

The Horn Levy in British Columbia

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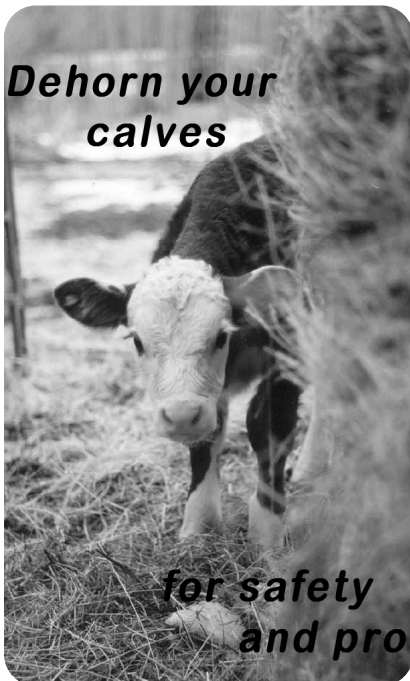
> The Levy

Established in 1939, the Cattle Horned Act used a levy to encourage the dehorning of cattle in order to reduce economic impacts of injuries caused by animals with horns. Originally the levy was set at \$2 per head and remained that way for more than sixty years until votes by provincial cattle organizations recommended that the levy be increased and that it be a levy under the Farming and Fishing Industries Development Act administered by the Cattle Industry Development Council.

On September 1, 2005 the levy was increased to \$10 per head following an extensive education and promotion campaign to make producers aware of the increase.

> Definition of A Horn

For purposes of the Horn Levy, horn means visible, non-tampered horn, or tampered horn greater than two inches in length, except for horns on registered purebred cattle when sold (purebred registration documentation to be provided to inspector).



> The Committee

The following cattle industry associations elect representatives to sit on the Horn Levy Committee. In addition to these elected representatives, one ex-officio member from the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and one from Ownership Identification Inc. may attend committee meetings along with the Committee secretary. This committee reports to the Cattle Industry Development Council.

>	Cattle Association	# Elected Representatives
	BC Association of Cattle Feeders	one representative
	BC Breeders and Feeders Association	one representative
	BC Cattlemen's Association	two representatives
	BC Milk Producers' Association	one representative

The Cattle Industry Development Council (CIDC), a group of eight cattle industry producers, is responsible for the Horn Levy in BC.

The goal of the levy is to encourage proper dehorning of cattle. Producers are strongly encouraged to dehorn animals in the first week of life to minimize stress and discomfort.

The levy is collected by Ownership Identification Inc. (OII) and at sales yards on the sale of horned cattle.

Funds collected from the levy are available for cattle organizations for projects that benefit the cattle industry. Applications are reviewed on an individual basis by the Horn Levy Committee.

Applications are available through the secretary or via:

www.cattlefund.net

> Benefits of Dehorning

Removing horns from cattle, and calves minimizes the amount of bruising to carcass, thereby improving carcass quality.

According to Tom Hamilton, Beef Specialist (Research Coordinator) with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, the benefits of dehorning calves at a young age are: properly dehorned calves receive a price premium of \$3.00 - \$5.00 per cwt compared with

horned calves and early dehorning imposes less stress on calf and avoids weight loss incurred closer to sale date.

Hamilton states that the cost of dehorning a calf is \$3 / head and the Net Return is \$13.50 - \$24.50 per calf sold. Hamilton continues to say that polled breeding stock (with superior genetics) can minimize the need to dehorn, degree of stress and risk of health problems.

> Preferred Dehorning Practices

The choices of dehorning techniques range from genetic to surgical. The risks for each method vary. Many producers choose to dehorn newborn calves because the techniques are easier and safer for the operator, less stressful on the calves and demonstrate concern for the animal welfare. Here are the common dehorning methods.

"The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) recommends that when the following procedures are necessary, they be performed within the first week of life: castration of cattle, swine, sheep, and goats; tail docking of swine and sheep; and dehorning of cattle and goats."

These surgical procedures are a routine part of livestock husbandry. The concern of the veterinary profession is that they be performed in a humane fashion, and that

the welfare of the animal be assured. Pain, stress, recovery time, and complications will be minimized by performing these procedures on animals under one week of age. The onus

is on the practitioner to evaluate the technique and procedure used, as to its appropriateness in each situation.

**"DEHORNING AND CASTRATION
SHOULD BE PERFORMED WITHIN
THE FIRST WEEK OF LIFE."**



POLLED BULLS

< Horned or polled cows mated to a naturally polled bull (Angus) will give birth to polled calves. However, some non-naturally polled bulls carry the gene for horns and will not breed true for the polled trait.

CHEMICAL DEHORNING

Caustic chemicals will prevent the growth of horns when properly applied to the horn buds of newborn calves. The chemicals are available as sticks and pastes. To protect yourself, wear gloves when applying the chemicals. To protect the calf, avoid application near its eyes. Do not use caustics in rainy weather.

ELECTRIC HOT IRON METHOD



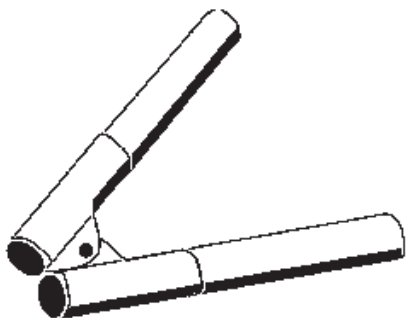
< Both the 120-volt electric and the gas-fired irons will destroy the horn producing skin at the base of the horn. This technique works well for calves up to 12 weeks old. However, the technique requires good restraint of the calf. Except in very young calves, blocking the nerve to the horn is recommended. There are several sizes of dehorning irons. The proper size is one where the burner makes a complete ring around the base of the horn. Use a short extension cord as voltage drops with a long cord, limiting the amount of heat generated by the dehorner.

DEHORNING SPOON OR TUBE



< With this method, a sharpened metal tube cuts through and removes the horn-producing skin at the base of the horn bud. Use the proper size tube to remove the horn plus about 1 /8 inch of skin around the entire horn bud.

GOUGE OR BARNES-TYPE DEHORNER



< With this method, the dehorner rapidly removes the horn bud and horn-producing skin. The dehorner is suitable for dehorning calves with horns up to 4 inches long. The blades must be kept sharp for best results.

BLOCKING THE NERVE TO THE HORN

One nerve provides the feeling to each horn. The technique makes dehorning easier on the calf and on the person doing the job. You must block one nerve on each side of the head. The lidocaine anesthetic is a prescription drug and is only available from your veterinarian.

Dehorning photographs and descriptions are courtesy of the Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2003. Reproduced with permission

> Horn Levy Fund Projects *Grand Total (1997-2006) = \$ 176,431*

1997 PROJECTS TOTAL	\$ 54,550
Nechako Ag Info Project - Nechako Regional Cattlemen's Association	\$ 8,250
Grasslands Interpretation Centre - Nicola Watershed Roundtable	\$ 20,000
Degamuukw Appeal - B.C. Cattlemen's Association	\$ 20,000
Grasslands Tour - Nicola Stock Breeders	\$ 1,500
Southern Interior Weed Committee Operations - Okanagan Wildlife Heritage	\$ 4,800
1998 PROJECTS TOTAL	\$ 11,500
Humane Transport Inspectors Training - Canadian Food Inspection Agency	\$8,000
Rush Skeleton Weed Seminar - North Okanagan Livestock Association	\$2,000
B.C. Hereford International Seminar - B.C. Hereford Association	\$1,500
1999 PROJECTS TOTAL	\$ 14,270
Extended Grazing Season Seminar - BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries	\$1,500
Rangeland Monitoring Field Day - Southern Interior Stock Association	\$2,000
Range Protein Block for Distribution Research - Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	\$2,600
Mineral Review - Kettle River Stock Association	\$1,000
Weed Committee Operations - Rock Creek Farmers Institute	\$5,000
Sustaining Healthy Grasslands Tour - Grasslands Conservation Council of B.C.	\$2,170
2000 PROJECTS TOTAL	\$ 14,093
Re-building Livestock Scale House - Westwold Livestock Assoc.	\$3,000
Bridge Funding for Council Startup - Grasslands Conservation Council of B.C.	\$7,500
"No Trespass" Signs Project - B.C. Cattlemen's Association	\$1,420
"LCD Projector" Purchase - B.C. Cattlemen's Association	\$6,790
Publication Project - Grasslands Conservation Council of B.C.	\$3,000
Riparian Management Seminar - Kamloops Stockmen's Association	\$2,883
2001 PROJECTS TOTAL	\$ 23,760
Brand Inspector Training - Ownership Identification Inc.	\$12,560
Dehorning Research - University of B.C.	\$8,000
SRM Tour - Society for Range Management - BC Chapter	\$2,000
Noxious Weed Field Day - Thompson Nicola Noxious Weed Committee	\$1,200
2002 PROJECTS TOTAL	\$ 7,439
Lac du Bois Interpretive Sign - Grasslands Conservation Council of B.C.	\$1,300
Community Cattle Handling Facility - Westwold Livestock Association	\$1,539
Environmental Awareness Seminars - Nechako Valley Reg. Cattlemen's Association.	\$1,000
Two Weed Field Days for Ranchers - Southern Interior Weed Management Committee	\$3,600
2003 PROJECTS TOTAL	\$ 30,475
Establish New Range Club - University College of the Cariboo Range Club	\$2,500
Help Establish Cattlemen's Assoc. in Houston - Pleasant Valley Cattlemen's Association	\$1,000
Ag Awareness Colouring Book Project - BC Assoc. of Ag. Fairs and Exhibitions	\$2,500
Reprint "Boundary Weed Brochures" - Boundary Weed Management Committee	\$2,000
Operation of Cattle Horn Act Rollover Committee - B.C. Cattlemen's Association	\$20,000
Radio Promo "Agriculture Facts on the Air" - Nechako Valley Reg. Cattlemen's Association	\$1,800
Weed Identification Workshop - Nechako Valley Reg. Cattlemen's Association	\$675
2004 PROJECTS TOTAL	\$ 0
NOTE: No projects were approved during the time when the new Horn Levy Fund was being created.	
2005 PROJECTS TOTAL	\$ 11,860
New Horn Levy Fund	
Assessment of Plant Community Types & Carrying Capacity - Peace River Regional Cattlemen	5,000
Our Water Future – Seminar - Kamloops Stockmen's Association	1,200
Training for Oil Inspectors - Kamloops Stockmen's Association	5,000
2005 Speaker – Nechako - Nechako Regional Cattlemen's Association	660
2006 PROJECTS TOTAL	\$ 8,484
Steak sizzle Radio Program - Nechako Regional Cattlemen's Association	850
Dr. Tim Ball, Guest Speaker - Kootenay Livestock Association	800
Portable Livestock Scale - Pr. George Cattlemen & 4-H Council	3,434
Invasive Plant Inventory - Horsefly Cattlemen's Association	3,400
Grand Total (1997-2006)	\$ 176,431