

Handling and loading of farm livestock

The Humane Slaughter Association (HSA) and Agricultural Training Board (ATB) booklet (36 pages) is designed to accompany the HSA video *Livestock in Transit - Handle with Care*. It provides supplementary material for the ATB training courses.

This 'user-friendly' booklet which is aimed at stockmen and hauliers deals with the transportation by road of the main red meat species - cattle, sheep and pigs - and equines. It stresses why good handling is important to reduce stress, prevent deterioration in meat quality, to improve handler safety and ease of work.

The section on animal behavioural characteristics indicates how an understanding of these can help the handler in his task. There are many practical notes on loading, space allowances, care of stock on the move, and unloading as well as on the UK law.

Handling and Loading of Livestock, ISBN 1 871561 03 5 is available from the HSA, 34 Blanche Lane, South Mimms, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 3PA UK. Price £2.00 post free.

Care of farm animals in the laboratory

Two colour VHS videos have been produced by Datascope Communications in conjunction with Glaxo Group Research and the Institute of Animal Technology.

These are concerned with the care of farm animals in the laboratory and aim to inform the technical staff how to manage these animals. They deal with handling, housing, breeding and some injection/blood withdrawal techniques of five species. The videos are to be welcomed because they provide basic information on stockmanship with which the average technician is unlikely to be familiar.

Given the target audience it would have been helpful if more emphasis had been placed on husbandry in the laboratory, whereas they were mainly shot in an agricultural setting. More emphasis could have been placed on routine handling and laboratory procedures, such as blood, urine and faeces sampling and restraint could have been explained in greater detail. There is little information on methods which may be used to train the animals to co-operate in such procedures. It would also have been helpful if there had been information on anaesthetic procedures.

While the production is often slow, and the spoken commentary unrelated to the visual material, there are some excellent pictures and the settings and animals come across very well. In spite of their shortcomings, these videos can be regarded as a pioneering effort breaking new ground and making a useful contribution to the training of laboratory animal technicians.

Farm Animals with Care (1991) Vol 1 - Sheep and goats, 30 mins. Vol 2 - Pigs, cattle and poultry, 35 mins. Price £34 each post free. Both volumes £60 post free. Available from: T Wills, Wellcome Diagnostics, PBF Building 71, Central Road, Dartford, Kent.