

6.1 From calving to weaning

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Management practices

What management practices occur from calving to weaning time varies from one farm to another

Different for extensive N Australian beef farm (maybe rounded up 2-3 times per year) to S Australian beef enterprise where able to regularly round up herd to yards

This section covers common management practices from birth to weaning (noting age of weaning can be variable)



Dystocia (calving problems)

- Can be a common problem (varies with genetics and nutrition and sometimes disease)
- Mismatch between calf size and cow pelvis (feto-pelvic disproportion)
- Can also be how the calf is presented in utero e.g. coming backwards
- Common reason for a veterinarian to be called, range of tools that can be used to assist the calving process
- Sometimes calves are too big to be born naturally so may require a caesarean (done standing under local anaesthetic)
- Generally dystocia in cattle should be low (less than a few %), more problems in first calving heifers (less than 10%)



- Connect ropes/chains to legs (possibly to head)
- Some method to apply force (windlass/jack etc)

Calving Equipment

Showing 1-12 of 13 results

DEFAULT SORTING

SPARE PARTS



Calf Eze Calf Puller - Spare Parts
From: **\$47.50**

HOW TO BUY



Calf Snare
\$75

HOW TO BUY



Calving Chain - Nickel Plated - Quality - 150cm
\$59.95

HOW TO BUY

Calving Chain Handle Stainless Steel

\$24.50

HOW TO BUY



Calving Chain Stainless Steel - Quality
From: **\$32.75**

HOW TO BUY



Calving OB Strap - 150CM
\$24.95

HOW TO BUY



Calving Rope - Nylon
\$14.50

HOW TO BUY



Calving Straps - Low Trauma
\$35.95

HOW TO BUY

SPARE PARTS



<https://www.bainbridgevet.com.au/product-category/cattle-breeding/calving/>



Calf fostering

- In any enterprise there can be loss of calves in the birthing process, or loss of cows
- About 1 cow in 100-200 may also give birth to twins
- Sometimes may need to foster a calf onto another cow using skin of calf that has died or potential adding a strong smell to the foster calf and cows nose
- Once calf suckled a few times cow more likely to accept
- Ideally use calves from in own herd – otherwise biosecurity risk increased



Ear tags

- NLIS tags
 - Breeder
 - Post breeder (orange)
- Visual tags
 - Single piece
 - Dual tag (male and female)
- Apply in correct position
- Use correct applicator
- Several different companies
- Preprinted versus marker pen



Australian Year Colours

2016 = BLACK, 2017 = WHITE, 2018 = ORANGE, 2019 = GREEN, 2020 = PURPLE, 2021 = YELLOW, 2022 = RED, 2023 = BLUE Colours above repeat on an eight year cycle. Post Breeder = PINK (Please note, the year colour guide above is not compulsory when tagging cattle)

Colours*



*This Colour representation may vary in real products



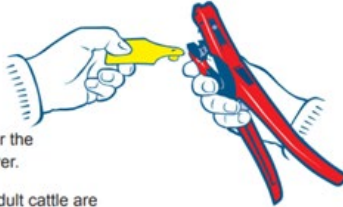
Universal (Red)

1



Ensure that the black insert is removed from the jaws of the Universal applicator.

2



Place the visual tag under the clip by depressing the lever.

It is recommended that adult cattle are restrained in a head bail for tagging.

3



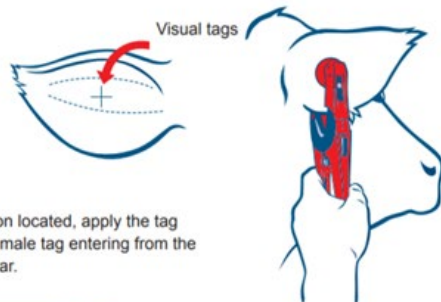
Slip male tag completely onto the application pin.

4



Dip jaws of applicator holding tag into antiseptic or disinfectant solution.
NB: Use disinfectant at recommended dilution ratios. Failure to do so may cause irritation.

5



With the correct position located, apply the tag firmly, always with the male tag entering from the back (outside) of the ear.



SUPER MAXI FEMALE 14



MAXI FEMALE 08



MAXI MALE 07



LARGE FEMALE 06



LARGE MALE 05



MAXI A-TAG 48



LARGE A-TAG 46



A-TAG FEEDLOT

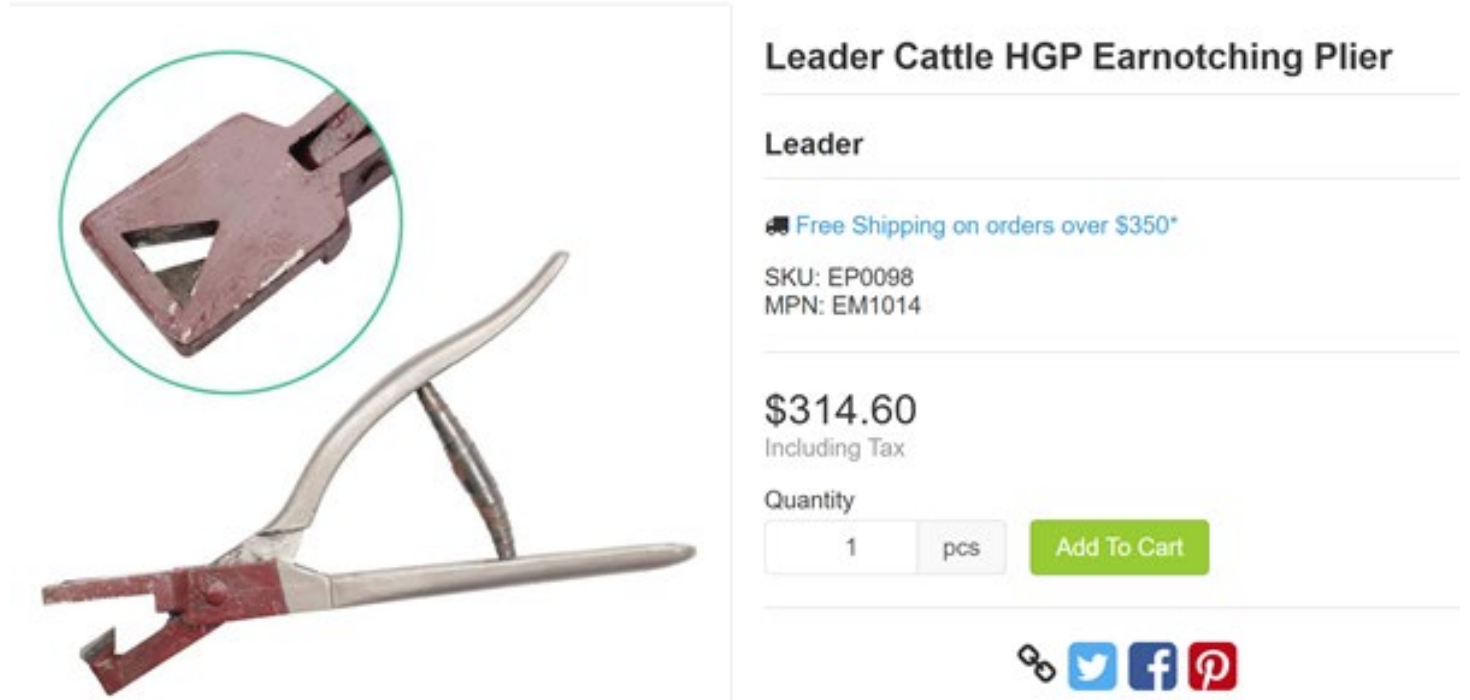


FEEDLOT TAG 40



Ear notch

- Becoming less common
 - HGP
 - Spey
- Still required in WA

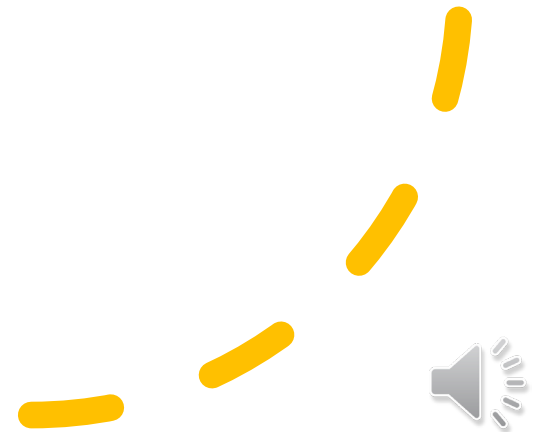


<https://www.everythingid.com.au/animal-husbandry-c-11/earmarking-branding-c-26/leader-cattle-hgp-earnotching-plier-p-136>



Ear tattoo

- Still relatively common in studs (lifelong ID)
- Used in addition to NLIS & frequently visual tag and sometimes branding
- Animal must be yarded to visualise tattoo (unless incredibly tame!)



Vaccination

- Large range of vaccines around the world
- Lesser number in Australia as some not needed (e.g. FMD)
- Most vaccinations are given under the skin (subcutaneous), most commonly using 16 or 18G needle
- Vaccination needles are generally short (about 1cm), whereas needles for intramuscular injection tend to be more than 2cm long – note that needle length often reported in imperial measure
- The gauge that reports the width of a needle comes from wire gauge measuring system



Common vaccinations

- Clostridial (often 5 in 1)
- Adding in Leptospirosis = 7 in 1
- Others
 - BRD
 - Johnes disease
 - Pestivirus
 - Pinkeye
 - 3 day sickness
 - Vibriosis
- Generally injected high in neck, under skin – but give according to label directions!
- Vaccine generally comes in a “pillow pack”
- Commonly given to calf 4-6 weeks apart and then yearly (but follow directions)



Castration

- Reduce aggressive bull behaviour
 - Bull injury
 - EHS
- Reduce infrastructure damage on fences etc
- Bulls grow more quickly than steers and less fat at same weight
- Good guide on process at <https://futurebeef.com.au/resources/castration/>
- Pain relief now available (registered)
- Ring/knife (+/- emasculator)/Burdizzo are options

S6.1 A person [castrating](#) or [dehorning cattle](#) must have the relevant knowledge, experience and skills, or be under the [direct supervision](#) of a person who has the relevant knowledge, experience and skills.



Dehorning/disbudding

- Can check full MLA guidelines at <https://futurebeef.com.au/resources/dehorning/>
- Dehorning beef calves generally done later than dairy as dairy calves are already in sheds so can be done in small batches
- Usually done in conjunction with ear tagging, castration, vaccination etc
- Variable age, depending on calving period duration and if 1 or more musters
- More variable in Northern Australia compared to Southern (generally)



Dehorning/disbudding

- Young calves use heat to disbud (<2 months age)
- Dehorning knife
- Scoop or cup (<12 mth) dehorner
- Guillotine, surgical wire, saw
- Pain relief

DEHORNER

Wire Saw Bridge
32cm 201 837 \$14.95
This 30cm long, all-steel bridge, can be used with dehorning wire (top view), or other convenient handle. This accomplishes a quick and efficient dehorning job on larger horns. But be sure to follow all usual dehorning rules and staunch bleeding. (Plugs 6.5mm dia.)

Wire Saw Forehand
Complete 201 854 \$14.95
handles (set) 201 853 \$15.95
Dehorning wire has been used for many years for removing mature or semi mature horns. This special wire is made of steel with very fine teeth. A short piece is tucked into the special handle and then simply used as a saw around the horn base, so close to the skull as possible. Change wire after 2 or 3 horns. Use hot iron up Dehorning Plucking to stop bleeding. Allow animal to stand quietly afterwards. (Do not mix immediately with other stock. Also useful for de-tailing horses.)

Lick Block Saver Cattle
32cm x 25cm 201 983 \$8.95
Australian 25kg calf and mineral lick-blocks are generally about 25cm x 25cm, as these will fit neatly in our blockholders from Liffa Grant, USA. The floor of the block holder is alone ground steel, and has holes for drainage, thus increasing block life. This is a durable product.

Book "Know Your Cattle"
214 654 \$17.95
The range of cattle to be seen on British farms is wide, a mixture of traditional breeds and imported stock. The book ranges from Ayrshire to Wagyu. Paperback, 96 pages, 46 photos, 2008.

DAIRY & BEEF
AUSTRALIA INDEX AT BACK.
Please use product codes when ordering

DEHORNER BARNES

BARNES DEHORNERS
Barnes dehorner offer a simple, efficient solution for calves up to about 10 months old. They are a low-cost tool used to scoop out the whole horn bud, which also with a ring of barbs at the base to prevent regrowth of regrowth. Use 32cm tool for calves up to 8 months, and 42cm tool for calves up to 10 months.

Economy
32cm 201 719 \$5.95
42cm 201 720 \$6.95
These "Economy" tools are quite adequate for the task. Jaws are generally from the same forms, and are standard and measured to 10 together. Do not make a perfect cut at all times. Jaw openings: L&R: 32cm x 42cm x 32cm, 42cm x 32cm x 32cm. Dimension is overall length.

Stone Mtg (USA)
32cm 201 730 \$10.95
42cm 201 732 \$10.95
42cm 201 733 \$10.95
These are quality US-manufactured tools from Stone Manufacturing in USA. They feature separately formed rear and outer jaws, which fit neatly together for a perfect cut with minimal force. The jaws are hardened to Rockwell-C5 standard, for very long life. Jaw openings: L&R: 32cm x 42cm x 32cm, 42cm x 32cm x 32cm, 42cm x 32cm x 32cm. Dimension is overall length.

Stainless Steel
32cm 201 738 \$10.95
This model is quality manufacture and features concentric jaws, which cut cleanly. Longer concave-free life and quality cut should be worth the extra cost. Jaw openings: L&R: 32cm x 32cm. Dimension is overall length.

Antler Saw Curved
32cm 201 829 \$15.95
High quality curved saw ideal for fast and clean removing of any livestock. Made from Japanese SK5 Sanyang sword steel with hard-chrome finish. Features 1000 gpm. hardened "Super Tooth" in-edge fast cut teeth (cleaned) possibly cut for best results. Blade length 32cm. Use only under veterinary supervision.

THESE PATCHES
Antiseptic Spray
Chlorine 500ml 201 823 \$12.95
Santal 500ml 201 824 \$14.95
Rage-E 500ml 201 825 \$16.95
Chlorine acts in the treatment of tropical infections and bacterial skin diseases, wounds, cuts and abrasions. Also helps killing flies and insects from wound sites.
Dehorner is an enzyme wound spray acts in the removal of pus and discharging tissue from wounds, scars and abrasions. It also promotes growth of healthy tissue and reduces scarring.
Rage-E kills and repels flies and other biting insects from dogs, cattle, horses, pigs and all animals.

Antiseptic Dusting Powder
200g 201 826 \$16.95
3kg 201 827 \$169.95
A very effective antiseptic and fungicide, with mild astringent properties. Especially suitable for use during dehorning, castrating or spraying.

DEHORNER

James Scully Convex Small
complete 201 824 \$109.00
handles 201 823 \$44.95
The small Convex is the ideal dehorner for use on younger stock up to about 10 months, and also for sheep and goats. The cutting action is quick and smooth, leaving a clean stump for healed recovery. Blade opening is 40mm. Length 18cm. o.s. Weight 3.7kg. Handle 10cm o.s. supplied as each.

James Scully Convex Large
complete 201 819 \$109.00
handles 201 814 \$44.95
We recommend the large Convex for mature stock, but where horns are not at maximum growth, the "point" can be cut as easier to use than the Roundline style, and the tool is more rigid. Maximum blade opening 60mm. Replacement blade available. Handles 10cm long. Length 10cm o.s. Weight 7.3kg.

Farmland Yearling Stainless
complete 201 816 \$109.00
spt handles 201 817 \$22.95
spt blades set 201 812 \$66.95
spt tools set (13) 201 813 \$24.95
High quality model from Farmland. Fully improved model with new design and heavy-duty hinge joints. This is a higher quality tool with improved cutting efficiency. Quencher-like mechanism for repeat cutting action. Custom blades opening to 50mm. All stainless steel. Length 80cm o.s. Weight 2.4kg. Use this size dehorner for green horns only.

Shoof Upgraded James Scully Keystone**
spt 201 880 \$79.00
spt blades set 201 736 \$79.00
handles 201 814 \$44.95
This dehorner is regular US-manufactured James Scully, but has been modified by Shoof to overcome common original model with blade problems. Blade set is also compatible with either model Scully Keystone dehorner.

Tipper Moore US
complete 201 828 \$109.00
spt blades 201 829 \$22.95
This very solid cast-steel dehorner is specially made for tipping. It opens up to 40mm clear to take horn or horn tip. Blade of A&S hardened steel, tempered to retain good edge. Blade is replaceable. Handle slips prevent bruising. This tool is not beautiful, but will stand outside use no problem. Made in USA. Length 87cm overall.

Tipper Barrel
32cm 201 830 \$109.00
Our Barrel Tipper uses drop-forged hardened steel cutting blades for good cutting edge, and aluminum handles for lightness. Blades open to 60mm diameter. Length is 80cm o.s. Weight 1.4kg.

DAIRY & BEEF
AUSTRALIA INDEX AT BACK.
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ON SPECIAL

Antiseptic Spray
Chlorine 500ml 201 823 \$12.95
Santal 500ml 201 824 \$14.95
Rage-E 500ml 201 825 \$16.95
Chlorine acts in the treatment of tropical infections and bacterial skin diseases, wounds, cuts and abrasions. Also helps killing flies and insects from wound sites.
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Branding (fire)

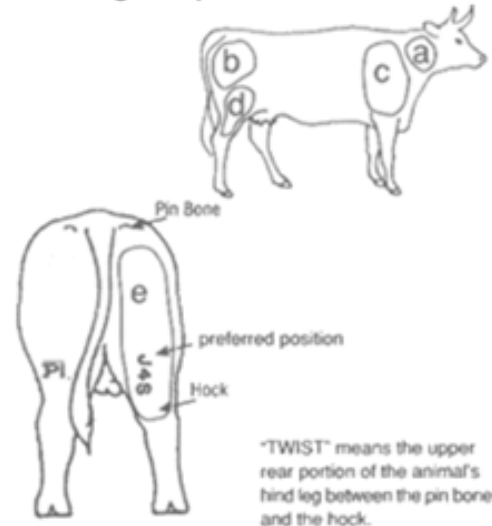
- Mostly done in northern extensive systems – limited access to freeze brand equipment (dry ice or liquid nitrogen)
- Each property has own registered brand to allow lifelong identification
- Useful in extensive enterprises where stock may wander eg loss of fences during wet season

Cattle branding positions

The first brander on cattle may imprint the registered three-piece brand or symbol brand on any of the following positions:

- a. neck
- b. rump
- c. shoulder
- d. thigh
- e. twist (the upper rear portion of the animal's hind leg between the pin bone and the hock).

It is illegal to place a brand on the ribs or cheek of cattle.



Drench

- Drenching historically = giving product *per os*
- More recently associated primarily with parasite control (by mouth, injection or pour-on)
- Different “families” of anthelmintics
- Timing of drenching varies between environments, less likely on more extensive enterprises due to lower numbers of parasites
- Some anthelmintics short acting, some longer
- Generally given at weaning time (and not before)



Weaning weight

- Relatively common to collect weight at weaning, particularly in stud enterprises (EBV)
- Assess growth on dam and need for further growth
- Electronic scale now common using NLIS



<https://am.gallagher.com/en-AU/Solutions/Weighing-and-EID-Solutions#case-studies>



Weaning process

- Yard weaned versus non (weaned via a fence or weaned out of sight e.g. move to a different property away from dams)
- Yard weaning useful as an education process for young stock, feedlots prefer yard weaned stock as calmer in that environment
- Allows contact with people, vehicles, dogs etc
- Nanny cattle (older cattle) may be used

