

Low-stress animal handling techniques on pasture/range

Ben Bailey, Lakeside, NE

These are some guidelines I keep in mind when handling livestock.

- Accept responsibility for what cattle are doing or not doing; if you were not there, would they be doing that.
- Be aware of the flight zone; watch for the ones with a larger flight zone when entering a pen or pasture.
- Try to work in straight lines; do not curve around.
- Movement *against* movement tends to speed it up while moving *with* movement tends to slow it down.
- Cattle like to see where pressure is coming from, so pressure from the side and front as much as possible.
- Cattle do not want you to be directly behind them for any length of time.
- When cattle turn and look at you, you are in too close or too far away.
- Teach cattle to move away from you in a straight line.
- Do not let cattle hook around you if they need to go straight. That being said, they want to come around you. When they trust and accept your pressure, they will walk off straight.
- When we work with our pairs, we try to teach the calves these things as soon as possible.