Best Practices of Handling
IDENTIFICATION

Funep

Anita Schmidek - Hugo Durán - Mateus J. R. Paranhos da Costa

Keeping records on cattle breeding and performance of herds is an important tool to promote the efficiency in livestock farming. Monitoring information on weight gain, reproduction and mortality, as well as on the use of products (vaccines, medicines, food, etc.) and on the conditions of the facilities and equipment allows producers to check the performance of their herds, to control the handling procedures and to identify the critical factors that need to be addressed. Therefore, it is easier to identify and solve the problems that occur in day-to-day work at beef cattle farms when the animals are identified. Adopting individual identification of cattle is an important step in any information recording system. Ideally, this procedure should be made as soon as possible, preferably in the first days of calf life or shortly after the arrival of an animal in the property.

Best practices of Identification - step-by-step

1. The procedures of cattle identification should be planned and organized in advance.
2. First of all, define the method of identification to be used; then, where it will be performed, which animals will be identified and who will be responsible for this task.
3. Check if facilities, equipment and supplies are available, clean and in good order. Always use high quality equipment and supplies.
4. The people in charge of cattle identification should be well trained.
5. Before starting work, define the roles of each team member.
6. Set a pace of work to ensure that identification is well done. Do not work in a rush, do it very calmly and attentively.
7. Except for newborn calves, all animals must be taken to the corral for the identification. Preferably use a squeeze chute to restrain each animal, individually, and perform beef cattle identification when the animal is well restrained.
8. Drive the animals to the corral carefully, without running nor screaming.
9. Organize the identification numbers (or codes) to facilitate their use.
10. Avoid mistakes! Make sure that the identification code is correct before applying it on the animal's body.
11. Monitor animals regularly after identification; do so more frequently in the first few weeks, and mainly in situations of greater risk of myiasis.
12. If the animal is very agitated, wait a little until so it calms down, before positioning the mark.
13. In case of myiasis or inflammations, treat the animal as soon as possible, following recommendations of a veterinarian.

The ear tattoos

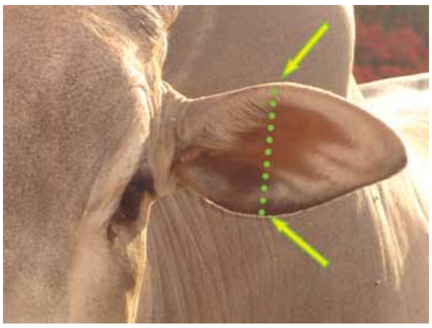
14. Do not tattoo on the ear ridges or in areas with thick veins and much fur.
15. Thoroughly clean the local of the ear where the tattoo will be applied.
16. Spread the ink on the spot to be tattooed. The area covered by the paint should be larger than the tattoo.
17. Use black ink for animals with light skin and green for dark skin.
18. Position the tattoo pliers in the correct location. Press until you pierce the skin of the ear.
19. Remove the tattoo pliers carefully. Spread more ink over the tattoo rubbing it gently.

The application of ear tags

20. It is recommended to apply ear tags in cooler and drier months.
21. In periods of rain and heat, it is recommended to pierce the ear of the calf before applying the ear tag. The hole must be 6 mm. Place the ear tag only after the healing of the hole.
22. The ear tag pliers should be upright ("standing"); avoid horizontal ("lying") position.
23. Fit the ear tags to the central part of the ear and between the two main ridges.

Hot branding

24. Do not apply hot branding on cattle body during rainy days, nor when the animals are wet or dirty.
25. The brand should be very hot (red-hot).
26. Position the brand firmly in the correct position and press, without much force, for a second. Do not do sudden movements.



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