

IMPROVING SAFETY IN CATTLE HANDLING ON FARMS

RESULTS OF A SURVEY CARRIED
OUT BY THE HSE IN THE COUNTIES
OF THE SOUTH WEST

THE PROBLEM

- INCREASING ACCIDENTS ON FARMS DURING CATTLE HANDLING
- INVOLVE FARMERS/FARM WORKERS AND VISITING AGENCIES
- FACTORS INVOLVED
 - THE ANIMAL
 - THE FACILITIES ON FARM
 - TRAINING AND COMPETENCE

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

- QUESTIONNAIRES DEVELOPED WITH ASSISTANCE OF BCVA, DEFRA ANIMAL HEALTH AND OTHERS
- DESIGNED TO OBTAIN FACT AND OPINION ON VETERINARY ISSUES INCLUDING
 - TRAINING IN CATTLE HANDLING
 - ACCIDENT AND INJURY HISTORY
 - HANDLING FACILITIES ON FARMS
 - IMPROVEMENTS REQUIRED

- POSTED TO VETS AND VET PRACTICE MANAGERS IN COUNTIES OF SOUTH WEST
- REPLIES ANALYSED AND REPORT PRODUCED

TRAINING IN CATTLE HANDLING

- MAJORITY STATED NO FORMAL TRAINING AT VET SCHOOL
- MAJORITY STATED NO FORMAL TRAINING FROM EMPLOYER
- LEARNED BY OBSERVING EXPERIENCED VETS
- MINORITY STATED SOME TRAINING/EXPERIENCE FROM HOME FARM

HIGH RISK ACTIVITIES WITH CATTLE

- TB TESTING
- CASTRATION
- LAMENESS
- CALVING
- BULLS
- PREGNANCY TESTING

SUPPORTED BY INCIDENCE OF REPORTED INJURIES

MAJOR DEFICIENCIES IN FARM FACILITIES

- LACK OF CRUSH/RACE
- POORLY MAINTAINED CRUSH/RACE
- UNSUITABLE CRUSH/RACE
- SECURED WITH BALER TWINE
- LACK OF FARM LABOUR/UNTRAINED LABOUR
- RUST, SHARP EDGES, POOR HEAD LOCKING, POOR FOOTING
- GENERALLY FACILITIES WORSE ON BEEF FARMS
- HOBBY FARMS

FEATURES DESIRED ON CRUSH

- GOOD ACCESS TO BOTH SIDES
- ACCESS FOR TB TEST
- SEPARATE OPENING/REMOVABLE PANELS
- SCISSOR/SELF-LOCKING YOKE
- ADJUSTABLE YOKE SETTINGS
- ADJUSTABLE RUMP BAR
- BELLY BAND
- FOOT WINCH
- SOLID FLOOR
- COMBINED WITH ADEQUATE, WELL DESIGNED RACE. SECURE, NO STRING,

THE ANIMAL

- BEEF CATTLE, SELDOM HANDLED
- CONTINENTALS – LIMOUSIN,
BLONDE d'AQUITAINE
- HORNED BREEDS
- FAILURE TO DISBUD

SUMMARY OF ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

- TB TESTING
- TRAINING IN CATTLE HANDLING
- INADEQUATE HANDLING FACILITIES AND LABOUR SHORTAGE ON FARMS
- DESIGN OF CRUSH AND RACE
- ENFORCING A MINIMUM STANDARD OF FACILITIES ON FARMS
- MOBILE HANDLING FACILITIES?

WHY THIS WORKSHOP

‘ the results of the survey have demonstrated the strength of feeling with regard to health and safety issues in veterinary work on farms. These issues involve various parties including vets, farmers, manufacturers of cattle handling equipment, Government Departments etc.

It would be beneficial to bring the various parties together to share information and develop a way forward to improve the health and safety of those persons required to handle and work with cattle on farms.’