

Quite often it is necessary to pull cattle found sick in the afternoon or evening. Set rules must be followed:

1. Pull because of visible signs only.
2. Start medication with TREATMENT NO. 1, tag and put the animal in the sick pen.
3. If the body temperature is above 104°F *the next morning*, change treatment.
4. If the body temperature is below 104°F, repeat the treatment.

Elevated body temperatures obtained in the afternoon would seldom, if ever, be meaningful and should not be used as criteria for sickness.

Repeated antibiotic injections into the same area (muscle) of the body will often result in inflammation of the tissues surrounding the injection site. This inflammation is exhibited by a body temperature rise, a swelling at the injection sites, and soreness which may cause the animal to become lame. Be alert for soreness which may occur after multiple treatments. This soreness, causing a lack of movement, may be erroneously interpreted as "DEPRESSION". One can expect to encounter a rise in body temperature of 1-2°F after an animal has received 3-4 treatments of erythromycin. If this occurs it will be necessary to evaluate the animal by its appetite and other physical signs. To reduce the possibility of causing tissue inflammation, *the injection sites should be alternated from one side of the animal to the other on a daily basis*. A simple routine to insure that the injection sites are alternated is to label one side of the chute EVEN and the other side ODD. Then on the EVEN days of the month, inject the animal on the EVEN side; and on the ODD days of the month, inject on the ODD side.

Electronic Thermometer/Body Temperature

The electronic thermometer is a tool which is very useful for detecting animals which have an elevated body temperature. Cattle *do not* maintain a body temperature within a very narrow range such as humans. In the normal regulation of body temperature, cattle let their temperature fluctuate many degrees rather than expend energy to hold it constant. Under stress conditions, cattle temperatures may range from about 100 to 108 degrees, and follow a diurnal pattern. (Low temperatures in the morning and high temperatures in the afternoon, not dropping until 4-6 a.m.) The magnitude of the fluctuation is effected by the environmental temperature and humidity as well as the stress of transportation. The diurnal variation occurs irregardless of the seasonal environmental changes.

The magnitude of temperature fluctuation in cattle may be as great as 6-7 degrees immediately after arrival and then gradually settles into a normal diurnal variation of 2-3 degrees after the cattle have adjusted to the new environment (usually 7-14 days).

Another problem encountered when using body temperatures is that the normal body temperature rises with movement or excitement of the animal. However, it appears that when body temperatures *are at their diurnal lows and are not elevated by the stresses of movement*, animals exhibiting fevers due to infections may be separated from the normal cattle with a thermometer. Identification of sick animals using the electronic thermometer has been very useful for the inexperienced stocker handler when used with the following limitations:

1. **Newly-arrived cattle should be divided into groups of not over 25 head and allowed to rest overnight with free access to hay and water.**
2. **Processing and the taking of body temperatures starts at dawn and is completed within three hours.**
3. **No animal is out of its pen or waiting for processing for over 30 minutes.**
4. **Extra care must be taken to move the cattle through processing with a minimum of excitement or stress. Body temperatures need to be taken when the animal first enters the chute.**

The use of the electronic thermometer under conditions which conflict with the above four conditions could result in misleading body temperatures.