Basic Animal Husbandry
Caring for the Needs of Farm Animals
Animal Requirements

- Adequate fodder quality and quantity
- Sufficient access to clean drinking water
- Clean sheds of sufficient size and with adequate light and fresh air
- Sufficient freedom to move around
Animal Requirements

• Healthy conditions

• Sufficient contact with other animals, but no stress due to overcrowding

• For herd animals: an appropriate age and sex distribution within the herd
Animal Requirements

Factors Determining Numbers

• Fodder Availability
• Carrying capacity of pastures
• Size of shelters
• Amount of manure the fields can handle
• Available labor for looking after the animals
Housing

- Sufficient space to lie down, stand up, move
- Sufficient light
- Protection from sunlight, rain, and extreme temperatures
- Sufficient ventilation, but no draft
Housing

• Appropriate beddings

• Elements to exercise natural behavior

• Sheltered pits or heaps to collect and store manure
Housing

Bedding:
• Keeps floor soft, dry, and clean
• Absorbs excrement and needs to be replaced
• Straw, leaves, twigs, husks can be used
Feeding

• Diverse and balanced mixture of food

• Grazing and shed feeding have advantages & disadvantages

• Fodder cultivation can be integrated

• Overgrazing is a major threat to soil fertility
Feeding

Grazing:
• Less labor
• Requires more land
• Productivity lower
• More exercise
• Dung spread on pasture

Shed Feeding:
• More labor
• Requires less land
• Productivity higher
• Less exercise
• Dung easily collected
Feeding

• Pastures must be managed
• Overgrazing is most significant threat
• Rehabilitate pasture land with improved grass varieties
Animal Health Care

Considerations:
- Bacteria, Viruses, Parasites
- Amounts & quality of water, fodder, & exercise
- Housing
- Hygiene
- Social contacts
- Man-animal interaction
- Breed / variety
- Veterinary care
Animal Health Care

Causes of Disease:

• Germs: bacteria, viruses, protozoa
• Parasites: worms, insects
  – infestations: external parasites
  – infectious: internal disease
• Injury: handling, facilities
• Inherited Genes
• Poor Nutrition: easiest to correct
  – toxic materials in plants, nitrogen content
  – chemicals for insect control
Animal Health Care

Sources of Disease:
• Infectious Disease
  – spread by contact
• Confinement Systems
  – disease easily spread
• Animal Waste
  – host for germs
Animal Health Care

Sources of Disease:

• Water & feed
  – chemical residues, waste

• Air
  – germs, chemicals, mosquitos host disease

• Soil-borne Disease
  – live in soil
    • anthrax: bury animals deep, cover with lime or burn
    • do NOT drag dead animals
    • alternate pastures
Animal Health

Diseases divided according to how rapid they progress:

• Acute
  – rapid progression (cholera, bloat, mastitis)
  – generally have a rapid increase in body temperature

• Chronic
  – last a long time (cancer), costly to fight

• Some are localized
  – mastitis, pink eye
Animal Health

Vital Signs:

• Pulse
  – high under left fore flank or over jawbone

• Respiration
  – rate of breathing

• Temperature
  – rectal temperature most reliable
  – rise of 3 deg F is considered serious

• Symptoms
  – not eat, isolate self, lack alertness, mucous discharge, droopy, lowered head, swelling, bleeding, abnormal bowel movements, worms in feces, unusual walk, abnormal behavior
Animal Health Care

Prevention:
• Keep breeds adapted to local environment & available food

• Herd Health Plan
  – Provide adequate nutrition & clean, fresh water
  – Maintain adequate livestock facilities; avoid overcrowding
  – Keep facilities clean and disinfected
  – Use proper immunization
  – Develop procedure for parasite control
  – Isolate new or returning animals for 3-4 weeks before combining with herd
  – Rotate pastures
  – Keep animal stress to a minimum
  – Control possible disease spread by visiting humans
  – Work closely with veterinarian in developing prevention programs as well as treating diseases
Animal Health Care

• Veterinary health care
  – Vaccination: build up antibodies to fight disease

• Some diseases (tetanus) animals can’t be saved once they show signs
  – separate from herd
  – humanely kill and dispose of

• Parasite control
  – worming usually done in spring
Animal Health Care

Veterinary Care Guidelines:

• Management practices should be directed toward the well-being of the animal

• Sick & injured animals should be given prompt and adequate treatment

• Vaccinations/de-worming should be used only when diseases/parasites are known or expected to be a problem in the region
Breeding Goals

• High fertility

• Good resistance against disease

• Long life with continuous production

• Able to utilize roughage and farm by-products
Animal Welfare

• Treat animals well
• Provide for their natural behavior
• Prevent suffering and death
Questions?