

DAWG TRACKS

SAFETY NEWSLETTER

MS Agricultural & Forestry Experiment Station
MSU Extension Service



While fatalities in agriculture are usually tied to equipment, many injuries often occur from working with large animals.

Common animal-related accidents:

- Kicks & Bites - Large animals like cows, horses, and pigs can cause severe injuries through kicks or bites. These accidents often result in broken bones, deep lacerations, or internal injuries.
- Trampling Injuries - Animals can become agitated or frightened, leading to trampling or stepped-on, accidents. This can happen during handling, feeding, or transport, and may result in serious injuries, including fractures or head trauma.
- Falls, Being Thrown or Knocked Down – Lack of training or experience in handling aggressive or large animals often leads to both the handler and the animal becoming increasingly stressed. This can quickly escalate to a fight or flight situation leading to accidents where people are head-butted, pinned down or crushed.

Reasons for animal-related accidents:

- Animals are stressed by their environment, including facility layout, sudden movements, or loud noises and become frightened or startled.
- Animals giving birth or naturally protecting their young feel threatened.
- Animals have been hit, neglected or abused in the past.
- Animals are sick or injured.

Tips that will help you work more safely around large animals:

- ✓ Study and understand the specific animal, breed, and herd/individual you are working with. What is their age, usual routine, temperament, and body language that indicates stress?
- ✓ Gain hands-on experience by working with a mentor who can coach as you work.
- ✓ Pre-plan and minimize risks by accessing each task you will be performing (splitting herd, calving, transporting, vaccinating).
- ✓ Have adequate facility or environment layout to work where you can maintain control.
- ✓ Have an escape route and avoid working alone.
- ✓ Be extra cautious in a new facility or working with unfamiliar animals.
- ✓ Be aware of the males that are more aggressive by nature.
- ✓ Be aware of newborns & young animals, and the strong maternal instinct nearby.
- ✓ Never assume or become complacent. Be willing to change your plans and course of action as needed with the changing situations.
- ✓ Stay observant and aware of the surroundings!

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Sources:

<https://youtu.be/fBqDddTQcso?si=7MSwi6MSaKsGtuHs>
<https://usfarmlaw.com/practice-areas/animal-related-accidents/>
www.Gempler.com