



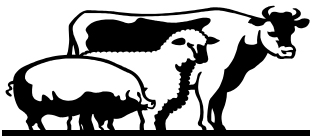
# *The Weekend Farmer*

e-Newsletter for Hobby and Small  
Farms in Wisconsin

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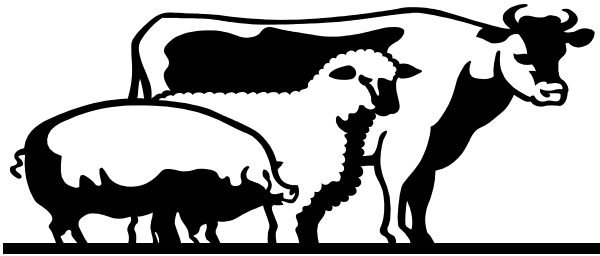
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To find contact information for your Local Extension Office visit <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/>



## Livestock Lessons

### Safe Handling of Livestock

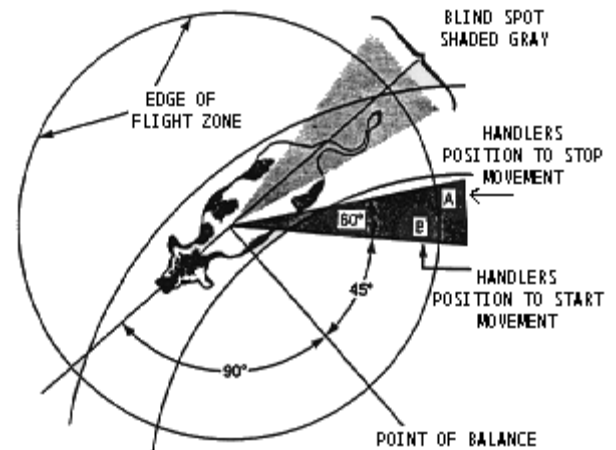
Adam Hady  
Agriculture Agent, Richland County UWEX

There are many times when working livestock that an animal has bolted, got spooked, or just plain won't do what we want them to. In these situations there can be an increase in the fear level of the animal and an increase in the agitation level of the handler. In this situation, the chances for the animal, handler, or both to get hurt increases significantly. By following and understanding some simple animal behaviors, you will be able to reduce stressful situations while handling livestock and create an environment that is safer for all involved.

The first thing regarding moving and handling livestock is how they perceive their surroundings. Being a prey animal, most livestock see the world with wide-angle vision. Their eyes are located to the side of their heads to allow them to see around them while they are grazing. Livestock, however, have a small blind spot and that is directly behind the animal. This is an area where working with an animal if they lose sight contact in the blind spot, this will create fear in the animal. Special note is that cattle have better depth perception when they are still with their head down. Due to this behavior, cattle in areas of contrasting light will often stop and lower their heads to get a clearer understanding of their surroundings. Through understanding an animal's sight pattern and the need to keep you in it there are a few handling techniques that we can take advantage of. The first is the flight zone. The flight zone (figure 1) is the area around an animal that when a human invades that area, the animal moves. If you enter the

flight zone slowly, the animal tends to move slowly. If the flight zone is entered abruptly, the animal tends to react in a similar manner.

The second is the point of balance; this is the point where the animal will either move forward or backward with the relationship to the handler. As you move from behind the animal, it will move forward. This will keep you out of the flight zone and still in sight of the animal. The animal will also want to move in a way that is not confrontational if given the choice. When you move too far forward on the animal, it will start to move backwards or turn away from the handler.



(Figure 1- cattle handling diagram)

Livestock are much more sensitive to pitch change than humans. As stated before, livestock are prey type animals where high pitched sounds are usually those signaling an alarm or harm to the animal. So handling or working the animals with a calmer tone usually keeps the animals calmer and ultimately safer to work with.

By understanding animal's natural reactions you can create a more positive handling experience for you and the animal. Staying calm will help keep the animals calm, however when you do find yourself or the animal getting a little excited, step back take a short break and start over. This will actually reduce time, stress, and increase safety when handling your livestock.



## HORTICULTURE HINTS

### Wisconsin's New Pickle Bill: Bringing Product to Market

Barbara Ingham  
Food Science Extension Specialist

The farm market season is upon us, and farmers may look to home-canned favorites as a way to diversify their income. A law recently signed by Wisconsin Governor Doyle, known as the 'Pickle Bill,' allows a person to home-can fruits, pickles, salsa and other acid and acidified food for sale at farm markets, community events, or a farm roadside stand.

According to University of Wisconsin-Extension food safety specialist Barbara Ingham, food processors in Wisconsin usually are licensed by the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). "The 'Pickle Bill' specifically exempts a person from having to obtain a license to can acid or acidified foods for sale," says Ingham. Exempt processors must still register with DATCP, Ingham notes.

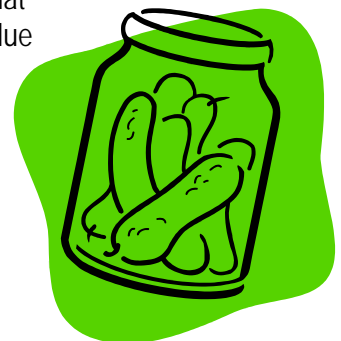
The new law requires that an individual claiming a licensing exemption abide by the following rules:

- Only naturally acid or acidified canned foods produced in a home kitchen may be sold under the licensing exemption. Bakery items, dried or packaged foods, or other processed foods may not be sold under the exemption. Home-canned low-acid foods like vegetables or meat can never be sold, with or without a license.
- Canned items may be sold only at community or social events, farm roadside stands, or a farmers' market, and only in the state of Wisconsin.

- Sales revenue from exempt products may not exceed \$5,000 per year per person. The sales limit for a family is also \$5,000 per year.
- Any farm stand or market booth must clearly post a sign stating: "These canned goods are homemade and not subject to state inspection."
- Each jar of canned food that is sold must be labeled with the name and address of the person who prepared and canned the food product, an ingredient statement, and the date on which the food product was canned. Each jar must also be clearly labeled with a statement: "This product was made in a private home not subject to state licensing or inspection."

"Home-canned foods can be potentially hazardous if proper canning procedures are not followed," says Ingham. "It's important to follow an up-to-date, research-tested recipe that will produce a safe, high quality product." As a result, the new law requires that a person canning foods for sale under the exemption complete a canning safety course or follow an approved recipe. A collection of approved, research-tested recipes from the University of Wisconsin Extension is available online [www.foodsafety.wisc.edu/preservation.html](http://www.foodsafety.wisc.edu/preservation.html) or from your local County Extension office.

In addition to using an approved recipe, the first batch of each canned product each year must be tested to ensure that it is acid enough to be safely canned. Ingham notes that several commercial labs in the state offer this service for a fee. "A pH test result that declares that the acid value is high enough to prevent botulism toxin from forming will reassure the processor that their product should not harm the consumer."



Processors canning foods under the 'Pickle Bill' should contact DATCP at 608-224-4700 to register their business. There is no cost for this registration. Individuals with questions about University of Wisconsin-Extension approved canning recipes, or training should contact Barbara Ingham at 608-263-7383 or [bingham@wisc.edu](mailto:bingham@wisc.edu). A fact sheet that explains the 'Pickle Bill' and provides information on pH testing and other safety measures can be found online: [www.foodsafety.wisc.edu](http://www.foodsafety.wisc.edu).

## Agroforestry – Making Trees Work for Your Farm

Diane Mayerfeld  
Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems (CIAS)

Agroforestry combines agriculture and forestry to create integrated and sustainable land-use systems. Normally we think of agriculture and woodlands as separate. But trees and shrubs can be incorporated into the farm in ways that complement your crops and provide additional income and/or environmental and aesthetic benefits.

There are five common categories of agroforestry:

- windbreaks
- alley cropping – widely spaced rows of trees with crops planted between them in the early years until the trees cast too much shade
- silvopasture – timber production in pastures
- forest farming – production of mushrooms, decorative ferns, medicinal herbs, and/or other woodland plants, and
- riparian forest buffers – trees and shrubs planted along rivers and streams.

In addition, don't forget that regular woodland management can also bring in income and benefit wildlife and native plants.

Let's focus on windbreaks to illustrate some of the potential benefits and challenges of bringing agroforestry to your farm.



Windbreaks are rows of trees and/or shrubs used to reduce and redirect wind. Field windbreaks can reduce soil erosion and water loss, and farmstead windbreaks can enhance the living environment and reduce home heating costs and dust. In addition, windbreaks can help shelter livestock and can help keep roads clear of drifting snow.

Although we tend to think of windbreaks as conservation measures, they can be designed to produce marketable products while also delivering environmental services. For example, evergreen branches and several shrub types could be harvested for making wreaths and other winter floral decorations. Or you could plant hazelnuts or elderberries or other fruit-producing trees or shrubs as one row of the windbreak.

When you design a windbreak, you need to take a wide variety of factors in mind, beginning with the engineering of the windbreak. The proper placement of the windbreak will depend on the prevailing winds in that location. A snow fence located in the wrong place can result in more snow accumulation rather than less! In addition, the recommended height, width, and density of the windbreak will depend on its purpose. For winter protection of structures and livestock a windbreak should be at least 60 percent dense, while 40 to 60 percent density is best for crop and soil protection, and 30 percent is adequate

for a living snow fence. The density of the windbreak is determined by what species you plant, how close together they are, and how many rows the windbreak has.

Other factors to consider include your soils, precipitation, and climate, whether you want to attract certain birds or other wildlife, and whether you also want to harvest products from your windbreak. Since establishment of a windbreak takes a considerable investment of time, labor, and money, it is well worth getting expert assistance with your planning. Your local Natural Resources Conservation Service office may be able to provide technical assistance for designing a windbreak and may also be able to offer some financial help with the costs of planting. Professional foresters can help advise on species selection and proper maintenance, though most will be more familiar with traditional forest management than with agroforestry. You can find a series of easy to read publications on windbreaks at <http://www.unl.edu/nac/morepublications.htm> .

There are a several places you can go for more information on agroforestry. The National Agroforestry Center website at <http://www.unl.edu/nac/index.htm> is a good place to start. Another website with a lot of good information is the University of Missouri's Center for Agroforestry at <http://www.centerforagroforestry.org/index.htm> . The resources on the University of Minnesota's agroforestry website at <http://www.extension.umn.edu/Agroforestry/> are developed for a climate much like ours in Wisconsin.

Information for this article was taken from Working Trees for Agriculture <http://www.unl.edu/nac/brochures/wta/> , Windbreaks in Sustainable Agricultural Systems <http://www.nfs.unl.edu/documents/windbreaksustainableag.pdf>, and Living Snow Fences <http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/naturalresources/DD7277.html>



## Money & Markets

### Budgets and Budgeting Enterprise Budgets

Ken Barnett  
University of Wisconsin Extension Educator

Enterprise budgets are an important tool for planning and for ongoing farm financial management. While many producers develop their own budgets, some producers choose to start with existing budgets and adjust them for their own enterprises. These budgets represent only one set of many possible cultural and management practices, and they do not account for geographic differences. They serve as a starting point for individual producers to adapt to their own specific enterprises and situations.

At least three types or levels of budgets are useful in the farm business. A farm manager will find a combination of all three (not necessarily at the same time) to be useful since each one has different characteristics. These three types of budgets are the total farm budget, the enterprise budget and the partial budget.

An enterprise budget is an estimate of the costs and returns associated with the production of a product or products referred to as an enterprise. An enterprise, or profit center, is a distinct part of the farm business that can be analyzed separately. An enterprise is usually based on some production input unit - an acre of land for most crop or vegetable enterprise budgets, or an individual animal unit for livestock enterprise budgets. Enterprise budgets are an important tool for planning and for ongoing farm financial management. Crop, vegetable, and livestock budgets can be used to estimate profitability,

project cash flows, provide a basis for credit, and assist in farm planning.

Cost and return estimates are projections for some future time period, such as the coming calendar year or crop year. Without good, historical production and financial records, developing enterprise budgets can be time consuming and frustrating. Historical records are a useful starting point for estimating future costs. Whether you have good records or not, you may be surprised at some of the cost changes you discover and budget for in your enterprise budgets. You may also be surprised at the net returns above variable and total costs. If you do not have the financial and production records necessary to develop an enterprise budget, you can begin by using budgets from other sources, such as the University of Wisconsin-Extension, which can provide information for planning and decision making. The "Enterprise Budgets" section of the UW-Extension Farm Team web site

(<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/farmteam/index.cfm>) has many examples of field crop, pasture, commercial vegetable, fresh market vegetable, dairy, and livestock budgets. If you use this method, you will need to adjust the budget to reflect your specific situation.

Budgets generally include variable operating costs, fixed costs, and expected production returns. Variable costs are those that vary with output within a production period. Examples include seed, fertilizer, chemicals, purchased feed, supplements, veterinary costs and medicines, fuel, repairs, and labor. Other terms used to describe variable costs include cash costs (or expenses), direct costs, and out-of-pocket costs. Fixed costs typically include building costs, depreciation, taxes, and interest on investment, land charges, and insurance. A management fee may be included as a fixed cost. These costs are considered to be "fixed" because they generally remain the same within a production period and do not vary with the level

of output. Indirect and overhead costs are other terms used to describe fixed costs.

Total costs are calculated by adding variable, fixed costs, and opportunity costs if not already accounted for. Ideally, you want to earn a profit above total costs every year. This is not always possible, since income received can be less than the total costs of production. Should you continue to produce under these circumstances? The answer may be yes if: (1) you are covering variable costs of production, and (2) it is a short-run condition. It is economical to continue production in the short run as long as income is higher than the variable costs of production. In other words, in the short run, you must receive a price that generates a return at least equal to variable costs. In the long run, however, market price and yield need to be high enough to cover total costs of production, including fixed costs. Otherwise, the enterprise will not be financially sound over a period of several years.



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