

# The Beef Industry's Response to Animal Welfare

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# Beef Quality Assurance

- Mission Statement
  - To maximize consumer confidence in and acceptance of beef by focusing the industry's attention on beef quality assurance through the use of science, research and educational initiatives.

# BQA History

- Originally called “Beef Safety Assurance”
  - This precursor of BQA arose in the late 1970s and early 1980s.
  - Aimed at assuring that beef was free of violative chemical residues.
  - Program educated producers about proper pharmaceutical usage and honoring withdrawal times

# BQA Accomplishments

- Reduction in the incidence of injection site lesions
  - 22.5% incidence in 1991
  - < 2.5% incidence in 2000

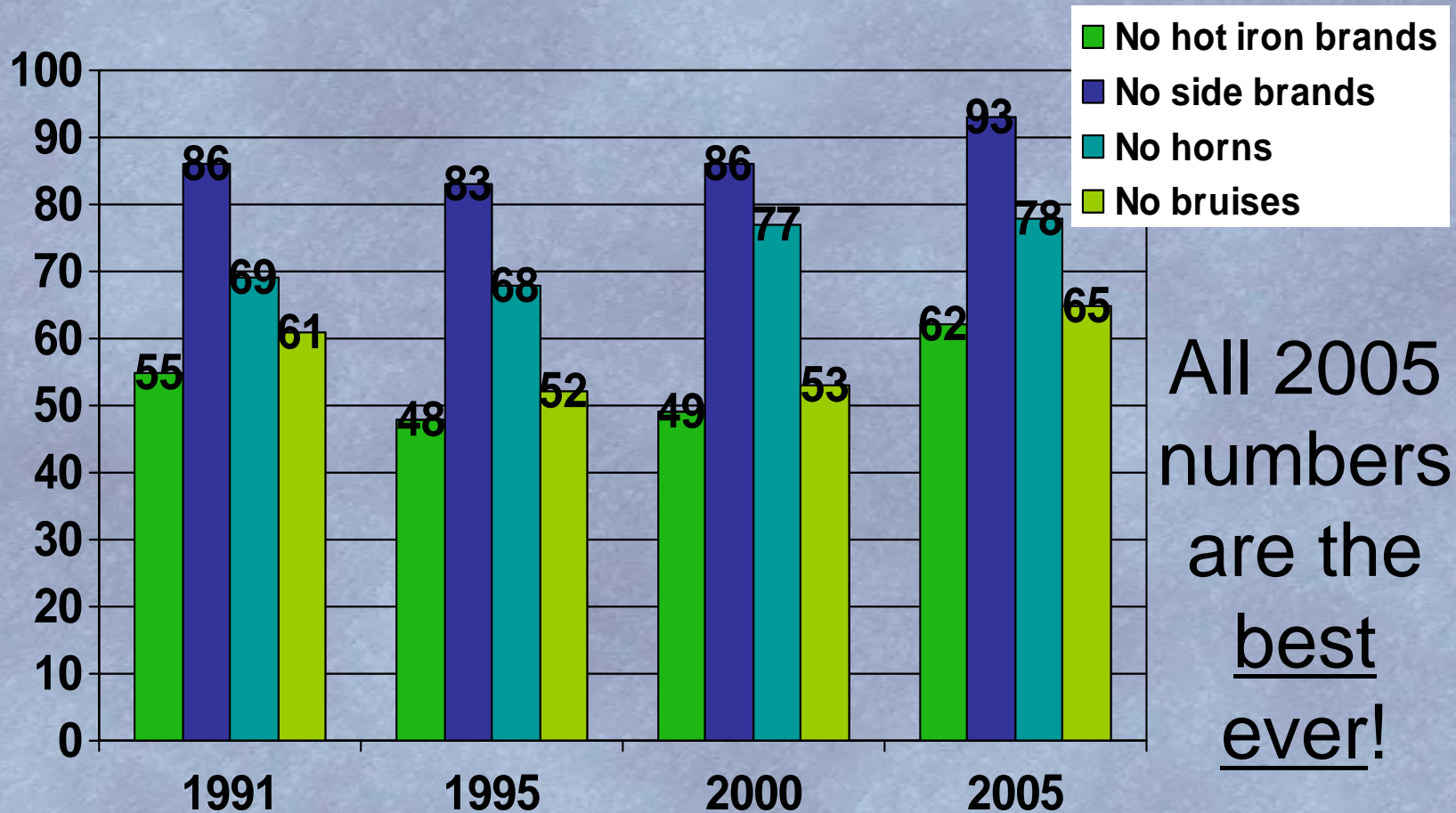
# BQA Accomplishments

- National Beef Quality Audits
  - Provides the beef industry “benchmark” data
  - Conducted in 1991, 1995, 2000, & 2005
  - Allows the beef industry the opportunity to re-focus its attention, as needed, on issues that effect our industry



# Brands, Horns, and Bruises:

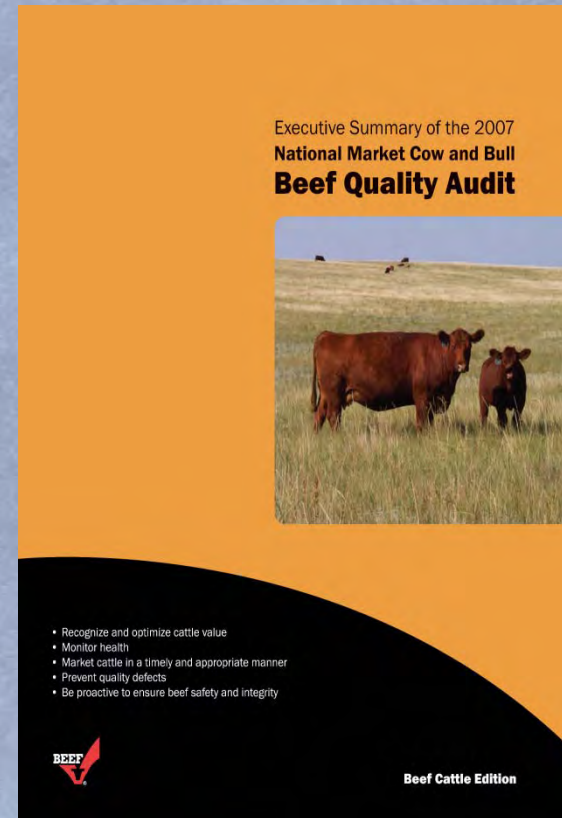
## Comparison of Past Audits



All 2005  
numbers  
are the  
best  
ever!

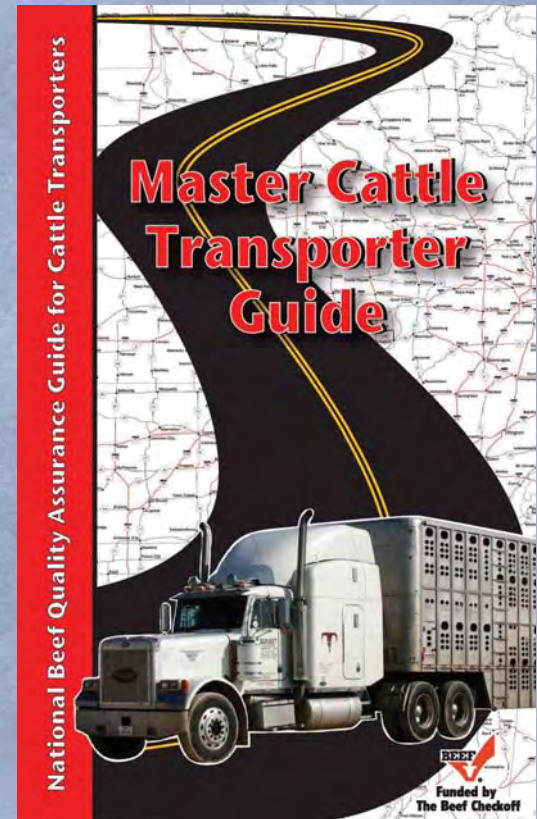
# BQA Accomplishments

- National Market Cow & Bull Beef Quality Audits
  - Conducted in 1994, 1999, & 2007



# BQA Accomplishments

- Transportation Beef Quality Assurance (TBQA)
  - Development of Master Cattle Transporter DVD
  - Distributed in 2006



# Beef Industry Long Range Plan

## BQA Objectives

- Breakthrough Initiatives
  - Initiate pilot projects that “plow new ground” and create better ways to address quality issues.
    - Market Cow and Bull Initiative
    - State Pilot Projects with Local and National Relevance

# Beef Industry Long Range Plan

## BQA Objectives

- Marketing Opportunities
  - Use BQA standards and certification to improve product quality and maximize market opportunities for producers
    - National BQA Manual
    - Certification Initiatives
    - Producer Leverage

# Beef Industry Long Range Plan

## BQA Objectives

- State Extension
  - Foster state flexibility and creativity to address production needs and market forces unique to a state or region
    - Localize National Manual
    - Certification Template
    - Education Flexibility
    - Customizable Materials

# Beef Industry Long Range Plan

## BQA Objectives

- Broader Scope
  - Pursue new areas that maximize producer market opportunities and meet consumer needs

# Beef Industry Long Range Plan

## BQA Objectives

- Greater Reach
  - Expand producer involvement in the BQA program
    - Reaching producers through key service providers
      - Veterinarians
      - Markets and Video Auctions
      - Truckers
      - Order Buyers
    - Dairy Initiatives

# Beef Industry Long Range Plan

## BQA Objectives

- Consumer Awareness
  - Leverage BQA's focus on safety and wholesomeness to enhance consumer perception of beef and beef producers
    - Communicate to the Communicators
    - National BQA Award

# BQA Accomplishments

- Industry Guidelines for the Care and Handling of Cattle
  - Distributed in 2007
    - Approximately 185,000 copies distributed to date
      - Producers
      - Colleges
      - Veterinarians
      - State Departments of Agriculture



# Cattle Care and Handling Guidelines

- Working group comprised of producers, animal scientists, and veterinarians
- Dr. Temple Grandin and Dr. Janice Swanson served as advisors
- Feedback from affiliates
- Approved by NCBA Board In 2003

# Endorsements

- Food Marketing Institute
- National Council of Chain Restaurants
- American Assoc. of Bovine Practitioners
- Academy of Veterinary Consultants

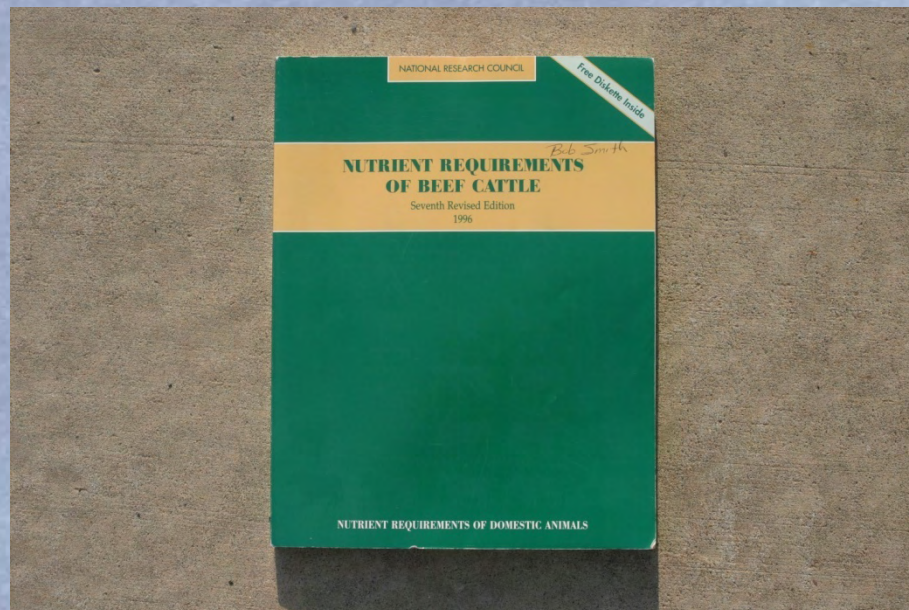
# Cattle Care and handling Guidelines

## Comprehensive Guidelines

- Nutrition and feeding
- Health management
- Identification
- Facilities
- Marketing and Transportation
- Cattle handling
- Downers
- Euthanasia
- Self-assessment
- More

# Feeding and Nutrition

Diets should meet the recommendations of the National Research Council (NRC) and/or recommendations of a nutritional consultant.



# Feeding and Nutrition (cont'd)

- Test suspect feed
  - Toxins
  - Micronutrient levels
- Use only USDA, FDA and EPA approved products

# Feeding Guidelines for Feeder Cattle

- NRC *Nutrient Requirements of Beef Cattle* is the basic resource for information
- Consult a nutritionist for advice
- Avoid sudden changes in ration or feeding program

# Monitor the Program

- Fecal consistency
- Digestive upsets
- Foot health
- Liver abscesses

# Shelter and Housing

- Comfort
- Socialization
- Environmental management

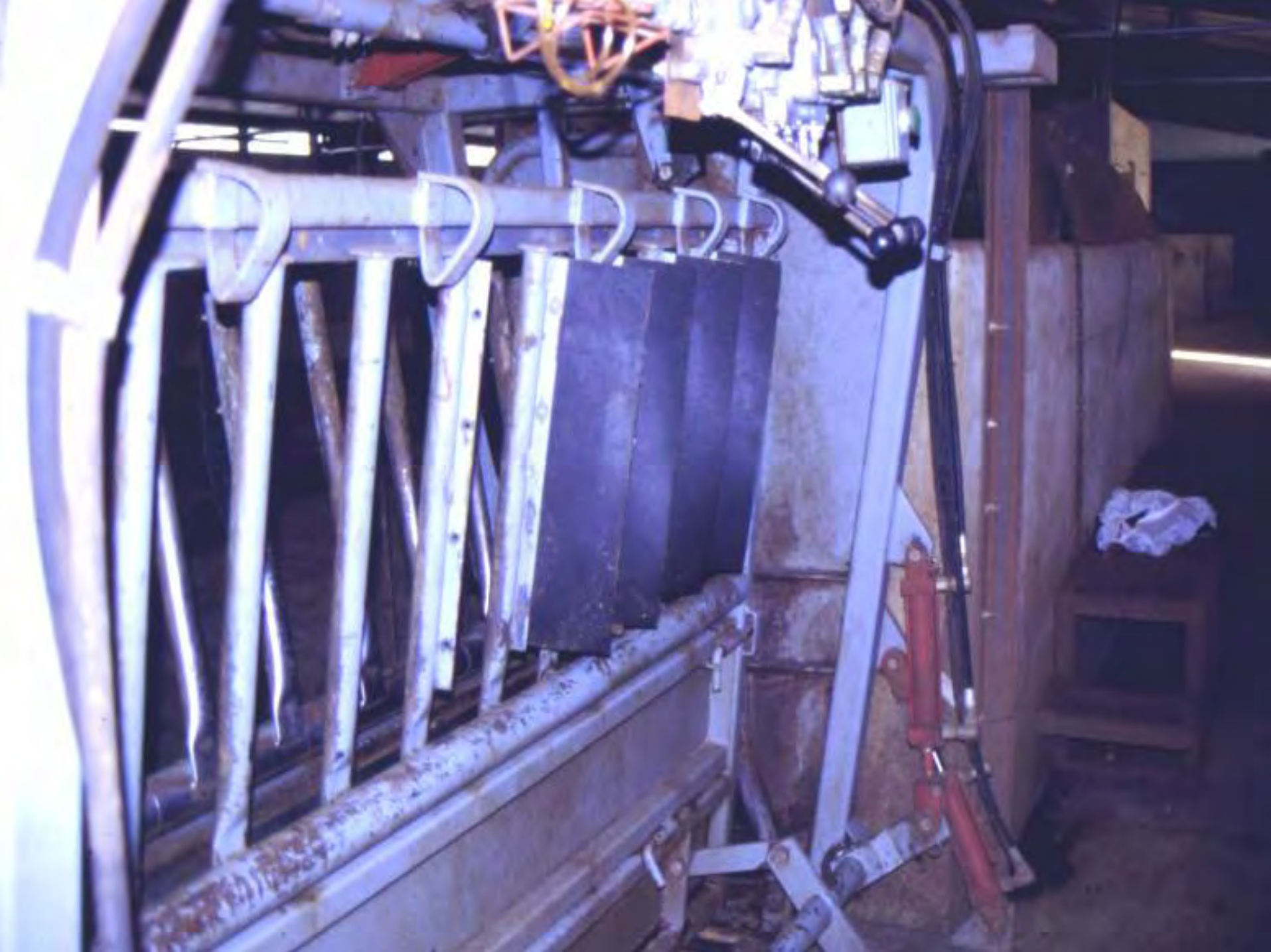
# Cattle Handling

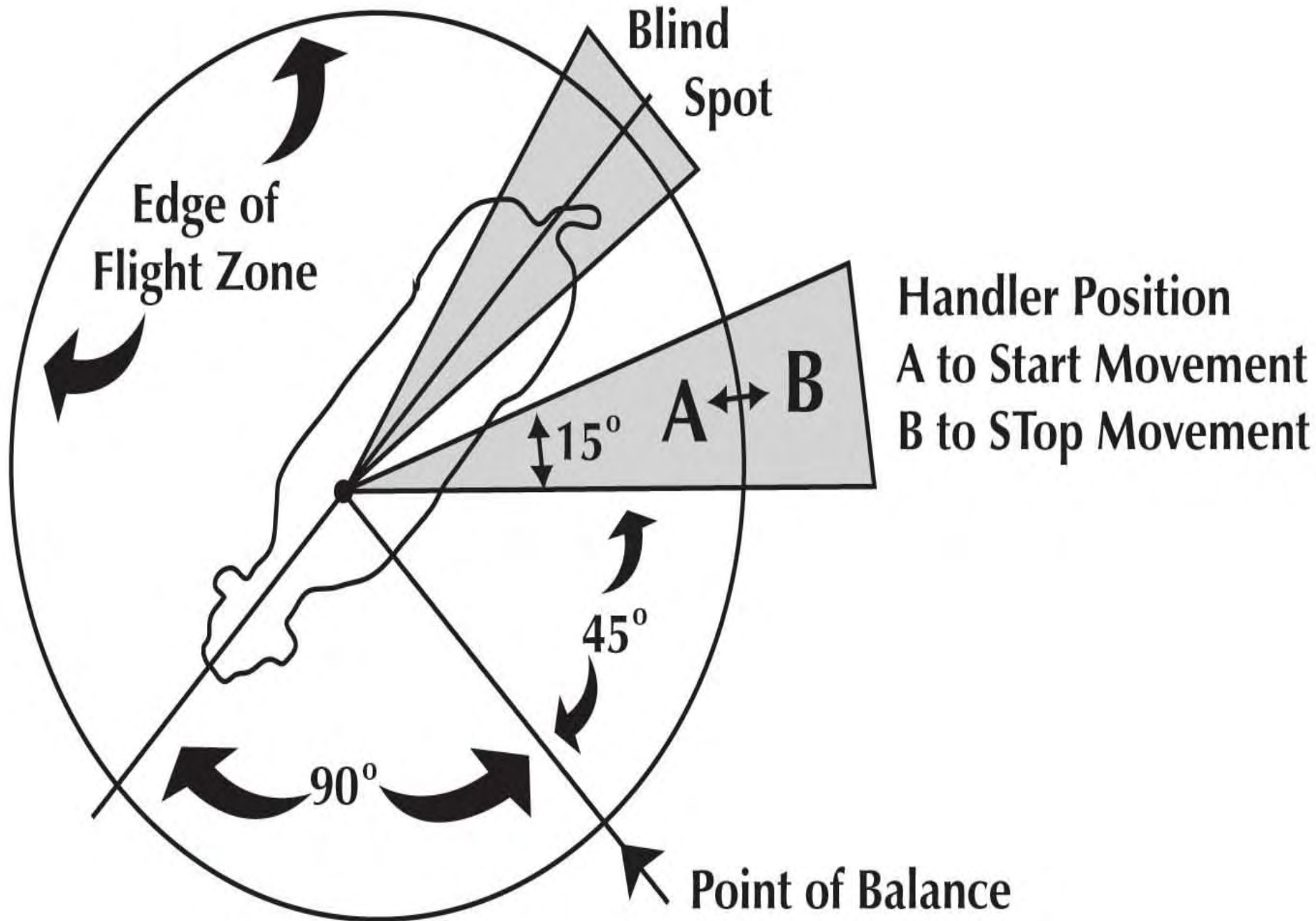
- Avoid slippery surfaces, especially tubs and alleys
  - Rubber mats
  - Metal grates (not sharp)
  - Grooved concrete
  - Deep sand











# Marketing Cattle

- The overwhelming majority of cattle are marketed in good health and physical condition
- Some cattle should not enter intermediate marketing channels because of animal welfare concerns
- Cattle not healthy or at risk of going down should be euthanized rather than being dumped on packer/processor



# Downer Cattle

- Prompt diagnosis – treat or euthanize
- Provide feed and water at least once daily

# Downer Cattle (cont'd)

- Moving downers – do not compromise welfare
- Unacceptable to:
  - Drag
  - Lift with chains

# Downer Cattle (cont'd)

- Acceptable methods to move downers
  - Sled
  - Low-boy trailer
  - Loader bucket

# Downer Cattle (cont'd)

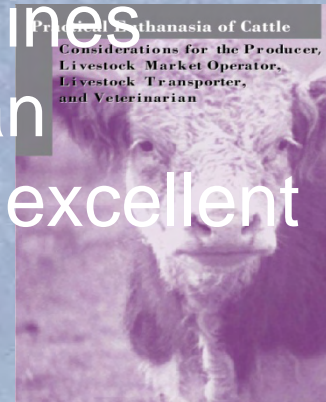
- Loader buckets
  - Do not “scoop” animals
  - Humanely roll downers into the bucket

# Downer Cattle (cont'd)

- If treatment is attempted:
  - Cattle unable to sit up unaided, or refuse to eat or drink should be humanely euthanized within 36 hours of onset
  - Veterinarian may prescribe longer treatment/observation period if well-being is not compromised

# Euthanasia

- Euthanasia is humane death occurring without pain and suffering.
- The decision to euthanize an animal should consider the animal's welfare. The producer will most likely perform on-farm euthanasia because a veterinarian may not be immediately available to perform the service.
- The *Practical Euthanasia of Cattle* guidelines developed and published by the American Association of Bovine Practitioners is an excellent reference ([www.aabp.org](http://www.aabp.org)).



# Training and Education

- Assess management practices everyday
- Verify adequate efforts directed to animal care and handling

# The NCBA Guidelines Accomplish the Guiding Principles for Assessment Programs

- Credible
- Workable
- Affordable

# Enhancing Meat Safety

Much more  
than a dollars  
and cents issue



COVER STORY



## HACCP

*Monitoring critical control points key  
to safer meat products*

### THE 7 HACCP PRINCIPLES

1. Assess hazards and risks associated with growing, harvesting, raw materials and ingredients, processing, manufacturing, distribution, marketing, preparation and consumption of food.
2. Determine critical control points required to control the identified hazards.
3. Establish the critical limits that must be met at each identified critical control point.
4. Establish procedures to monitor critical control points.
5. Establish corrective action to be taken when there is a deviation identified by monitoring a critical control point.
6. Establish effective record-keeping systems that document a HACCP plan.
7. Establish procedures for verification that the HACCP system is working correctly.