Your calves will be worth more on the market if they are properly dehorned, castrated, branded and vaccinated.

Horned cattle in the feed lot use more trough space, prevent other cattle from feeding properly and may cause bruises that lower carcass values. Dehorned cattle look more uniform, feed better and bring a higher market price.

Castrate your calves before they are 8 months old to prevent "staggy" appearance and a lower price.

Vaccinate your calves to prevent losses from certain diseases. It pays.

Branding properly gives permanent identification and proof of ownership. Do not lose calves through mistaken identity due to a poor branding job.

Proper equipment - corrals, chutes and tools - for handling cattle is also needed to do a good job.

Dehorn cattle for extra profits. Do the dehorning as soon as you can. The operation is less severe on calves and is easier for you to do. There are several ways to dehorn your calves.
BLOODLESS DEHORNING - Calves up to 10 days of age can be dehorned with dehorning liquid:

1. Dehorning liquid with colidian base dries and forms a rubber like covering that is not easily rubbed or washed off. Apply with brush or swab.

2. Dehorning paste is placed on the horn "button" with a small wooden paddle. Prevent the paste from contacting skin of either the calf or the operator. Several commercial dehorning pastes are on the market.

3. Caustic soda or potash also called "Caustic stick" - Clip hair from around the small, undeveloped horns or buttons and apply petrolatum to prevent caustic from coming in contact with skin. The end of the caustic to be held in the hand should be wrapped in paper or cotton. Moisten the other end. Rub the moist end of the caustic on the undeveloped horn. Two or three applications are necessary. Allow the caustic to dry after each application. This will take only a few minutes. If applications are thorough there will be no further horn growth. Protect calves treated with caustic from rain for a few days following the treatment.

4. Electric dehorner
Most electric dehorners have a cupped attachment. The horn tissue is burned by the cup placed over the horn buttons. This method is bloodless but must be done when calves are young. This method is not entirely satisfactory as there is sometimes a regrowth of horn tissue.

TUBE DEHORNER
You can use the tube dehorner on calves up to four months of age. Tubes come in various sizes. Use one that fits the base of the horn. The horn is gouged out by a turning action.
**SPOON DEHORNER**

This tool is used on small calves to cut or gouge out horn button. Some ranchers use a heavy hunting knife to cut off the horn buttons, then follow by circling the edges with a caustic stick.

**MECHANICAL DEHORNERS**

*For Calves*

This instrument, widely used by ranchers and farmers, has cutting blades that will remove horns on calves from 2 months to 8 or 10 months of age. Take a ring of skin off with the horn so new skin will grow over the horn base. This prevents further horn growth.

*For More Mature Cattle*

You can use a mechanical dehorner for dehorning more mature cattle. These are designed for speed in operation.

Make the cut at a point about 1/4 inch below the junction of the horn with the skin or hide. If this is done, the skin will grow over the horn base, preventing further horn growth.
DEHORNING SAW

You can use a saw when only a few cattle are to be dehorned.

Dehorning saws have blades especially designed for cutting horns. Make the cut about 1/4 below the junction of the horn with the skin or hide. This will allow the skin to grow over the horn base and prevent further horn growth. You can also use a fine toothed carpenters saw for dehoring.

DISINFECTION

It is most important that instruments used in castration and dehorning be thoroughly disinfected between each animal. This helps prevent infections and the spread of disease, such as anthrax, from animal to animal.

There are many good disinfectants available such as lysol, various quaternary preparations (Roccel, dairy utensil cleaners) and chlorine preparations. Iodine is an ideal skin disinfectant but is destructive to instruments. Kerosene has no disinfectant qualities.

TREATMENT OF WOUND

If dehorning or castrating is done in cool weather when there are no flies, no wound treatment is needed.

If flies are present there is danger of maggot infestation. Protect the wounds by using U.S.D.A. formula EQ 335.

The figures 335 represent the concentrations of the two main active ingredients, lindane (3 percent) and pine oil (35 percent). It contains (in percentages
by weight: lindane 3; pine oil 35; mineral oil 40-44;
emulsifier 8-12; silica aerogel 8-12.

Use a small paint brush to apply "EQ 335" to the wound. One treatment may give complete protection. Check wound and paint weekly until healed. Other commercial products can also be used. Pine tar is an old favorite wound dressing used by many stockmen. Your local veterinarian is your best source of good disinfectants and fly repellents.

CASTRATION

Bull calves from a few weeks up to 8 months of age may be castrated without serious consequences. Older animals usually bleed more, so greater care must be used in castrating mature bulls. If a bull calf is not castrated before 8 months he may become "staggly" which is objectionable in the feeder and fat steer.

Three methods often used in castrating calves are:

1. Grasp the lower end of the scrotum and stretch it out tightly, then cut off the lower third. This method exposes the ends of both testicles. Remove one testicle at a time. Pull the testicle out of the scrotum and cut to allow 3 to 4 inches of the cord to remain on the testicle.

2. The second method is to slit each side of the scrotum. Make the incision on one side and remove the testicle from that side before making the incision on the other side. Make the incision over the center.

BULL CALVES
Cut off lower 1/3 of scrotum
Cut across

OLDER BULLS
Make cuts on front of scrotum
Make cuts down, lower 2/3
of the testicle, from about the top third to the lower end. It is essential to extend the slit well toward the lower end of the scrotum to allow for proper drainage.

3. Another method used on young calves is to grasp the lower end of the scrotum, stretch it out tightly, stick the knife through the scrotum about midway and cut the sack open. Then pull each testicle out with the long cord attached. This method is fast, clean and allows a full cod to develop.

In the case of young calves, the cord may be cut squarely off. In older bulls, it is advisable to twist the cord rather tightly by holding it with the left hand and with the right hand twisting the free end before cutting it. Some cattlemen prefer to draw the cord tightly over the index finger of the left hand and cut it by scraping with the knife. Either of these last two methods of cutting the cords on older animals has a tendency to check the flow of blood. It is necessary to perform the operation with clean instruments, under sanitary conditions. Wounds may be treated with EQ 335 or some similar product.

■ BLOODLESS CASTRATION

The method known as “bloodless castration” calls for a special type of pincers, pliers or clamps, which crush each cord separately an inch or two above the testicle. The method is a satisfactory means of castration if done properly, but if the operation is performed too hastily the cord may be incompletely crushed and the steer is likely to develop stagginess later on.

Pinch one cord at a time. Care should be taken to see that the cord is placed between the jaws of the pincers before they are closed. As there is no break in the skin of the scrotum, there is no external bleeding. This is an advantage in areas in which screwworms are
troublesome. Steers so castrated usually develop larger and fuller cods by the time they are ready for market. This characteristic is desirable in well-finished steers. Instruments for performing bloodless castration may be obtained from dealers who handle stockmen's supplies.

Another type of bloodless castration is called castration. Possibilities of tetanus (lock-jaw) and the lack of cod development as steers become fat are the disadvantages of this method.

**VACCINATION**

Vaccination is a type of preventive medicine. Some diseases can be controlled by vaccination while others cannot. There are effective vaccines for the prevention of: anthrax, blackleg, malignant edema, tetanus, brucellosis, hog cholera, swine erysipelas, fowl pox, Newcastle disease, laryngotracheitis, sore mouth in sheep, equine encephalomyitis and enterotoxemia.

Some of the bacterins used for the prevention of disease are of doubtful value.

Always use vaccines and bacterins that are fresh. Look at the expiration date before buying. Follow the method of injecting advised by the manufacturer or by your veterinarian.

Clean the area to be injected with a strong antiseptic. Use a sterile syringe. Make the injection carefully.

Vaccination is only one of the tools of disease control. It is a common saying that "no disease has
ever been vaccinated out of existence."

The strict following of the rules of sanitation and good husbandry practices must accompany vaccination. Vaccination will not replace cleanliness, proper feed and shelter.

Antibiotics have been found useful in controlling shipping fever.

# BRANDING

Register your brand with the Commissioner of Agriculture and Labor at Bismarck, North Dakota.

Your brand is also your trademark. A good brand on your good calves is your best advertisement.

The brand is usually placed on the calf before weaning time.

The hot iron method of branding is the most common. Electrical branding irons are becoming popular. Branding liquids are discouraged. They lead to blurred brands and wounds that are difficult to heal. Cattle and calves are handled by casting or by chute branding.

A new development is a calf branding table. This places the calf in a convenient position to be branded, vaccinated, dehorned and castrated. The branding table is placed at the end of a chute and calves are run in one at a time.

# CHUTES AND CORRALS

Facilities for handling livestock are important in saving labor as well as getting certain jobs done. Ask your county agent for plans, bulletins and blue prints.