



Animal Care

People and Animals

People have raised and produced certain kinds of animals since prehistoric times. This means that animals have been important to us for a long, long time. Some animals produce food for us to eat, while other animals provide fibre and leather for clothing. We also use animals for work and leisure activities.

Food and Fibre Production

The main kinds of animals produced for food and fibre are cattle, sheep and goats, swine and poultry. Today, there are growing numbers of specialized farms and ranches producing non-traditional animals such as elk, deer, llamas, emus and ostriches.

Cattle

There are two types of cattle in Saskatchewan: beef and dairy. Beef cattle are raised to produce meat for us to eat. Usually, beef cattle are raised in pastures or on rangeland and finished in feedlots. Dairy cattle produce milk. They are usually found near large cities so

that the milk can be easily transported and processed nearby. Both types of cattle have the ability to use land that is not suitable for growing crops.

Sheep and Goats

Sheep and goats are used mainly for wool and meat. In addition, many people drink goats' milk and eat cheese made from goats' milk. Sheep and goats are well adapted to semi-arid conditions such as the southern prairies and desert regions. They can graze land that is too steep or rough to grow crops. Today, another use has been found for sheep and goats. Some farmers use goats and sheep to graze on weeds that are out of control in pastures.

Swine

Swine are also known as pigs and hogs. There are more than 700 million swine around the world. Swine produce pork. A number of important by-products come from pigs including various drug and surgical products as well as leather.

Poultry

Poultry includes chickens, ducks, geese, guinea fowl, peacocks, pigeons, swans and turkeys. The main kinds of poultry in Canada are chickens, ducks, geese and turkeys. It is estimated that there are about six billion chickens around the world and about 200 million ducks and turkeys.

Most poultry in Saskatchewan is raised on intensive production farms. The birds live in large barns. These barns have controlled climates and are well ventilated. Farmers carefully watch for diseases and monitor the

growth and development of the birds. Raising the birds inside helps farmers protect the birds from predators and bad weather.

Specialized Livestock Farms and Ranches

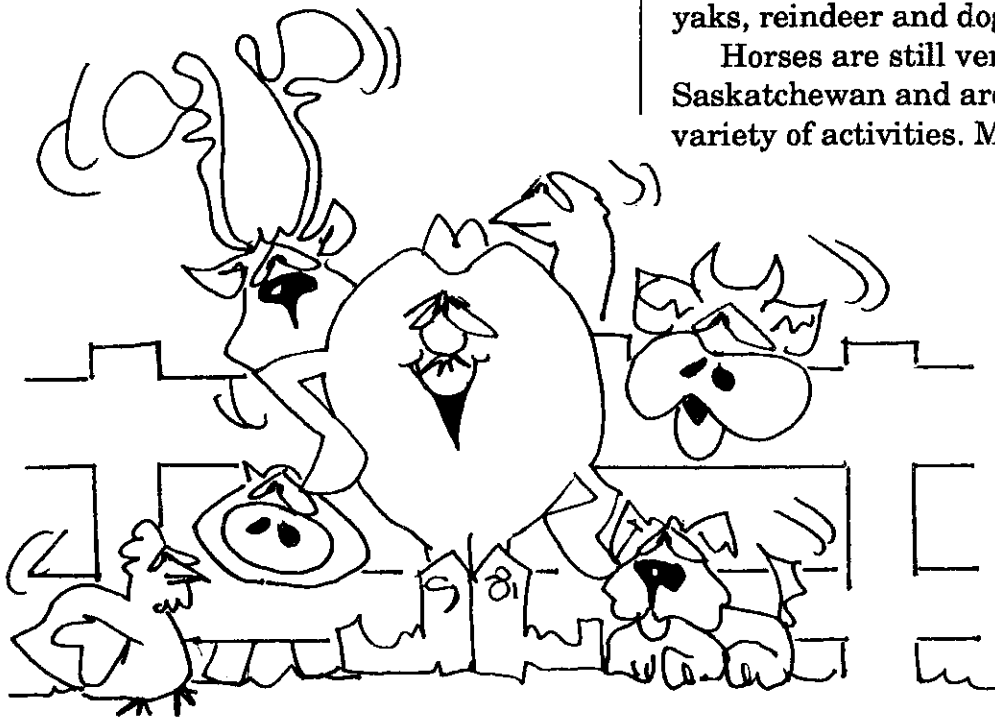
Today, there are a number of farms and ranches that produce specialized livestock such as elk, buffalo, deer, llamas, emu and ostriches. These animals require specialized fencing and housing to keep the animals safe and healthy.

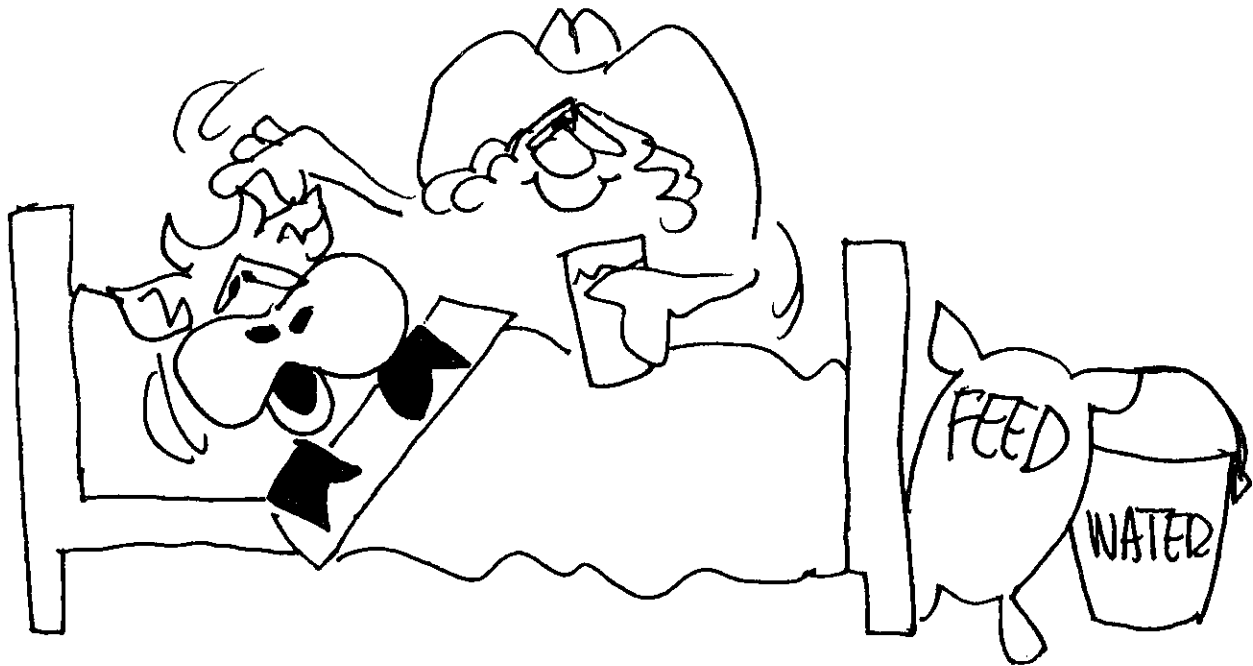
Animals for Work and Leisure Activities

Over many thousands of years, people have domesticated wild animals to help us work, provide transportation or leisure. These animals are called draft animals. They include horses, mules, buffalo, camels, llamas, alpacas, yaks, reindeer and dogs.

Horses are still very popular in Saskatchewan and are used for a variety of activities. Many ranches and

farms use horses to help gather or move cattle and sheep. Today, most horses in Saskatchewan are used for pleasure activities such as trail riding, horse shows, and rodeos.





Animal Husbandry

Animals deserve and need our care and attention. **Animal husbandry** is the term used to describe the science and art of producing livestock. It refers to the breeding, feeding, and management of animals on farms and ranches. Animal husbandry also includes the control of livestock parasites and diseases. (You could think about it in this way: the care you give to your pet is a form of animal husbandry.)

Farmers and ranchers know that they must practice good animal husbandry in order to raise healthy animals. Good animal husbandry requires:

- good quality feed, water and air
- a safe place to live
- people who know and like animals
- management skills to keep the animals healthy.

Livestock producers use the kind of animal husbandry practices that are best suited for the animals that they raise. For example, farmers would not raise chickens in the same way that they raise horses. The way in which producers care for their animals depends on a lot of things. Some of these are:

- the kind of animal
- what it is being used for
- how they will be managed
- what they need to eat
- where is the best place for them to live
- how to keep the animals safe and healthy
- the season of the year and weather conditions
- the animal's age
- the health condition of the animals.

Farmers and ranchers need advice and good information about animal husbandry. This information comes from:

- feed suppliers
- veterinarians
- extension agronomists
- livestock specialists
- meat processors
- meat inspectors
- other producers
- agricultural engineers
- agricultural organizations
- newspapers and publications
- research and universities.

Feeding Livestock

Livestock producers must make sure that the animals they raise have enough of the right kind of food to grow and be healthy in all seasons of the year. The diet, or ration, of livestock must contain enough protein, carbohydrates, minerals, and vitamins. Farmers work with veterinarians, feed suppliers and livestock specialists to decide which ration is best for their animals. The ration changes from season to season and depends on the size, age and condition of the animals.

Producers also work very hard to make sure that their livestock have a safe and abundant supply of water, air and light.



Where Animals Live

Many livestock producers raise their animals outside using barns, corrals and pastures. The farmers know that buildings and pastures must be suitable for the number and kind of animals that live there.

Some farmers raise very large numbers of chickens, turkeys or hogs in large barns that require specialized equipment. These kinds of farms are called intensive production operations.

No matter where animals live, producers need to think about these things:

- the quality and amount of feed
- adequate light and shelter either manufactured or natural
- clean water
- safety from predators
- comfort for the animals
- veterinary care
- ventilation.

Codes of Practice for Animal Care

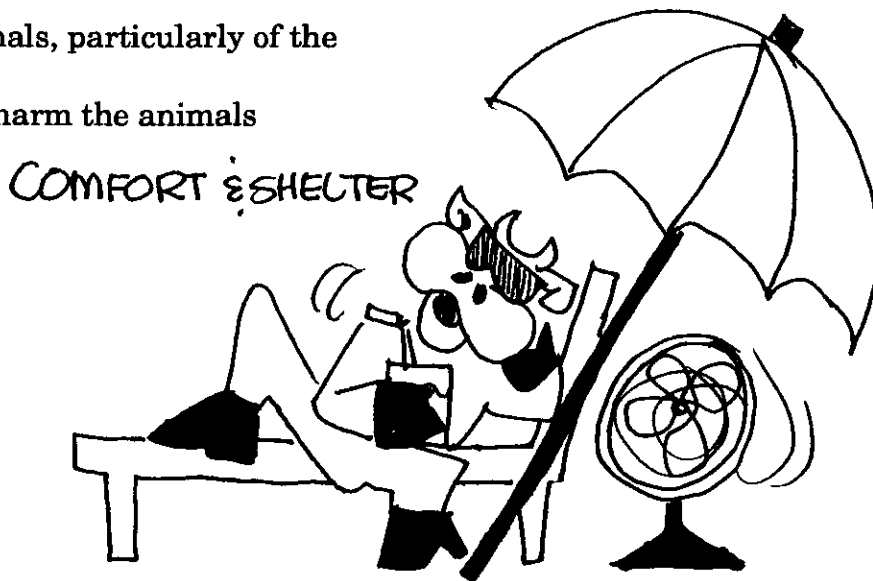
Livestock producers know that they are responsible for the health and safety of the animals they produce. They also know that consumers want to make sure that the food they purchase has been produced in a safe and responsible manner. That's why the livestock and poultry industries developed Codes of Practice for animal care. A Code of Practice is a set of guidelines. These guidelines establish standards for things such as food, shelter and safety for livestock.

The Codes of Practice are used to:

- educate producers about responsible animal care practices;
- encourage and promote responsible animal care throughout the industry.

These guidelines say that farmers must provide their animals with:

- comfort and shelter
- accessible fresh water
- healthy diet
- space for movement
- company of other animals, particularly of the same kind
- flooring that does not harm the animals
- prevention of disease and injury
- rapid treatment of injury, disease, infestation
- emergency arrangements in case of fire or mechanical services.



For More Information ...

Contact:

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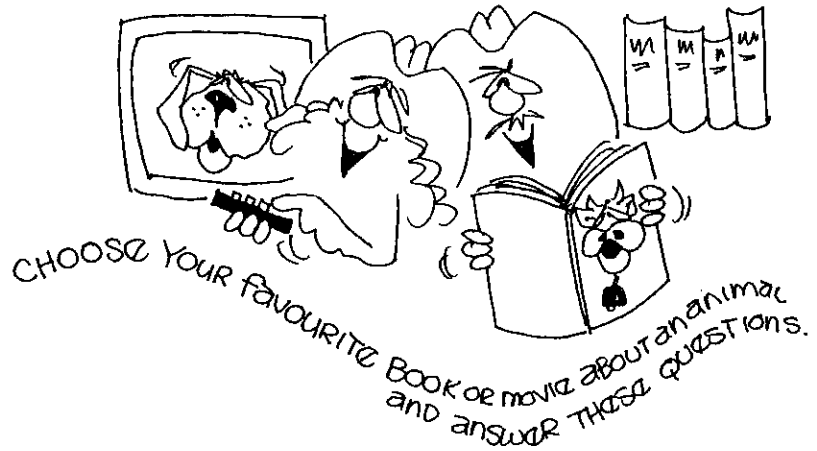
Phone: (306)249-3227

Fax: (306)244-2918

Email: facs@sasktel.net website: www.facs.sk.ca

Animal Stories

There are all kinds of books and movies about animals. Sometimes the animals are real and sometimes they are imagined. It is important to know the difference between real and imagined animals.



What is the title of the book or movie?

Are the animals real or imaginary?

Write a description of the animal or animals.

What does the animal eat?

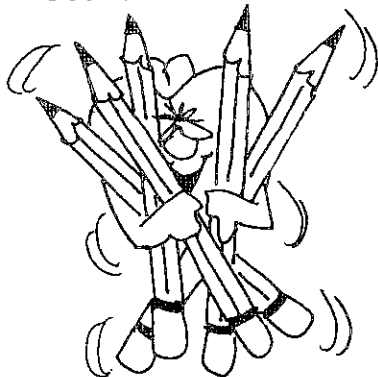
What happens if it is hurt or becomes ill?

Who looks after the animal?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Describe and draw the place where the animal lives.

Use lots of colour!

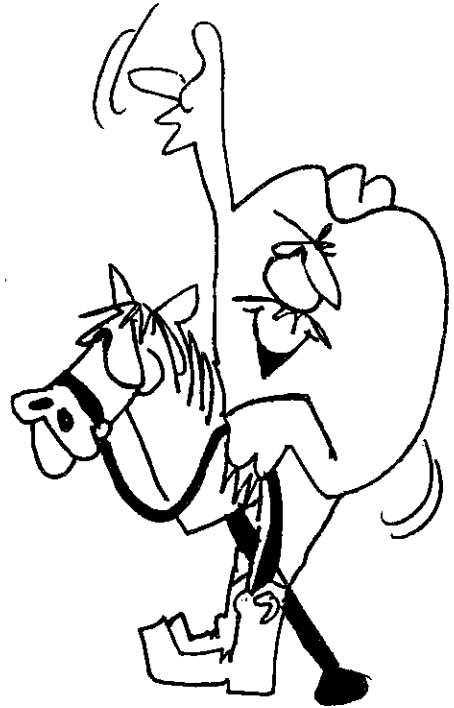


What are the differences between real and imaginary animals?

Real Animals

Imaginary Animals

Draw or write a description of your favourite animal.



My personal favourite—Diablo.