



# Approaching Livestock

## fact sheet

### How to handle animals

- **Be calm.** Always approach livestock calmly and slowly. Do not jump up and down or yell to get their attention.
- **Smells.** Reduce or eliminate smells
- **Distractions.** Remove all distractions (e.g., loose plastic or boxes, etc.) from the area where you will work with them. Animals can be scared by unfamiliar objects.
- **Reduce the time you work with them.** Be organized and have a plan prior to working livestock. (Animals can get more excited if they are not used to being penned.)

**Blind spots** are areas where an animal cannot see you. They are important as animals can be scared (and become dangerous) if you suddenly appear close to them.

#### Horses

<b>Blind spot</b>	Can't see directly in front or behind
<b>How to approach</b>	Approach at the neck and always make them aware of you as you walk behind them so they don't kick you.
<b>Potential danger</b>	Use back legs to kick behind them.
<b>Sign of aggression</b>	Ears pinned back

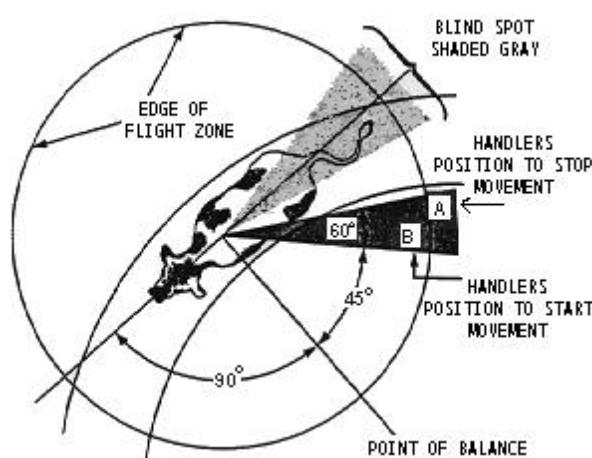
Note: the blind spot of cattle is similar to that of horses)

#### Camels

<b>How to approach</b>	Approach at the neck and <b>be cautious!</b>
<b>Potential danger</b>	Can kick in all directions with all 4 legs.
<b>Sign of aggression</b>	When excited may spit; Although typically not aggressive except during breeding season.

#### Flight Zone for animals you herd (Cattle, Sheep, and Goats)

The flight zone is an imaginary circle around an animal. When you are outside the zone, animals show interest and will face you. If all the animals are facing you, you are outside the flight zone.



Inside the flight zone, animals will usually turn and move away from you. If you are too close, the animal will either run away or if it can't run from you, it will turn and run back past you. On approaching animals, when the first animal turns to move away, you have entered the animal's flight zone.

**Moving animals:** To make an animal move forward: move slowly to where they can see you and within the flight zone (dark area in the figure).

To cause the animal to back up: stand in front of the point of balance (See figure).

**Reference and Figure:** Gill et al., Cattle Handling pointers. [extension.usu.edu/BEHAVE](http://extension.usu.edu/BEHAVE)

Prepared by Rebecca Atkinson (SIU) and Mark Bell, September 2011

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