

What's the Value of Low-Stress Stockmanship from a Feed Yard's Perspective?



Quite simply, it is a requirement for a sustainable future...



Today's roadmap...

- What does my farm look like?
- What role does low stress stockmanship play in my business plan?
- How do I define low stress stockmanship?
- Why is it important that it begins at birth?
- What is it's role in the future?



- Native of Palm Beach County Florida
- Cum Laude graduate from Dartmouth College—major in psychology—1997
- Married into agriculture and moved to Nebraska after college graduation.

- Today, our farm consists of:
- 3000 head cattle feed yard
 - 4700 acres of alfalfa, corn, wheat and soybeans
 - 600 acres of grass pasture
 - Alfalfa Dehydration Plant

*We grow a blend of traditionally raised and organic crops. Our cattle are Progressive Beef Certified and marketed through the Beef Marketing Group Cooperative.



My Business Plan: A reflection of me...

- Vertical collaboration to both reduce animal stress and improve product quality and efficiency.
- Tracing vaccine and health history on in coming cattle --- buying private treaty to build relationships and ease transportation stress.
- Professional veterinary and nutritional consultants
- Cattle Acclimation and using the teachings of Low Stress Handling
- Careful bunk reading techniques and timely delivery of feed.
- Clean and comfortable home pens



We may not make any more money, but we are all happier at the end of the day...

Why Acclimate?

- Teach cattle to recognize that the home pen is where they want to be.
- Teach cattle to walk in straight lines -- exit the home pen -- travel with confidence down the alleyway and into the corral -- walk past a handler with some element of trust.
- Cattle gravitate toward the feed bunk and water tank more quickly; thereby going on feed more smoothly.
- Enables safer, more effective handler --animal interactions which increases safety at the feed yard.
- Comfortable Cattle = More efficient feed conversion and higher quality beef.
- Acclimated cattle are easier to handle and make the daily workload of the crew more enjoyable.



5 lessons learned from my cattle...

- Proper preconditioning is vital to animal performance.
- A calf must be bred with an innate desire to live (vigor), and phenotypically capable of remaining healthy all of the way to the packing plant.
- Limiting stress is critical for both calf health and performance. To effectively limit stress, cattle caregivers must work together in order to continuously meet the needs of the calf.
- Cattle's past experiences help to determine the future.
- It is the little things that count. Paying attention to detail when caring for a prey animal is a critical component for success. Learn to "think like a calf" so that you can set him up for success.

What words describe low stress stockmanship?

- Caregiver
- Trust
- Communication
- Effective
- Quiet
- [Freedom to Thrive](#)
- Healthy Animals



The report card ends at the packing plant, not when the calf leaves the ranch...

Low Stress Stockmanship affects:

- Morbidity
- Mortality
- Feed Conversion
- Carcass Quality
- Food Safety
- Worker Safety

It is something that we can control, and it leads to sustainable beef.

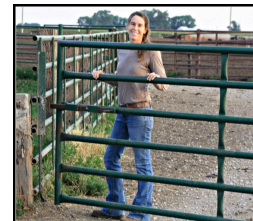


Anne's Crystal Ball: The future of beef production...

It will include:

- Teamwork -- Collaboration
- Reduced antibiotic use
- Improvement in resource efficiency
- Increased transparency with customers
- Continued focus on food safety and animal welfare

The farm gate divides but it does not hide.



Attitude will determine if they have a future in the journey of beef production...



Growing food is much like a distance race: What role will you play? Are you prepared to "pack" in order to be successful in the long run?

