

Livestock vaccination and shot safety

Key takeaways:

Are you working with any high hazard vaccines or shots? What unique safety precautions should be taken?

Where is the nearest first aid kit? Do the products recommend use of an ice pack if you get stuck by a needle?

Have employees been fully trained on your hazard communication program (HAZ-COMM)? Visit saif.com/ghs for more information.

For best practices and information on how to handle needles and shots safely, read our vaccination and other shots safety checklist (saif.com/S1089).

Administering vaccines and other shots is a common part of the job on many farms and ranches. This may be a common task, but that doesn't mean there aren't risks involved. Use this tailgate talk to spark discussion before beginning these types of tasks or at your next safety meeting.

An employee at a poultry operation accidentally poked his hand while administering a vaccine. He reported the event immediately to his supervisor and sought medical treatment. The needle poked his bone and caused a bone infection and it took several months for the employee to fully recover. Do employees immediately report needle poke injuries at your farm? What steps should be taken?

While cleaning out the ranch truck, an employee poked herself with a used vaccination needle that had slipped between the truck seats. Other employees reported that this had happened to them before too. What can we learn from this?

An employee was kicked in the chest by a cow while administering a vaccine in the hip. He avoided a broken rib but experienced painful bruising for several weeks. What precautions do you take to prevent this type of event?

Key takeaways

To get the job done, without injuries, follow these basic safety precautions before beginning the task.

- Check chute system and alleyway to make sure it works properly and adjust it for animal size.
- Restrain animals when giving shots.
- Make sure you have a clear exit route in case the animal gets free.
- Keep workplace free of clutter and tripping hazards.
- Use low-stress animal handling techniques.
- Review label information on all vaccines and shots.
- Keep syringes, needles, and medicine bottles out of reach of children
- Wash hands and equipment after use.
- Dispose of needles in a sharps disposal container.
- Review first-aid procedures.
- Warm up your muscles—especially wrists, arms, and back.

Take action (Complete one or more activities as a team)

- A. Where do used needles go after use? Go to the sharps disposal container and talk about hazards from improper needle disposal.
- B. Are animals properly restrained before administering shots? Walk through your chute system and inspect the system for hazards, maintenance issues, and make proper adjustments before beginning work.
- C. What are three things you can do to stay safe while administering vaccines or other shots?

