

Large Animals & Stress and Euthanasia

Concepts and Safety Issues

Large Animals and Stress

- Flight instinct – Run first, then look.
- Animals want to get up and leave.
- Humans are recognized as predators.
- Humans *ACT* like predators.
- Prey animals hide pain from predators.
- Horses do not neigh when trapped.
- Ears and eyes can tell the animal's focus.

Large Animals and Stress

KEY RESPONDER BEHAVIORS

- Control the “energy” at the scene.
- Avoid unnecessary chatter and noise.
- Move and act with quiet purpose.
- Constantly observe the animal’s response to activities.
- Coordinate the actions of all responders.

Large Animals and Stress

KEY RESPONDER BEHAVIORS

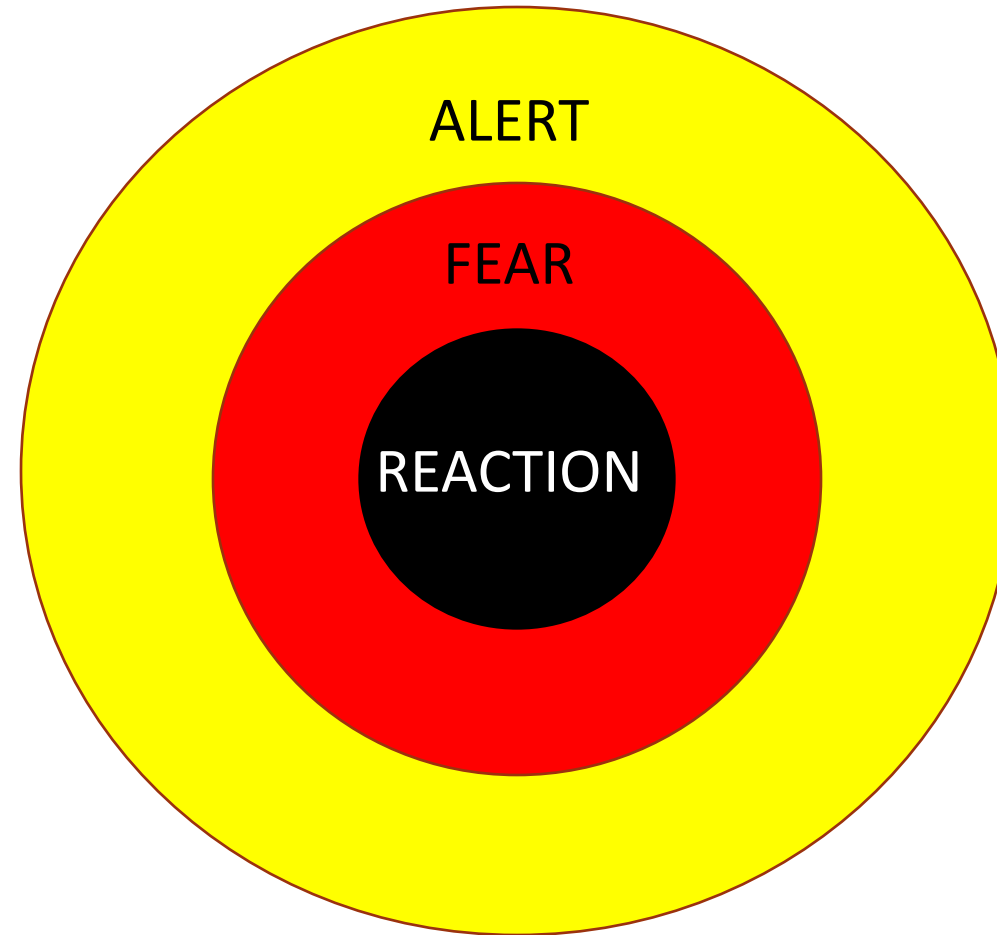
- Use caution when using noisy power rescue tools
- Monitor sparks from cutting tools.
- Apply pool noodle or plumbing insulation to cover sharp areas.
- Remember hay is Nature's sedative
- Consider using herd instincts if multiple animals are present.



Low energy helps maintain a calm horse during an extrication.



Large Animals and Stress



Alert Animal



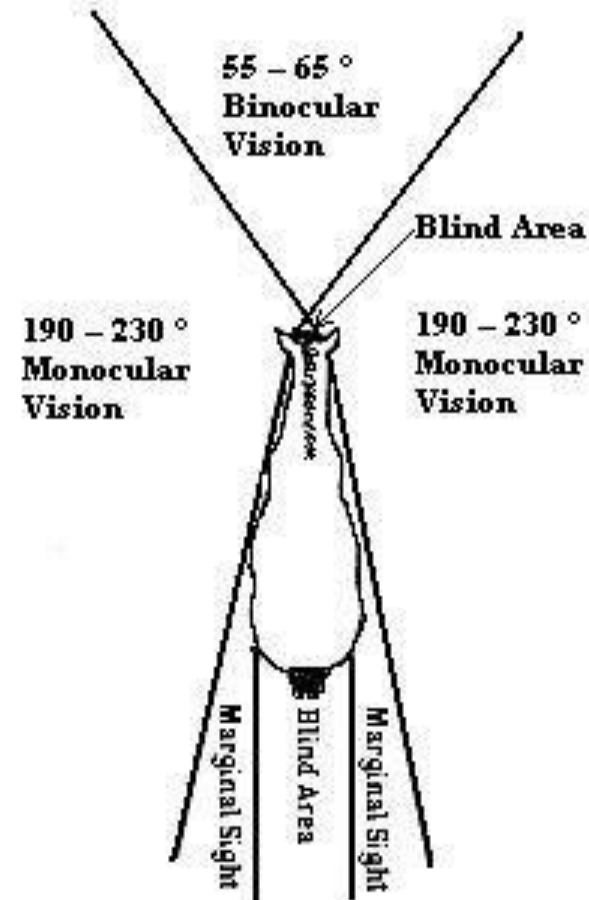
Large Animal Safety

Be aware of the animal's behavioral display!



Large Animals and Stress

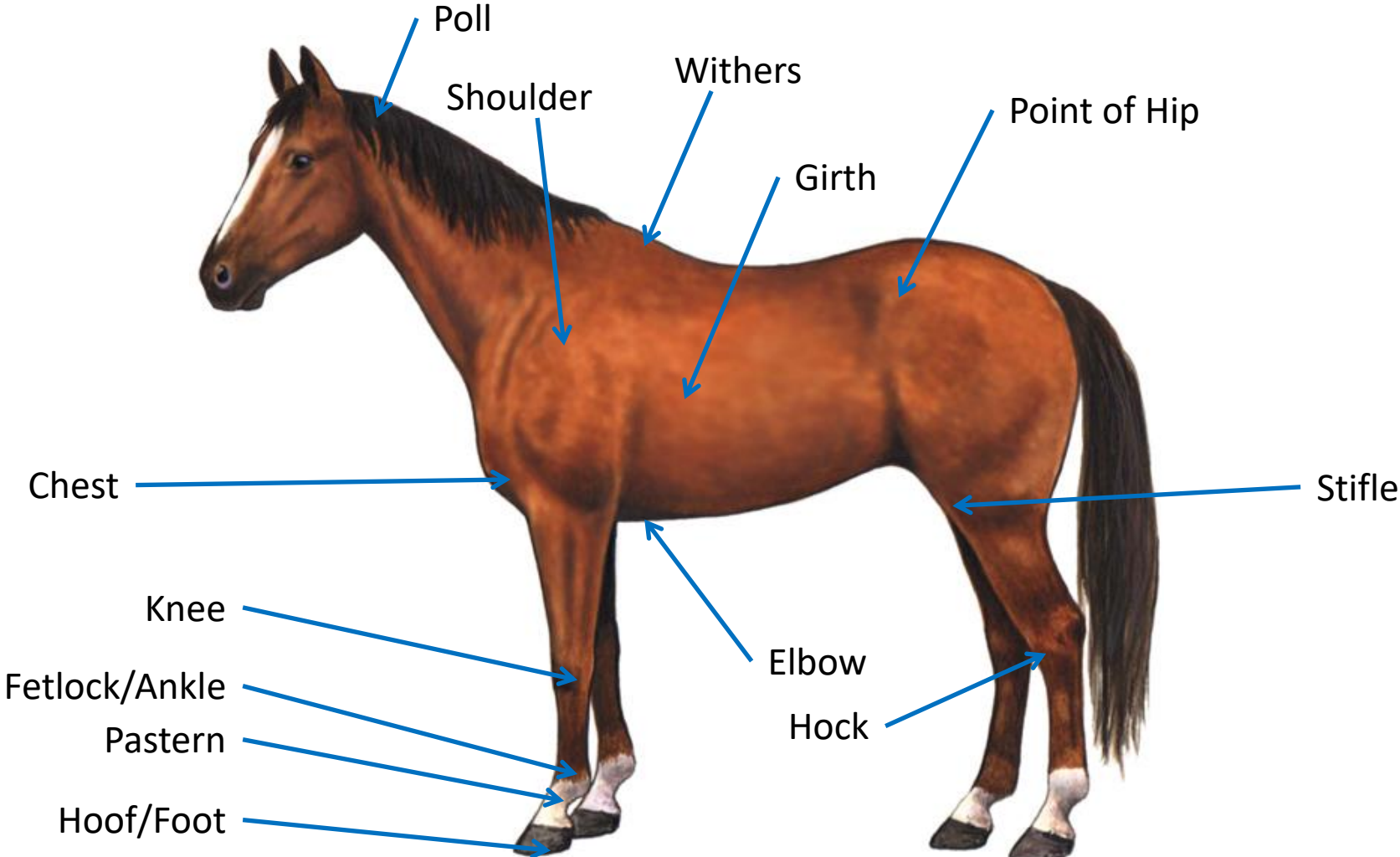
- Very sensitive skin, they can feel a fly land.
- Use firm rubs, not patting.
- Horses have a 500 lb biting force.
- Approach at shoulder if possible.
- Avoid blind areas.



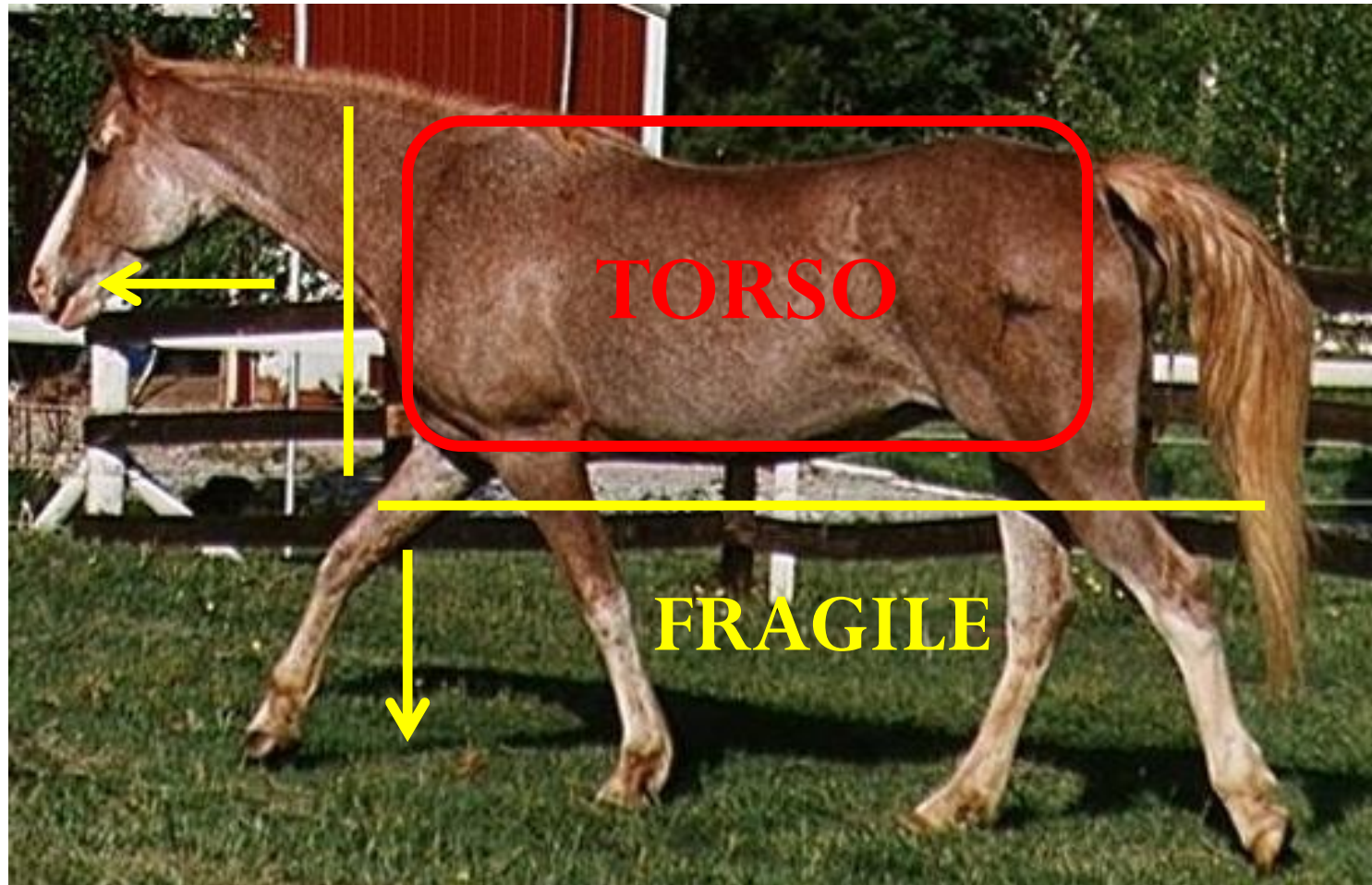
Large Animals and Stress

- Horses can have a lightning fast reaction to fear stimuli.
- Stay out of the “Kill Zones,” when the horse is standing and when recumbent.
- Use a low, calming voice. Avoid shouting or a high pitched voice.
- Use handheld radios to communicate among team members rather than shouting.

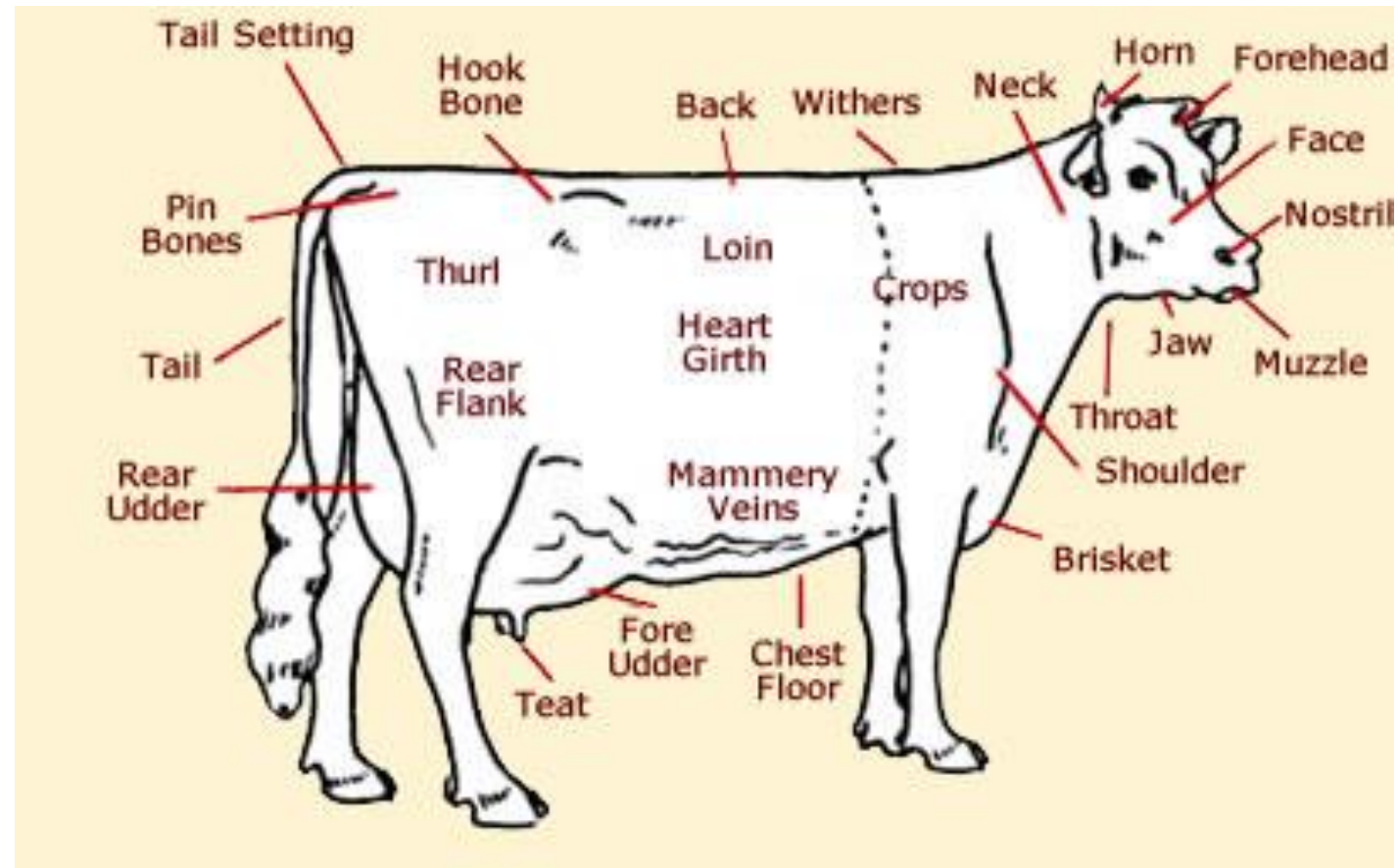
Basic Anatomy



Basic Anatomy



Basic Anatomy



Courtesy animalcorner.co.uk



Basic Anatomy

THESE AREAS ARE NOT
HANDLES FOR HAULING!



Fetlock/Ankle

Pastern

Hoof/Foot

Basic Anatomy



An extrication
gone tragically
wrong

Basic Anatomy

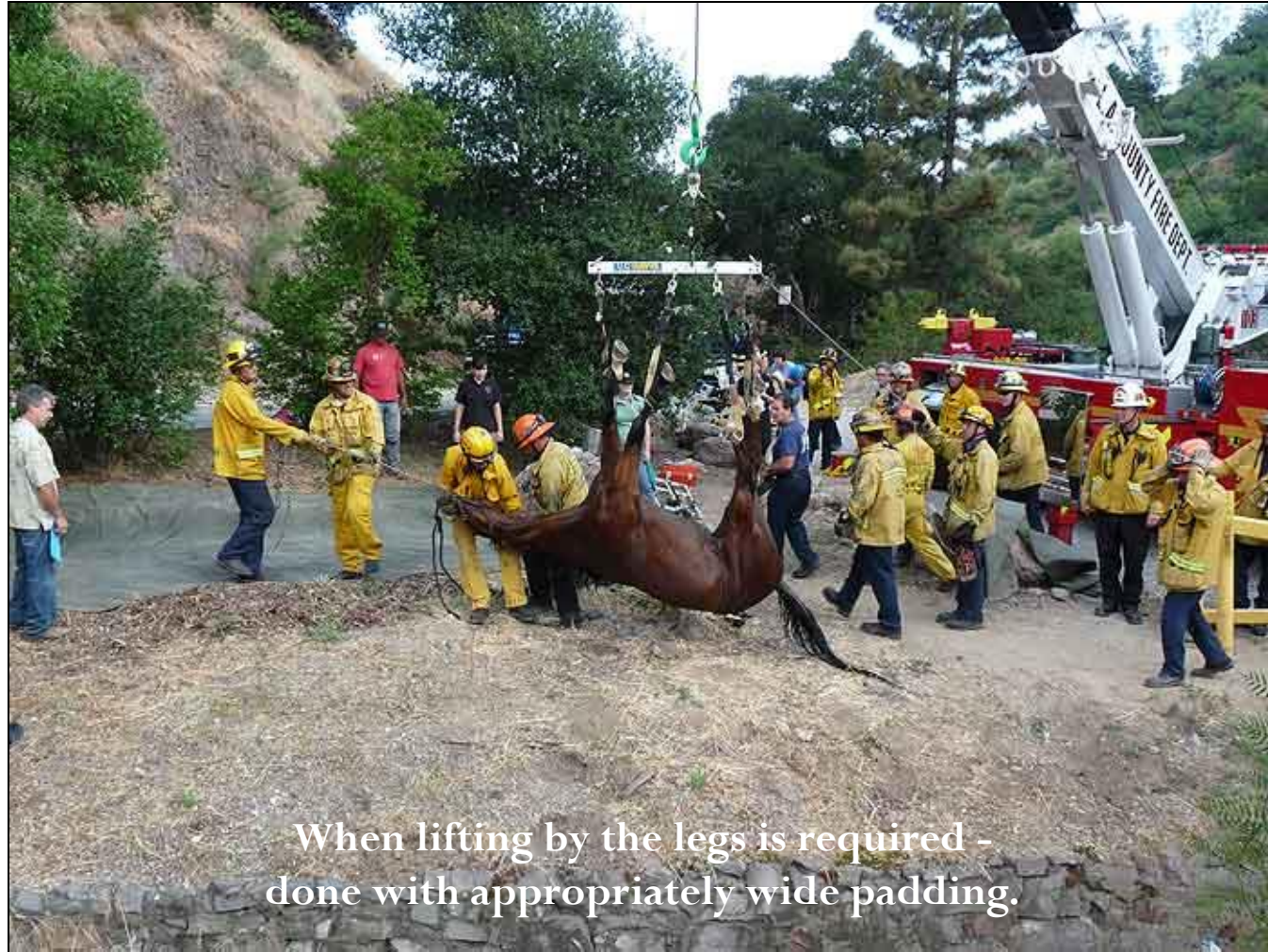
Key element for rescue hardware:

SURFACE AREA

If you have to use a leg, make the covering as broad as is practicable before attaching a pulling device.



Correct lift



When lifting by the legs is required -
done with appropriately wide padding.

Security and Containment

- Security is a must for the safety of first responders, public and livestock
- Keep livestock contained to the scene.
- Keep out those who don't need to be involved with the scene.
 - (General public, media)
- A public Information Officer (PIO) should be designated for significant incidents before one is needed... be prepared!

Security and Containment

- The scene should be blocked from public view.
- Prior to any animal extrication, a containment structure must be in place!
 - There are several documented cases of death or severe injury to the general public or first responders because this rule was not followed.

Security and Containment

- Containment plans should include list of local entities that can provide livestock handling equipment that can be used to erect containment facilities.
 - Should be included in Emergency Contact Sheet.
- Use available data (Animal Transport Incident Assessment Form, Bill of Lading, etc.) to determine size of needed containment structures.
 - Evaluate potential onsite factors and assets for use in containment.

Security and Containment

- Loose animals on the scene:
 - Provide a challenge.
 - Consider closing the roadway.
 - If any meet euthanasia criteria, euthanize immediately.
 - Injured livestock should be contained as soon as feasible.
 - Utilize:
 - Natural containment that is available.
 - Relationships with local community to develop site specific capture plans.
 - Aggressive animals posing hazards should be euthanized.
 - Use large caliber rifle, aiming for chest, considering distance, other safety issues. Shotguns with slugs are effective. (Note: Chest shots are for aggressive animals.)

Containment Options



Containment: Instant Corral



Containment: Portable Panels



Containment in the field



Deploying construction netting to direct a horse into a funnel chute.

Containment

Use available tools



Rescue Clip



Containment

Rescue clip attached to halter



Containment

Improvising: Haltering using a rope and catch pole



Containment

Improvising: Utilizing a quick halter and loading chute



Containment

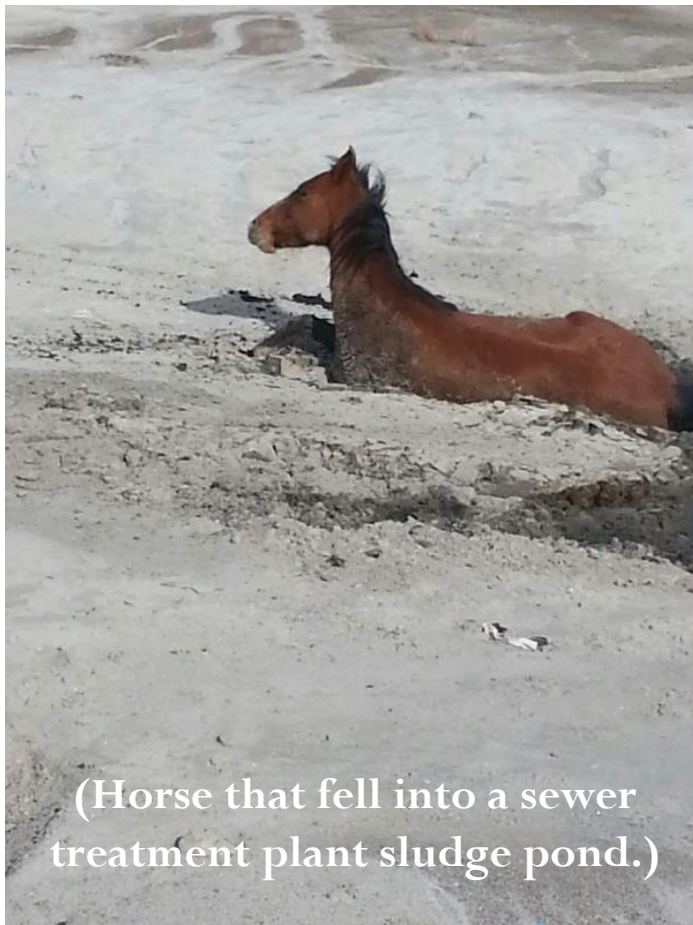
Containment methods need to be developed and fully practiced well in advance of an actual event!



(Securing a runaway horse)

Decontamination

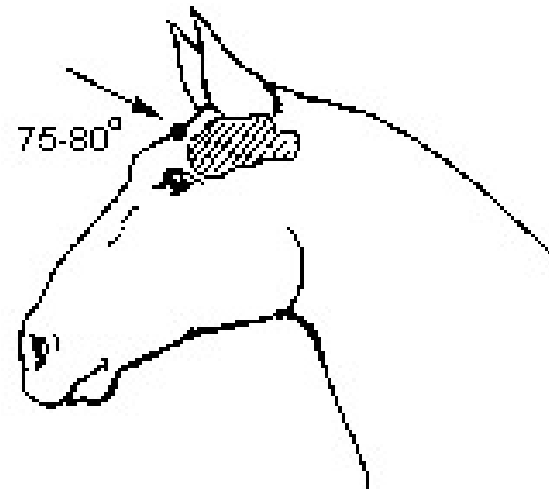
Be prepared to secure and decontaminate animal victims.



Euthanasia

Field Euthanasia

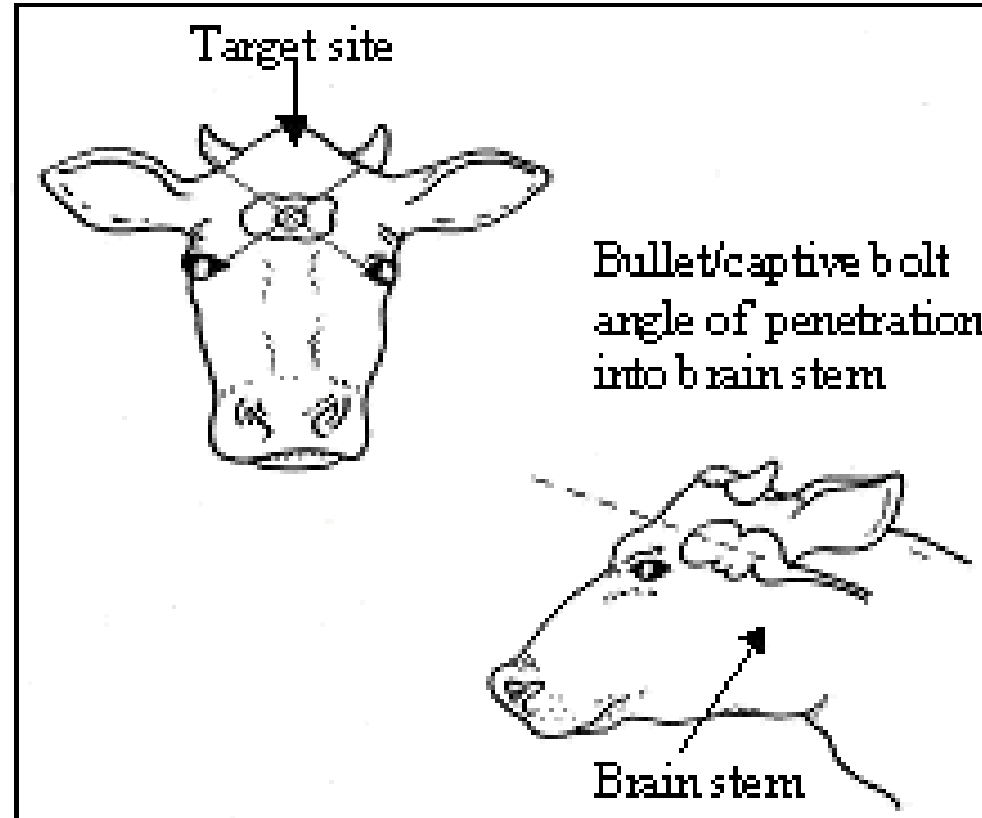
- Gunshot to the head
- Captive bolt



Euthanasia

Field Euthanasia

- Gunshot to the head
- Captive bolt



Euthanasia

- Euthanasia in trailers
 - Off load mobile animals
 - For livestock remaining on the trailer
 - Sort based upon severity of injury—Determine potential candidates
 - Euthanize those still in truck: immobile, non-extractable
 - Follow Approved Methods of Euthanasia
 - Euthanize as soon as practical
 - Designated candidates on truck first (worse condition)
 - Off loaded group

Euthanasia

- Situational awareness
 - Secure the scene, block, obscure visual observation.
 - Have an escape route and a plan.
 - Consider dangers related to dealing with injured, scared animals in confined, closed area.
 - Animals thrashing, charging, etc.
 - Plan for dangers related to euthanasia.
 - Livestock reactions to rescue and euthanasia actions.
 - Firearm discharge, captive bolt challenges.
 - Restraint is key, but can also be dangerous.

Euthanasia

- Situational awareness, cont.
 - Be cognizant of other human and animal hazards.
 - Saws, sparks, slivers, sharp edges, protruding objects
- Use approved methods of humane euthanasia.
 - Captive bolt vs Firearm.
 - Safety needs to be foremost
 - Barbiturates probably are not practical.
- Evaluate for confirmation of death.
 - Lack of a heartbeat.
 - Lack of respiration.
 - Lack of corneal reflex.

Euthanasia

- Human safety is most important---cannot be ever be superseded by animal condition or incident needs.
 - Safety glasses
 - Ear plugs
 - Respiratory protection
 - Full body coverage clothing
 - Use body armor available
 - Appropriate helmets, face shields, etc.

Euthanasia

- The following records need to be maintained for each euthanized animal:
 - Animal ID: Eartag, Registered name
 - Animal description
 - Reason for euthanasia: broken extremity, burn, extreme trauma, unable to get up, etc.
 - Responsible party for prescribing euthanasia

Euthanasia

- The following records need to be maintained for each euthanized animal, continued:
 - Person responsible for executing euthanasia
 - Local veterinarian is best option. Onsite service may not be necessary or required
 - Important for others to be trained in humane euthanasia
 - Those trained should be included on Emergency Contact Sheet
 - Method of euthanasia: Firearm, captive bolt, pharmaceutical

Carcass Disposal

- Plan ahead: identify facilities in Emergency Contact Sheet.
- Know state and local regulations.
- Develop plan to handle mortalities far in advance of an actual incident.
 - Detail options for animals of domestic and international origins.
 - Possible options for disposal include:
 - Landfill
 - Composting
 - Burning
 - Burial
 - Rendering
- Final disposition of mortalities needs to occur ASAP.

Carcass Disposal

- Animal mortalities should be handled with the same dignity and respect as human mortalities.
 - Critical that visual barriers be used in public areas.
 - Maintain carcass integrity to every extent possible.
 - Various equipment can be used to help extract animals.
 - Heavy tarps, straps, Ag. (grain elevator, baler), mine/conveyor belts
- Loading
 - Appropriate heavy machinery needs to be available.
 - Local/State highway departments
 - Consider using local private machinery
 - Detail contact info in Emergency Contact Sheet / Disinfect afterwards
 - Heavy tarps, straps, Ag. (grain elevator, baler), mine/conveyor belts

It's critical that we understand the potential dangers and relative unpredictability of livestock at large.



THE END