

Daily Observations – PPT Script

Animal Management

1. Animal Care Basics

As producers it is our responsibility to provide basic care for our animals. But what does that mean, animal care. We must observe our animals daily. We have to understand their normal so that we can see if they become abnormal. We have to provide basic needs for the animal. Food, water, and shelter just like us are the most important needs that must be met. The housing that we provide must be safe and comfortable in order for our animals to have good welfare and perform up to their potential. Part of keeping your animals comfortable is to keep their housing space clean and dry.

2. Daily Observations – Animal Observations Performance

Daily observation helps ensure that sick animals do not go unnoticed and that animal caretakers are doing their job. Daily observation can also help to assess the effectiveness of health and nutrition programs, the suitability of facilities, and the quality of caretakers. Production traits are often used as a basis for telling if they animal is performing the way it should be. Taking weight measurements of your animals can help greatly on a weekly basis to show your animal rate of gain. Knowing this you can see how efficient your animals are and predict or manage your animal's weight for your end goal. Assessing your animal's body condition score or fleshing score- the amount of fat cover- can also help determine your animals current state and your animals end target appearance.

3. Daily Observations – Animal Observations – Physical Evaluation

When conducting your daily observations be sure that you are looking over each of your animals. This should be a head to toe look over. First you can look the animal's eyes and nose. Are they clear or do they have build up? Next look at the skin. Are there any cuts, wounds, abscesses? How does the hair coat appear well kept or do it have some patchy spots? What do the legs look like? Do the knees feet and joints look normal or do they look swollen? Is the animal lame? Do they put equal weight on each of their legs while standing or walking? What is the animal's behavior? Are they inquisitive and friendly or are they nervous or fearful? Does their manure look appropriate or is it watery or too stiff? If any of these items are different than normal that means you need a change in the animals environment or in the facilities.

4. Daily Observations – Recording

How do you know what normal is for your animal? Naturally animals are different from each other, and one animal's normal behavior is different from another. Getting to know each of your animals individually to understand their behavior and their appearance lets you know when something is not normal. Recording your observations can help you know and learn about each animal. This can be done simply with a calendar or a poster in your animal's facility

where the caretaker each day can initial and date their observations. Be sure when you have a different caretaker maybe if you go on vacation that you give them an understanding of what normal is for you animals.

5. Knowledge Check

Daily inspection of animal should include

- A. Eye
- B. Hair
- C. Feet
- D. Behavior
- E. All the above

Yes - the correct answer is all of the above. We should be looking at all aspects of our animals each day to understanding how they are doing in a performance state and in a welfare state.

6. Basic Needs – Water

Water is the most important nutrient requirement and is necessary for normal body function, growth and reproduction. The amount of protein or energy your feed has does not matter if your animal does not drink enough water. The quality and quantity of water an animal receives is important and should be monitored regularly. Poor water quality can reduce how much you animal drinks and negatively impact the health of the animal. Waterers should be designed so animals can drink freely and have flow rates that easily meet their water intake requirements. The importance of the quality of the water cannot be overstated. The water needs to be fresh, cool, clean daily. Studies have shown that the lighter the color of your buck the cooler the water is kept and the more water the animals drank. Clean your waterers on a regular basis. Be sure you have enough water for the number of animals you have. Knowing how much water your animal requires will help you know how much water to provide. Realize that as you animals change their production stage their water requirement changes also. weather changes the water needs as well.

7. Basic Needs – Feed

Feed is the next basic need. Animals that are on a self-feed or full feed systems need to make sure to prevent out of feed events. Checking the feed bins and feeders in this system can help make sure feed is properly flowing. Out-of-feed events can negatively impact the animals' well-being by increasing aggression, decreasing average daily gain and average daily feed intake. Feeders should be clean of manure. Be sure that you are providing your animals with the proper nutrients and feeding them appropriately. Feed your animals the proper amount and avoid restricting feed to impact weight for shows. Nutritional requirements changes with each animal as the grow and move through production phases.

8. Basic Needs – Shelter

Shelter is the final basic need. Animals need a space to escape from harsh weather. This could be extreme cold, extreme heat, rain, snow, or sun. Weather in Ohio can be unpredictable and we as producers need to be sure that each animal has a place that they can be clean safe and dry. Just like water and feed, animals change their shelter needs as they grow. Space requirements for animals increase as animals get bigger. Think about the space a baby chick needs versus the space a mature weight market chicken. When you are setting up your pen be sure provide enough space for your animal at the mature weight.

9. Knowledge Check

Basic needs of an animal include

- A. Feed
- B. Water
- C. Grooming
- D. Shelter
- E. A,B,and C
- F. A, B and D

Correct answer is F. Food, water, and shelter are the basic needs of animals. We as producers have a responsibility to provide our animals with these basic needs.

10. Facilities – Body Space Requirements

The topic of space per animal is an ever-changing area of debate in the current climate in animal agriculture. Animal welfare and the minimal requirements of animals have been under scrutiny. Things we need to think about when we look at an animals environment are- ability to stand up and lie down, when lying down can the animal lie flat on their side without their head and limbs touching another animal, feeder, or a fence, is the area appropriately sized for your animal. In your resource book are specific space requirements for each specie according to the different productions stages.

11. Facilities – Ventilation, Air Quality

Ventilation is important for animal to create an environment that's conducive for good health growth and performance in any stage of life. Proper ventilation allows for the movement of good quality air. You may be thinking that you do not have a ventilation system in your facility. However, you likely do. This could be something as simple as opening a window, a door, or turning on a fan. Ventilation systems can control air quality. Air quality can be contaminated with dust and gasses and cause watery, matted eyes and difficulty breathing. Ammonia is a common air contaminate that impacts an animals well-being through irritation of the respiratory tract making it hard for them to breath. Making sure your pens are clean will control ammonia.

12. Facilities – Temperature Control

Animals have the ability to control their body temperature in their environment provided the air temperatures are not too extreme. Air temperature is impacted by air flow though your facility, the density of animals, the humidity, the season, and any supplemental heat or cooling systems you have added. Animals regulate their heat and loss heat in several ways. Animals can evaporate heat by sweating losing moisture through their skin, they can also evaporate moisture through their lungs while breathing. They can lose heat through conductive transfer, this is when heat moves from one object to another, flooring can take heat away from an animal. Animals can radiate heat to cool themselves. This method transfers heat without objects touching. And finally convective transfer is a method for animals to lose heat. Heat is transferred along a temperature gradient between the surface temperature of the animal and the air temperature a short distance away. A draft in a barn will cause body heat to be lost more readily than if there is no air movement.

13. Facilities – Pen Maintenance Sanitation

Pen maintenance is important. The condition of your pen is in affect other indicators of an animals well-being. We want to be sure that the space we, as producers, provide a safe place for them to live. Pens should be free of all sharp objects that stick out. Sharp objects could cut our animals and cause further health concerns. the flooring that we put our animals can really affect how they live we want to make sure that they floor is rough enough that an animal does not slip and sprain their leg but also smooth enough that it does not cause irritation to the animals feet further causing a health issue. The bedding should be clean and dry, this means that you will need to clean your animal pen. Cleaning your animals pen frequently helps decrease the disease risk and parasite risk. Sanitizing housing areas between moving animals in and out can greatly reduce disease concern and helps controls flies.

14. Knowledge Check

Which of these factors do not impact facility quality for animals?

- A. Density of animals
- B. Temperature
- C. Ventilation
- D. Nutrition

Correct answer is D. Nutrition. While nutrition is important for the animal it is not considered a part of facilities. The rest of the options are all specific to ensuring the proper quality of facility for your animals.

15. Bringing It All Together

Okay - let's bring this all together. What does animal care mean for you? As a producer you need to observe you animals daily. This should be a visual observation and observing performance traits such as weight. You should be recording your observations somewhere. You must provide your animals with their basic needs of food, water and shelter. Be sure that the pen you have them in is appropriate size. Provide proper ventilation. This will help keep dust and ammonia out of the air allowing your animals to breathe fresh air. Cleaning your pen regularly will help keep you pen dry and help decrease ammonia and disease risks. If you don't provide your animal proper care its health and ability to grow can be negatively impacted.