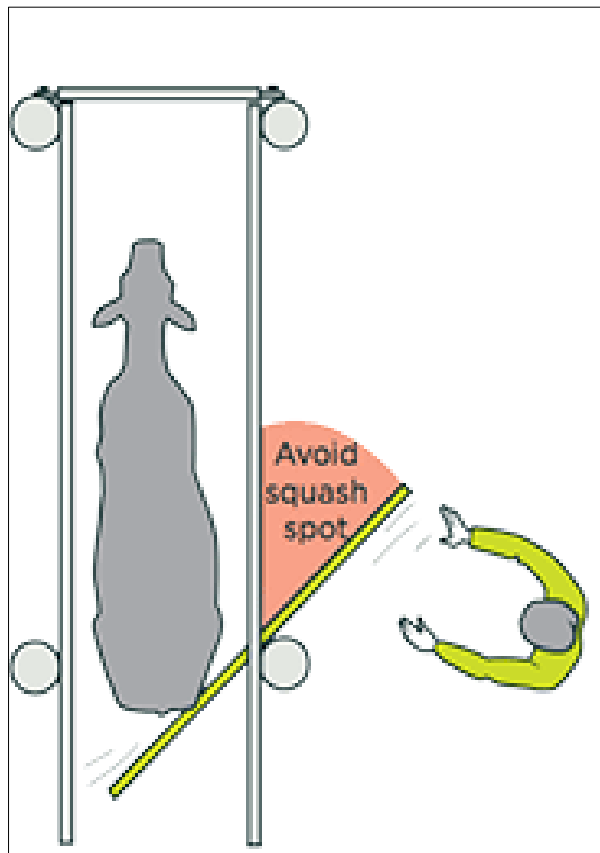
- You want the animals go forward...walk backwards
- Return to the path by leaving flight zone...and walk back
- Animals will do exactly what you want.....go forward.

No Shouting! No hitting!



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8.2.3 Working with cows through a crush cont'd...

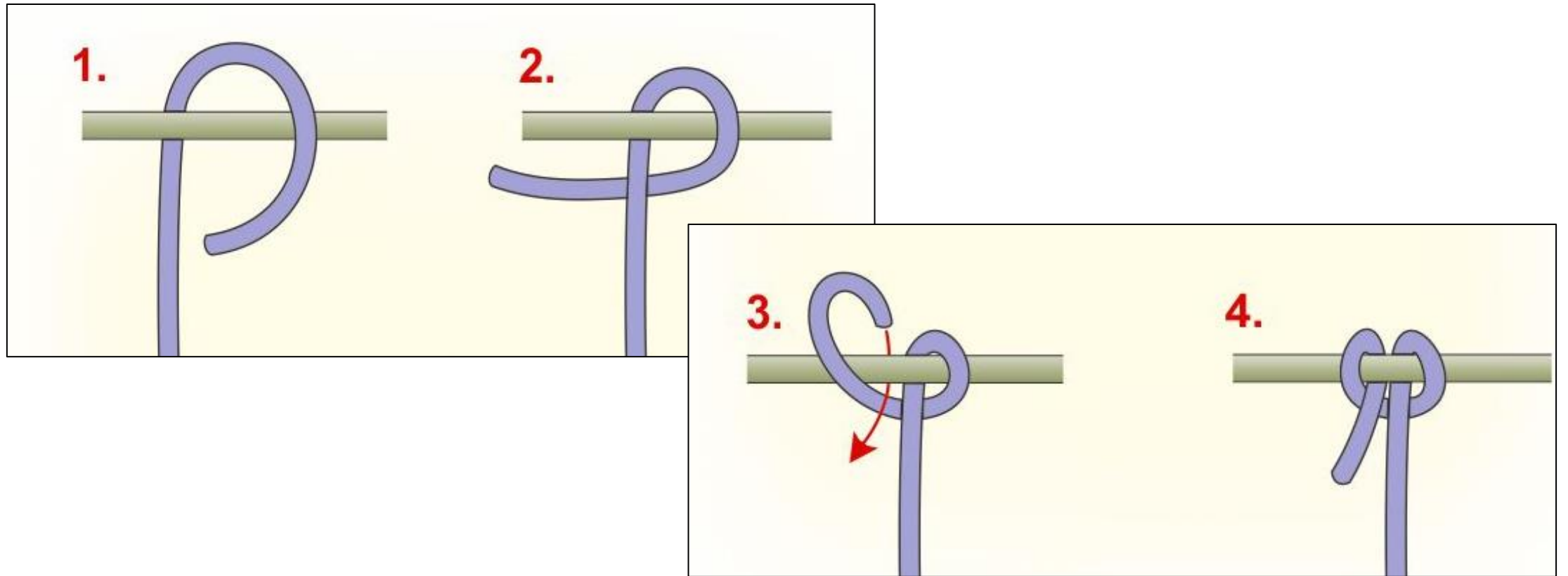


Always be aware of sudden movements , animals are strong, avoid serious injuries. Keep out of reach of iron bar.

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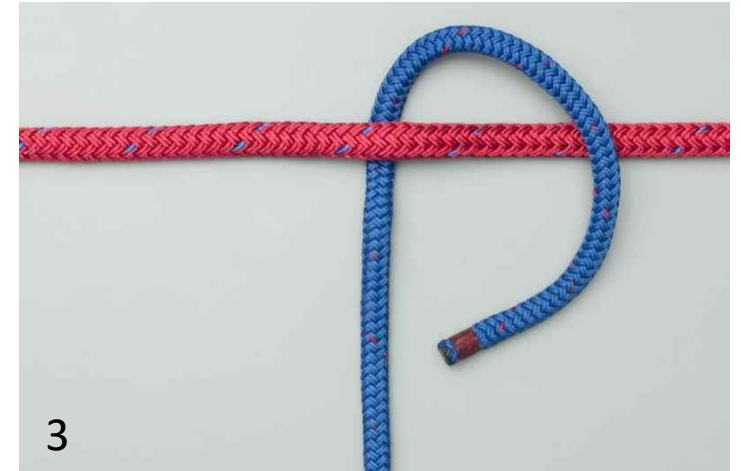
9. Restraining Cows

9.1 How to tie a cow with **easy escape/loosening**



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9.2 How to tie a cow using the “Cow Hitch knot”



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9.3 How to tie a cow using the “Clove Hitch knot”

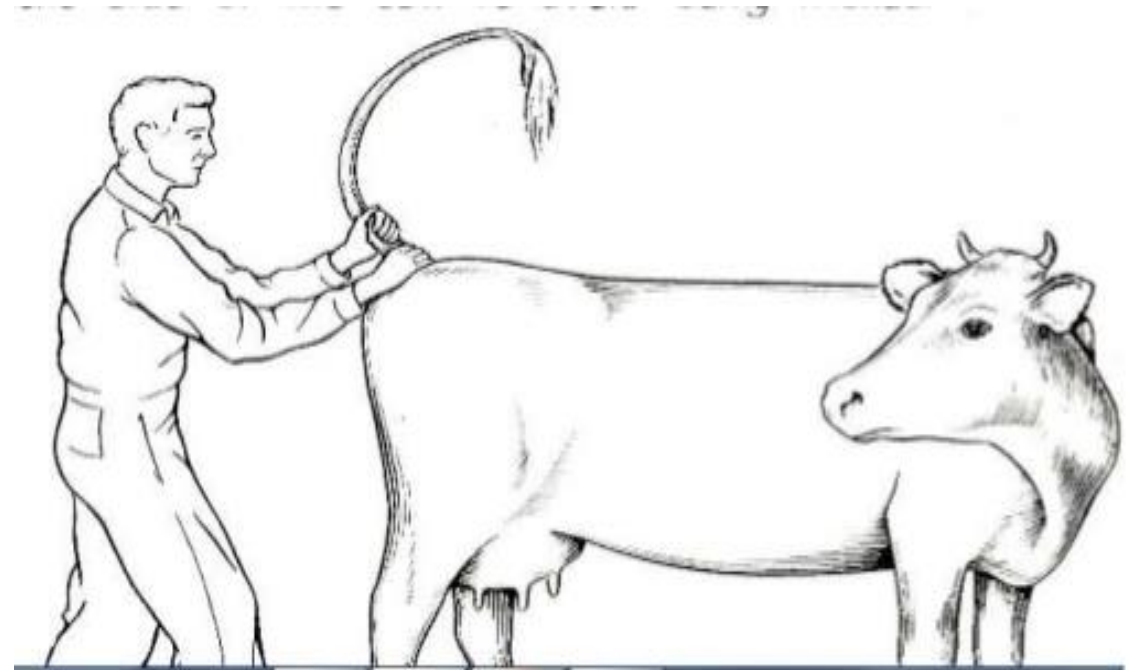


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10. Some individual restraining techniques

10.1 Tail Restraint

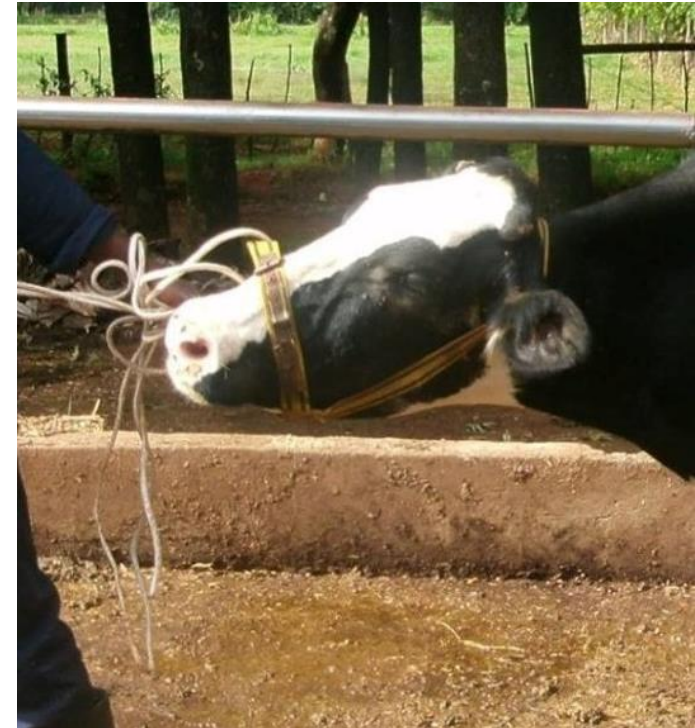
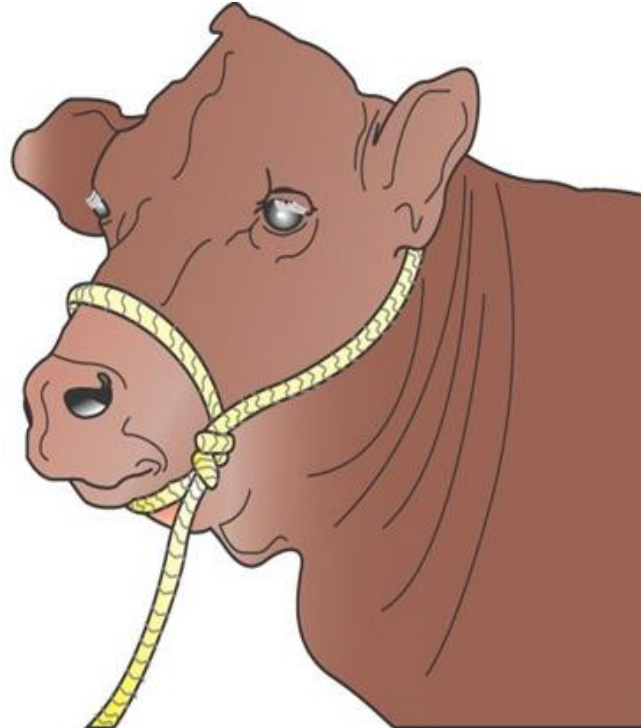
- A technique applied by an assistant whenever it is necessary to distract the attention from another part of the cow's body, for example milking



Cow Handling (Level 3)

10.2 Head Restraint

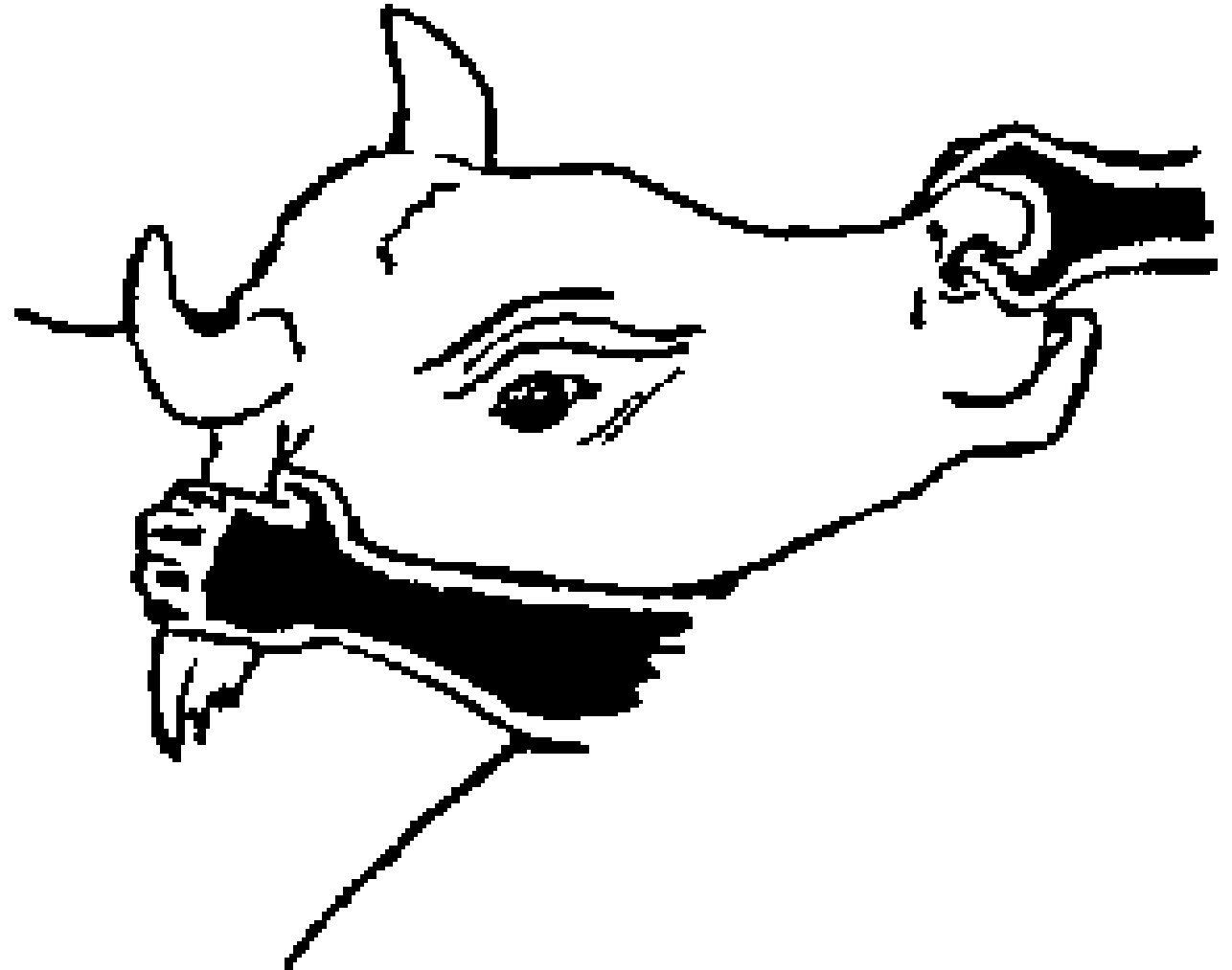
Examples of a proper placement of a halter



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10.3 Nose Restraint

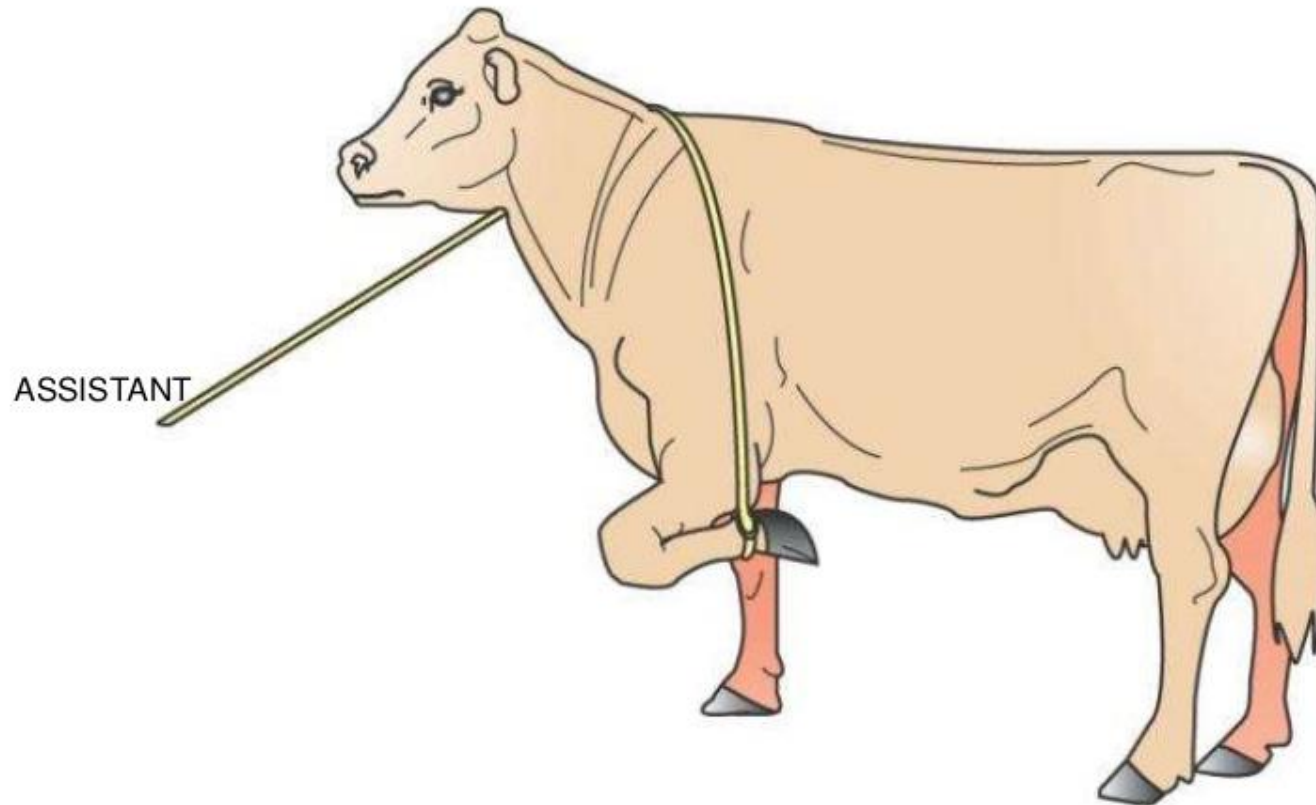
- If you do not have a halter, the best way to hold a large ruminant is to take a firm grip of the nostril using the thumb and forefinger of one hand while holding the horn or the ear with the other hand.



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10.4 Front leg Restraint

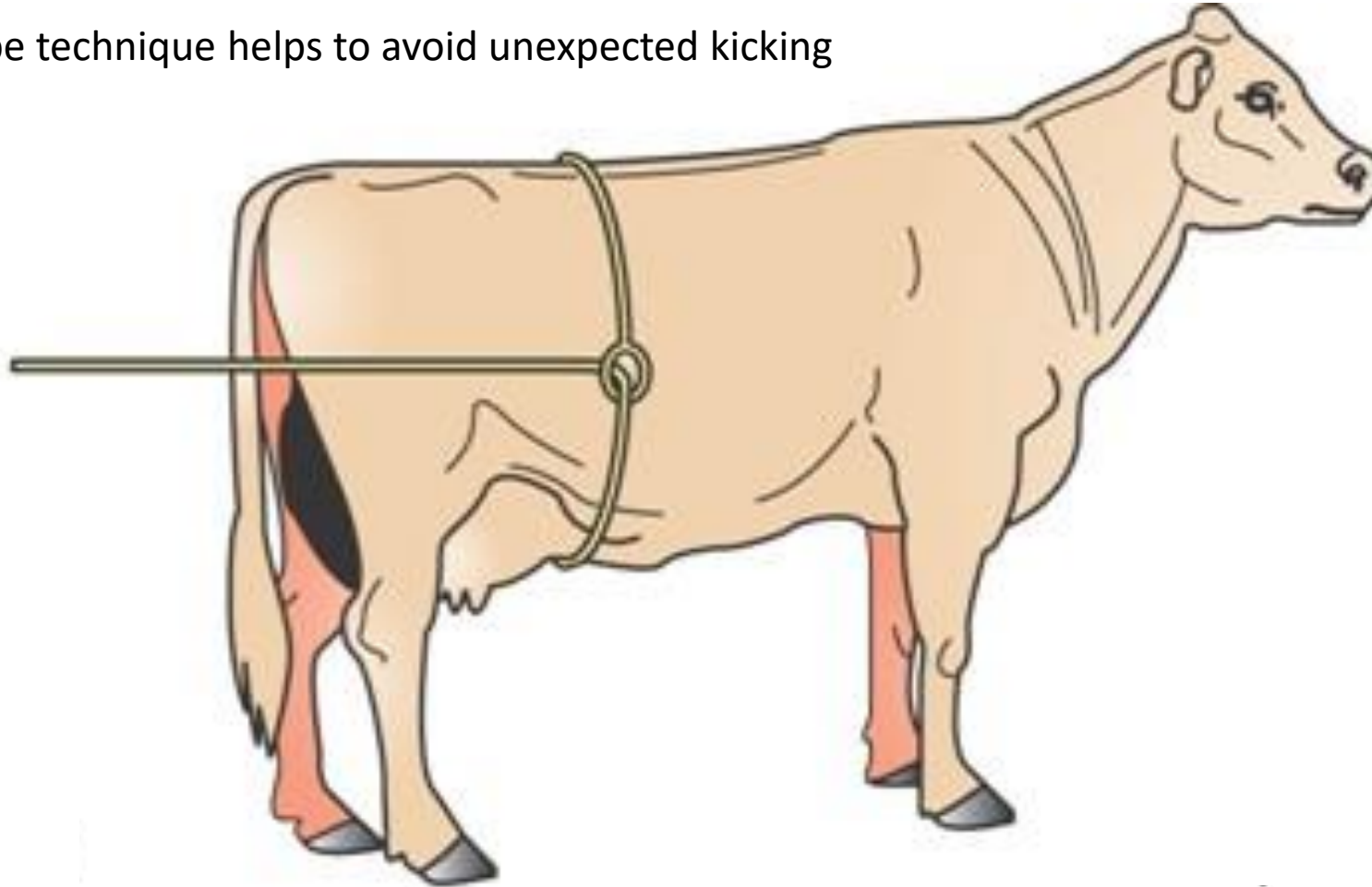
- The front leg may be raised and held off the ground for examination or treatment. It is also a good method to make the cow stand still and avoid her from kicking with the hind leg.



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10.5 Flank rope Restraint

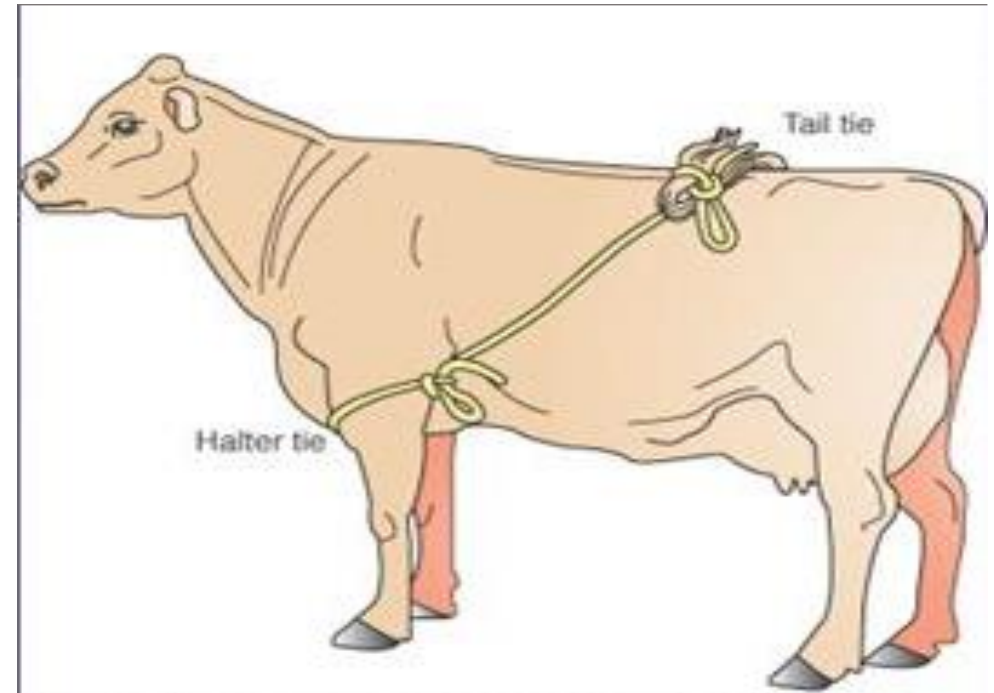
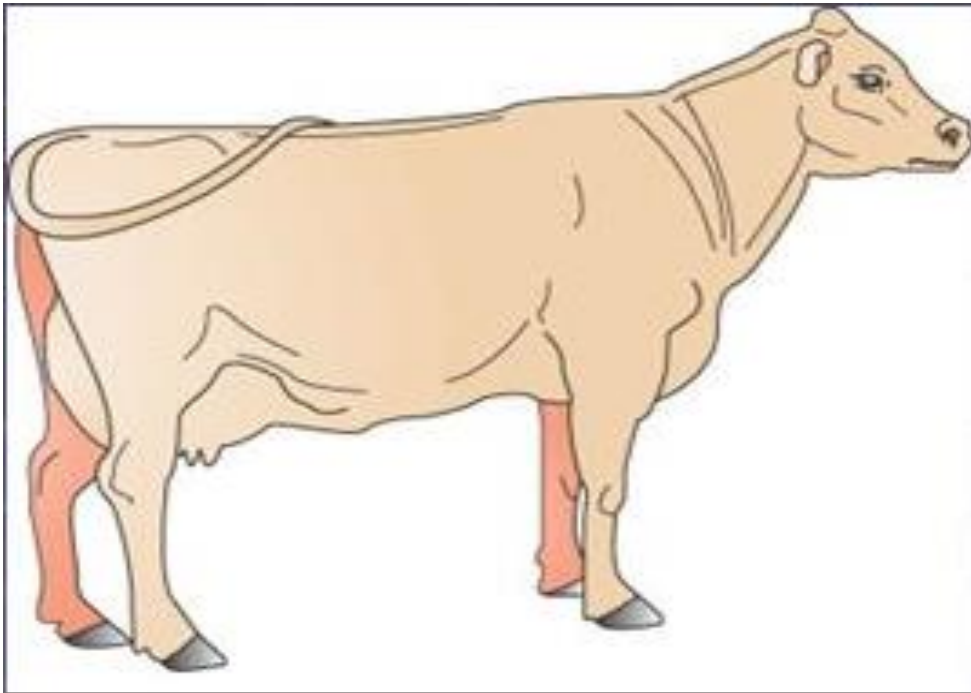
- The flank rope technique helps to avoid unexpected kicking



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10.6 Tail rope Restraint

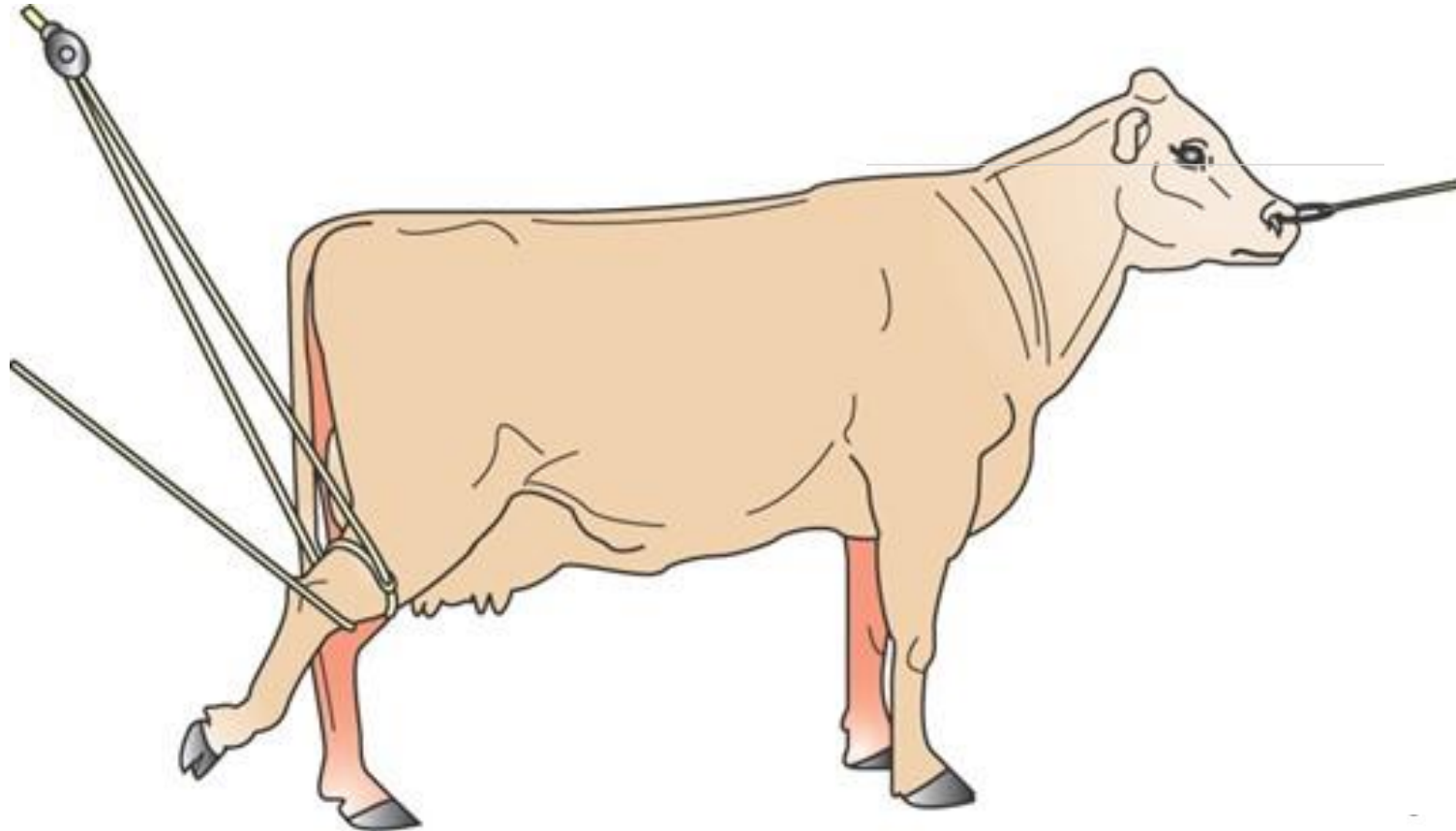
- The purpose of this restraint is to keep the cow's tail out of the way during udder treatment or calving
- Tie the tail over the back to the opposite for limb



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10.7 Hind leg Restraint

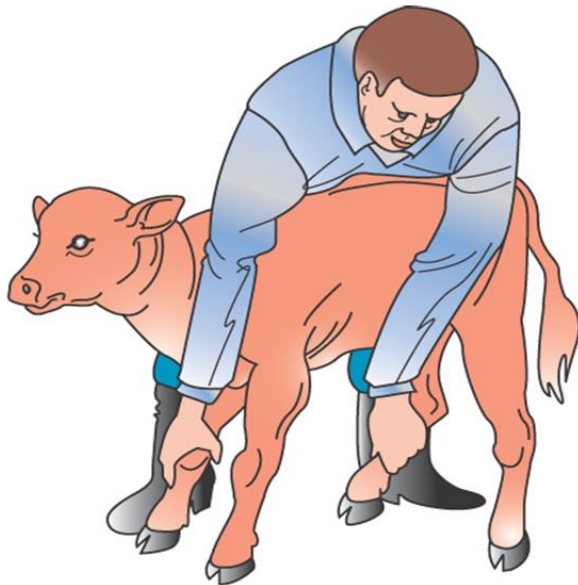
- Is used for example in case of lameness/h hoof trimming to make work very simple/easy.



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10.8 Calf Restraint

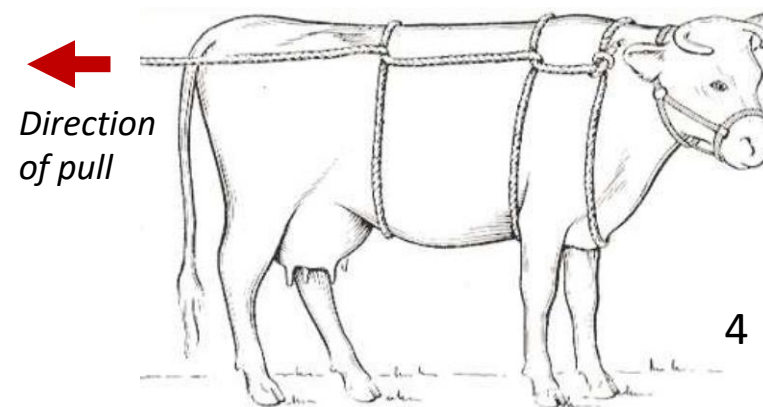
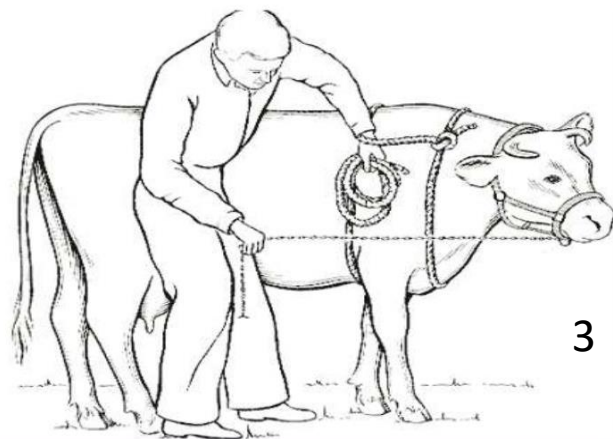
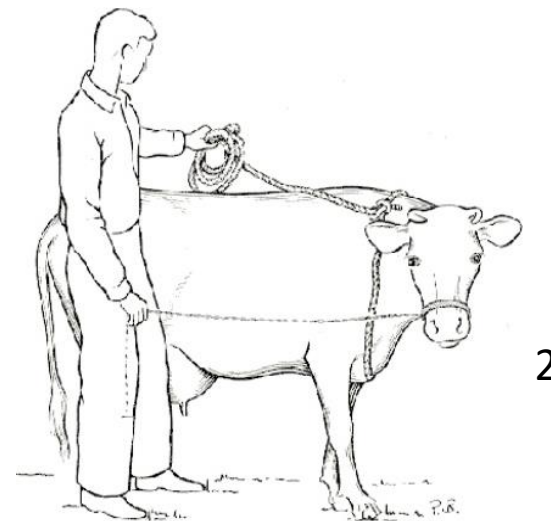
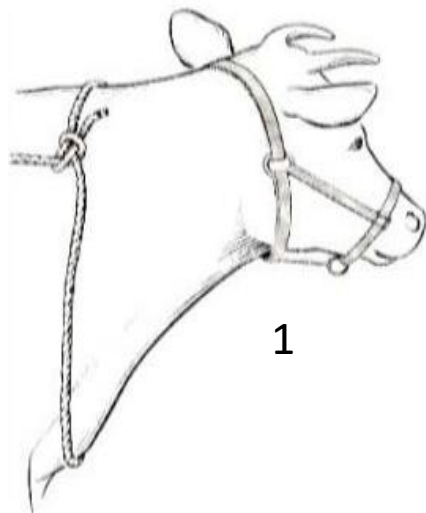
- Flanking the calf might be necessary for example when dehorning.
- The handler's legs are used to slide the calf to the ground. Do not put your entire weight on the calf. Do not occlude the trachea.



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10.9 Rope Squeeze

- This the standard method of casting a cow
- By pulling the rope in stage four(4) the cow will be forced to lay down.



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11. Summary (Quick Take home)

1. Handling cows in a correct and decent way always pays back
2. Cows will treat you like you treat them
3. Cows are happy and friendly when you are happy and friendly
4. Cows/animals are more productive and healthier if they have no fear
5. Cow handling starts when calves are young. The socialization phase with humans must take place from day 0, otherwise the calves will run wild.
6. Cows have a very good memory system, they will remember/they will not forget
7. Cows have their own body language, try to understand
8. If restraining is necessary, do it quietly.



- END -