

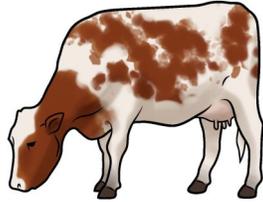
Livestock Psychology 101



Get the Training! If you're new to working with livestock be honest with your supervisor about your abilities. Workers handling cattle (or any livestock) need to be well trained in animal care, production standards, animal welfare, regulations and workplace safety. One of the best ways to learn about working with cattle is to observe and mentor with an experienced handler. Use this page to take notes when talking about assessing individuals or a herd. Does one animal appear to be more nervous than the others? What are the warning signs for an animal who has had enough? How could behavior change due to illness?

Content

- Grazing or chewing cud
- Ears in neutral position
- Nostrils moving naturally
- Head in natural position
- Relaxed stance
- Eyelids relaxed



Calm

- Grazing or chewing cud
- Relaxed face
- Standing or laying down
- Head in natural position
- Eyelids relaxed



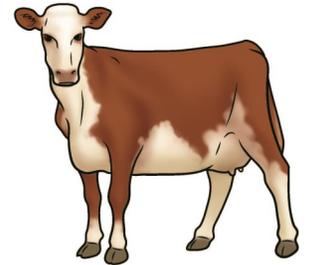
Curious

- Eyes open, watching with interest
- Ears perked
- Alert stance



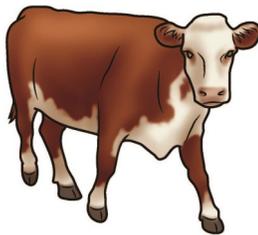
Alert

- Eyes open, watching or staring
- Ears perked forward
- Alert stance
- Head up



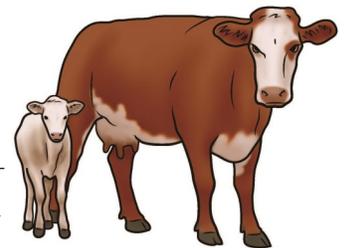
Nervous or Uncertain

- Head up
- Alert stance (or stiff stance)
- Staring
- Eyes wide and may see some 'whites' of the eye showing
- Quick switches of the tail



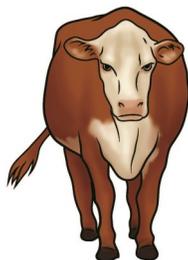
Protective

- Head up
- Shaking or tossing head
- Eyes wide, staring intently
- Quick switches of the tail
- Snorting



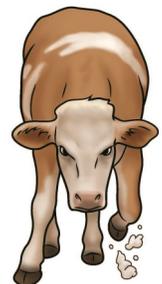
Agitated

- Staring intently
- Shaking or tossing head
- Appears ready to react
- Quick switches of the tail
- Snorting forcefully



Aggressive (or pushed too far)

- Staring intently
- Shaking or tossing head
- Pawing the ground
- Showing their sides
- Ready to charge, may put head low



NOTE: These are some general points about cattle behaviour. Each animal has the capacity to react in its own unique way to situations and stimulation. Care should be taken around all livestock. Workers should discuss livestock handling with an experienced handler and take a livestock handling courses before beginning to work with livestock. This poster is designed to be used as a conversational training aid and is not sufficient as a stand-alone guide.