

# CONSIDERING THE CODES

## DEHORNING

### CODE REQUIREMENTS

- Dehorning must be performed by competent personnel using proper, well-maintained tools and accepted techniques.
- Seek guidance from your vet about pain control for disbudding or dehorning.
- Disbud calves as early as possible, before horn bud attachment (2-3 months).
- EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2016: Use pain control, in consultation with your vet, when dehorning calves after horn bud attachment.

### REFERENCES

- National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC). 2013. Code of practice: for the care and handling of beef cattle. Available at: <http://www.nfacc.ca>. Accessed: 08/29/14.
- American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). Literature Review on the Welfare Implications of the Dehorning and Disbudding of Cattle. 2010. Available from: <https://www.avma.org>. Accessed: 01/21/15
- National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC). 2012. Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Beef Cattle: Review of Scientific Research on Priority Issues. Available from: <http://www.nfacc.ca>. Accessed: 04/14/14
- Goonewardene, L.A., et al. 1999. A comparison of reproductive and growth traits of horned and polled cattle in three synthetic beef lines. Canadian Journal of Animal Science. 79(2): p. 123-127.

### How will the requirements improve my animals' care and strengthen my operation?

- All methods of horn bud and horn removal, at any age, cause pain and stress in calves. Pain control, such as local numbing and oral anti-inflammatory medications, have been proved to reduce the pain experienced from dehorning.
- Attachment of the horn buds to the skull occurs at 2-3 months. After which, dehorning will result in a larger wound, requiring more time to heal and increased risk of infection. Therefore, dehorning at an earlier age reduces the likeliness of having to treat these wounds.
- To avoid the time and cost involved in disbudding, an alternative is to breed polled lines of cattle into your herd.

