Activity scope

This document relates to student involvement in Stockyards as a curriculum activity. Stockyards can be defined as any area where live animals are handled and/or confined.

Risk level - High

Special considerations

- Any person in charge of an animal has a duty of care and is legally obliged to provide appropriate care for the animal and meet its needs in a reasonable way.
- Refer to the Animals in Education website for information about approval requirements and standard operating procedures for the use of animals in schools.
- Livestock should be assessed by a competent stockperson (e.g. agricultural teacher or assistant) as having suitable temperament and behaviour before they are used in a teaching situation.
- Livestock should be appropriately vaccinated.

Minimum activity-specific qualifications for supervisors

- For a registered teacher, competence (knowledge and skills) in safe stockyard procedures, OR
- For a leader other than a registered teacher:
  - an agricultural assistant employed by the Department of Education and Training with competence (knowledge and skills) in safe stockyard procedures, OR
  - another adult with demonstrated competence if no suitable teacher or agricultural assistant is available.

Minimum activity-specific equipment/facilities

- Stockyards and equipment are maintained and assessed to be in good working condition.
- All equipment, including personal protective equipment, meets Australian Standard specifications.
- Stock-handling aids are used in accordance with the manufacturer’s operating instructions and the relevant animal welfare code of practice.
- The flooring of stockyards should provide safe footings for operators and the stock being handled.
- Students should wear enclosed footwear appropriate for the activity, and suitable personal protective equipment when needed.

Activity-specific hazards/risks and suggested control measures

- Establish clear communication signals between instructors and students for situations where animals are manipulated in a stockyard.
- Ensure that a suitable location is selected and that other students are properly supervised while not actively receiving instruction.
- Be aware of the capacity and limitations of the stockyards, and of equipment and stock-handling aids being used, and work within these limitations.
- Design the stockyards to assist the smooth flow of stock and to reduce the risk of injury to the animals and operators – refer to Workplace Health and Safety Queensland stockyard design.
Remain aware that live animals are unpredictable and may react differently to similar stimuli, depending on factors such as stage in breeding cycle, age, sex, season, breed and training. Stockyard design should take these factors into account to limit potentially hazardous situations such as:
  o charging animals
  o crush injuries
  o kicking
  o lifting or manual handling.

Provide instruction and practice in the procedures and use of escape routes. Safe escape routes may include well-placed manways, easily accessible rails and footholds for climbing.

Ensure students maintain high levels of personal hygiene.

Remain aware of the allergen and disease risks associated with dust, dry matter and airborne organisms, e.g. Q fever.

Comply with relevant Workplace Health and Safety Queensland codes of practice.

Useful activity-specific links

- Animal contact guidelines – reducing the risk to human health 2014

- Animals in education

- Animal Use in Queensland State Schools

- Animal welfare codes of practice

- Preventing zoonoses

- Q fever in the school environment

- Workplace Health and Safety Queensland codes of practice

- Workplace Health and Safety Queensland stockyard design

Disclaimer:
This document is developed and distributed on this website by the State of Queensland for use by Queensland state schools. Use or adaptation of, or reliance on, this document or information in this document by persons or organisations other than the State of Queensland is at their sole risk. All users who use, adapt or rely on this document or any information in this document are responsible for ensuring by independent verification its accuracy, currency and appropriateness to their particular circumstances. The State of Queensland makes no representations, either express or implied, as to the suitability of this document or the information in this document to a user’s particular circumstances.

To the full extent permitted by law, the State of Queensland disclaims all responsibility and liability (including without limitation, liability in negligence) for all expenses, losses, damages and costs arising from the use or adaptation of, or reliance on, this document or any information in this document.

Links in this document to external websites are for convenience only and the State of Queensland has not independently verified the information on the linked websites. It is the responsibility of users to make their own decisions about the accuracy, currency, reliability and correctness of the information at these external websites.