
Animal Science

Info Series: AS-B 210
The University of Tennessee
Agricultural Extension Service



IDENTIFYING AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF A CATTLE HANDLING FACILITY

Beef Cattle producers need good cattle handling facilities to perform necessary management practices. To insure the safety of the animal and the producer the facility must be properly designed and maintained. Facilities also need to allow for the working of animals with a minimum of stress. Periodically a producer needs to do a “walk through” of the handling facility at the animal’s eye level to determine if improvements are needed. Below are a few questions designed to help identify those areas that need improving.

Headgate

	<u>Yes/No</u>		
Is headgate in good repair and freely moving?	_____	Is lighting adapted to prevent shadows from falling across the chute?	_____
Is headgate free of sharp of objects?	_____	Is the bottom half of the working chute built with solid walls?	_____
Is headgate free of problems that can be corrected?	_____	Is chute tall enough to keep from animals from jumping over?	_____
Is the headgate placed so cattle are moving toward a lighted area?	_____		
Does headgate operate quietly?	_____		

Chute

Is chute designed to allow for easy access to the animal’s neck?	_____
Is the chute adjustable or 26 inches or less wide?	_____
If the side opens, does it operate freely?	_____
Does the chute have a solid bottom that minimizes slippage?	_____
Is the chute free of sharp objects?	_____

- Is a blocking gate in the chute? _____
- Is a cutting gate in the chute? _____
- Is there gate in chute to allow access for pregnancy checking? _____
- Are overhead braces in chute high enough to prevent head bumping? _____
- Do you have a funnel or crowding gate to get cattle into chute? _____
- Do you have a solid crowding gate to push cattle into chute? _____
- Do gates operate quietly? _____

Holding Pen

- Is holding pen constructed of heavy weight materials? _____
- Is the height of the holding pens adequate to prevent animals from jumping over? _____
- Is holding pen free of sharp objects? _____
- Is holding pen in good repair? _____
- Is holding pen easily accessible to the crowding pen, working alley and squeeze chute? _____
- Are gates in holding pen located at corners to facilitate moving cattle in and out? _____

Did you answer “yes” to each of the questions? If not, then you have identified areas that need to be improved. If you need assistance in determining how to make improvements or redesigning your facility, contact your local Agricultural Extension Office.

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Additional information on managing beef cattle can be obtained by contacting your local Agricultural Extension Service Office or from the Animal Science Home Page: www.utextension.utk.

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