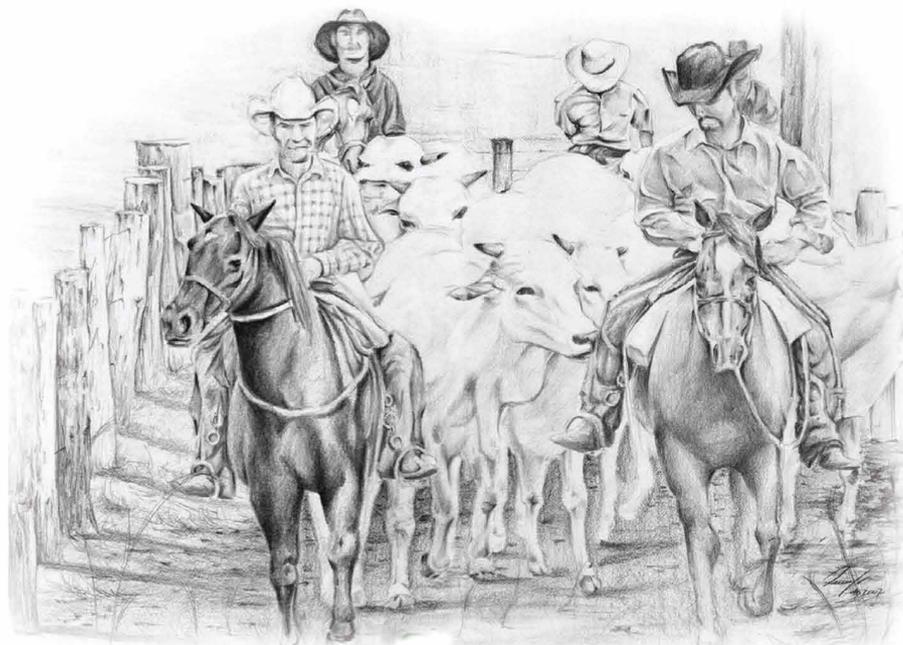
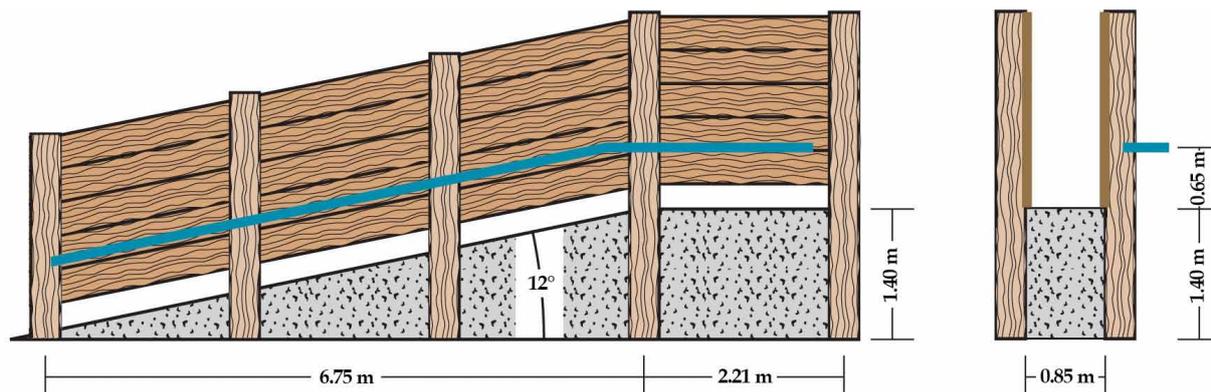


Best Practices of Handling CATTLE LOADING



Mateus J. R. Paranhos da Costa - Ana Lúcia Garcia Spironelli - Murilo Henrique Quintiliano

Mishandling of cattle during loading causes stress and increases the risk of accidents. This usually results in animal suffering and economic losses, due to the higher incidence of bruises in the carcasses. Aiming to reduce these problems, we are presenting this summary of best practices of cattle loading with useful guidelines for the improvement of the efficiency and safety of this procedure.



Best practices of cattle loading - step-by-step

1. Make a good planning of all the activities required for cattle loading.
2. Be sure that the documents needed for cattle transportation are in order.
3. Plan the arrival of the trucks at the farms to avoid long waits for the drivers.
4. Ensure that the access roads to the corral are in good conditions for truck traffic; otherwise, provide support for the drivers in the locals with problems.
5. Be sure facilities and equipments are in good working conditions.
6. Organize the boarding, defining the tasks of each worker.
7. Define the person who will be responsible for cattle loading, and be sure that the number of people is enough to run the procedure in a good manner.
8. When loading less than 50% of the cattle from a lot, do the on-site (pasture or paddock) separation, driving to the corral only the animals that will be shipped.
9. When loading most of the cattle from a lot (more than 50%), drive all of them to the corral and do the sorting.
10. Always drive the animals calmly, keeping a cowboy in the front of the lot.
11. In the case of animals housed in pastures which are very distant from the corral, drive them to a pasture near to it at least one day in advance.
12. Distribute the animals in the corral pens, leaving at least half of the pen area free. This facilitates carrying out the handling procedures and make them less stressful for the animals.
13. The corral is a place of work, so minimize the time the animals stay there.
14. Do not load the animals just after long walks.
15. In case of weighing the animals before boarding, do it carefully and calmly.
16. Use the weighing procedure to sort the animals and form the lots for boarding.
17. Form the loading lots according to the capacity of each load compartment.
18. Do not leave the animals without drinking water, especially when they wait to be loaded. Keep them in areas with free access to drinking water and shade.
19. Do not identify the animals just before boarding.
20. Do not mix animals from different lots or categories.
21. Check the conditions of the trucks (maintenance and cleaning). Only proceed with loading when everything is in order.
22. The cowboys are responsible for driving and boarding cattle.
23. Respect the load capacity of each compartment of the truck, considering the category of animals to be loaded.
24. Only drive to the loading ramp the exact number of animals for each load compartment of the truck.
25. If an animal refuses to board, be calm, never hit the animal with sticks or stones. Use the electric rod with adequate voltage and amperage only in critical situations.
26. Never drag an animal for boarding.
27. Arrange the group of cattle in each loading compartment.
28. After filling a load compartment, close it and repeat the process until loading is completed.

