



Stock Handling Procedure Manual



This document has been created to ensure best practice around the handling of stock during all NZ Young Farmers events. This will ensure the safety of all involved in our events including the wellbeing of the animals.

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Choosing the right animals

When choosing animals for your event you need to ensure that the animals will be comfortable in the environment and that you have the correct person involved in handling stock and overseeing this section of your event

- Show stock – the ideal first choice, particularly when working with larger animals. They are use to being in environments with lots of people and different noises, plus they are usually selected with better temperament for handling.
- If show stock are not available, then stock need to be as quiet as possible to ensure safety of both handlers and stock. Remember there is media everywhere and upset/angry stock is not a good look especially if they or someone gets hurt.
- Minimum number of animals – if you are separating animals in the module ensure that an animal is not left on its own at any time with the exception of being in a crush. This can cause the animal to stress and become dangerous. We recommend for best practice the following minimums:
 - Large animals i.e. cattle – minimum of four
 - Small animals i.e. sheep – minimum of four
- Using more than one animal in your module – if running a module like saddling up a horse, look to use more than one animal for the module. A horse, no matter how well trained, might not want to be saddled by someone who doesn't know what they are doing 8 times over the day. With other animals this is imperative.
- No pigs or any animals outside of the ordinary farm stock are to be used. The only exception is if adult pigs are used in a specific module and they must be supervised by their owner or pork industry professional.

Animal Welfare

To ensure the animals are comfortable and do not become stressed it is best practice to bring feed for the animals. Ensure that the farmer you are borrowing the animals off is happy with the feed supplied. Stock must also have access to water, shelter where possible and enough room to move so as to reduce undue stress on them.

The location where the stock are should be off to the side and away from the main flow of people/traffic. This is to ensure the stock do not feel under pressure at any time.

There is to be no lifting of animals unless in crush/crate that is designed for this purpose and is part of the module.



Securing the animals

- The use of permanent stockyards is best practice but not always an option.
- If permanent stockyards are not available, you need to ensure that adequate secondary fencing is in place to reduce the risk of the animals escaping. Temporary stock yards are acceptable as long as they are secured. This can be achieved by the use of pins, waratahs etc. or in the worst-case scenario lashed to a truck or heavy ute. The yards must not be able to move if, for example, stock get a fright and rushed to one side of the pen. The pen must also be large enough to allow the stock to move freely.
- Horses and show stock must be on lead at all times when outside of fenced area. They must be supervised by skilled animal handlers and when are not required, to be tied up at all times away from areas of direct traffic flow.
- Horses must always have a fenced off area around them to reduce the chance of a bystander getting kicked.
- Sheep must always have a second surrounding pen in case of jumping or gates must be across the top of pens at all times and tied down to prevent jumping.
- The truck/trailer that stock are brought to the site in must stay on-site throughout the day and a ramp to load the stock needs to be available at all times should the stock need to be removed.

Animal first aid

- When working with animals you must ensure that you either have a vet onsite and/or on call in case of an emergency. The number for the on call vet must be in the H&S paperwork as well as with the module paperwork.
- At Grand Final a vet onsite is compulsory when working with large animals or completing modules where animals could be harmed in front of a large audience i.e. shearing. The vet must carry suitable medications for sedation and an animal first aid kit.
- Be aware that if the vet is the judge of a module, they are not able to be counted as the on-site vet due to being tied up with their own module.

Bees and their hives

- When working with bee hives please ensure that they are either brand-new or are clean and have not been used for a long period. Fresh hives can cause bees to swam and create a hazard at events.
- Ensure you check prior to running a module with bees, that no competitors and volunteers involved have an allergy to bees.

If you have any further questions about the use of stock or how to handle them, please contact National Office and ask to speak with Carolyn Bennett.

