

Livestock Care in Museums

Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums (ALHFAM)

“An Organization Of People Who Bring History To Life”

Prepared by: *FARM*: The ALHFAM Professional Interest Group focusing on agricultural issues in a museum setting.

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This outline is a “guidance” document intended for individual site’s resource and risk assessment when developing livestock programs and management plans/policies. It is the opinion of the review committee that livestock plans should receive board approval or other accreditation from the sites governing body. Policies should be developed and administered with the assistance of experienced livestock health professionals. We recommend that the responsible party consult individuals who currently oversee livestock programs in a museum setting. The assistance and guidance of other professionals lend credibility, public confidence and considerable security to livestock programs.

The information below is intended to be an outline that *stimulates thought* on the subject of livestock in a museum setting. It is not intended to be a comprehensive outline. For more specific information contact the chair(s) of the ALHFAM professional interest group- *FARM* found on the website at alhfam.org.

Points for Consideration

- ***Institutional Commitment***—Is the institution committed to the resources- financial, physical (barns, fields, pasture, fences, etc...) and personnel necessary for a livestock program?
- ***Mission Statement*** of the livestock program-- THE BIG PICTURE of how livestock programming enhances the museum site. How does the livestock program fit into the overall mission of the site?
- ***Goals and objectives*** of the livestock program--- State clearly what you wish to accomplish by implementing a livestock program. How will the livestock fit into the site’s programming? Will the livestock serve an active or passive interpretive role? Do you intend to use the livestock as part of the site’s interpretation in a “working” manner?- [Examples: shear the sheep with historically appropriate methods; work the horses and oxen in fields]. Are the livestock intended to be a passive enhancement to the site? Or some of both?

- **Staffing** for livestock program---Determine necessary staffing levels to maintain program in a professional manner. Identify staff person responsible for livestock care and clearly define their responsibilities. Develop a clear chain of command from the governing body to the livestock handlers. Identify responsibilities of all staff engaged in livestock care. Consider source for qualified staff to recruit for positions. Clearly define the availability of staff persons to properly maintain livestock program.

The Livestock Management Plan -- The nuts and bolts of the plan are contained in clear policies. The document inevitably will identify all areas of livestock care. (The list below is not necessarily in order of priority.)

I. Purchasing policies

- A. Budget- for purchase and maintenance
- B. Determine realistic costs for livestock.
- C. Initial acquisition
- D. To breed or not to breed
- E. Livestock selection
 1. Phenotypic and genotypic
 2. Breed choice.
 3. Rare breeds conservation
 4. Breed or individual temperament requirements.
 5. Training requirements- horses and oxen.
 6. Loans- incoming/outgoing
 7. Gifts- *Note: consider advantages and disadvantages to gifts.
Do donated livestock have hidden issues or problems?*
 8. Sponsorships- adopt an animal program, etc...

II. Environmental control- specifications for the following may be found in the Federation of Animal Science Societies, Ag Guide, or other university publications. See USDA animal care policy manual #29.

- A. Space requirements-specific to species/ indoor and outdoor
- B. Relations between species
- C. Temperature tolerances of species/breed
- D. Sanitation/ manure disposal
- E. Pest management
 1. Exterior parasites on livestock
 2. Internal parasites in livestock
- F. Physical site
 1. Buildings and grounds
 2. Shelter requirements
 3. Ventilation/ Odors to surrounding area
 4. Feeding arrangements- troughs, mangers, etc...

5. Predator control methods.
6. On-site and off-site facilities

G. Fencing

1. Types- historic or modern.
2. Safety- humans/livestock.
3. Cost consideration.
4. Maintenance requirements.
5. Within view of public?

H. Nutrition -- Recommend a nutritionist/ veterinarian as a consultant-
(provides credibility).

1. Specific needs for each species.
2. Specific needs for individual livestock within species.
3. Work load for each species and each individual.
4. Gestation periods for each species.
5. Lactation
 - a) Weaning
 - b) Drying off
6. Growth expectations
7. Water supply
 - a) Source
 - b) Container- period or modern
 - c) Fresh – determine this.
 - d) Amount needed per animal.
 - e) Availability.
 - f) Public perception
8. Storage of feed
 - a) Rotate/ freshness
 - b) Containers
 - c) Rodent free
 - d) Security from livestock/visitors
 - e) Feeding schedule
 - f) Quantity
 - g) Quality/Brand
9. Personnel--*Note: Designate the personnel who feed!*
(*training is necessary to insure consistency*).
 - a) Posted and available for easy access for staff
 - b) Identifying amounts and specific guidelines for certain livestock individuals.

III. Health Programs and biosecurity-- Design in consultation with local veterinarian -- adds credibility as well as expertise—(a professionally assisted program- under contract or not).

A. New acquisitions

1. Vaccinations before arrival
2. Parasite control before arrival
3. Practices unique to species prior to arrival
4. Quarantine upon arrival

B. Vaccinations- preventive/general/reproductive.

1. Times of year -- Identify season- initial or booster
2. Age--newborn, yearling, mature, etc...
3. Type of medication/ dosage amount/ booster

C. Worming

1. Schedule
2. Type of medication
3. Rotation of medication type.

D. Castration

1. Methods/determination
2. Medical treatment
3. Trained, experienced staff.

E. Veterinarian

1. Maintain close working relationship.
2. Hospital facilities- distance/ location
3. Sick animal quarantine
4. New acquisitions quarantine
5. When to call

F. Ferrier- if applicable

G. Disposal procedures

1. Live animals
 - a) Euthanasia
 - b) Sale- restrictions?
 - Private party
 - Auction
 - Donation
 - c) Use for facility
 - Human consumption
 - Processing
 - Programming
 - Storage
 - Dissemination
2. Deceased animals
 - a) Burial
 - b) Disposal service
 - c) Donations to vet schools or other facilities

H. Record Keeping

1. Health
2. Nutrition
3. Acquisitions
 - a) Newborn
 - b) Purchase
 - c) Donations
 - d) Medical supplies
 - e) Other supplies
4. Breed registrations

IV. Staff Training

- A. Mission of livestock program
 1. Overview of management plan
 2. Policies and procedures
 3. Chain of command
 4. Training frequency and refresher training
- B. Animal husbandry
 1. Handling livestock
 2. Livestock behavior
 3. Restraint techniques
 3. Physiology of species
 4. Nutrition- feeding schedule
 5. History of species
 6. Preventative care
 7. Grooming schedule
 8. Health check schedule
- C. Visitor interaction
 1. To pet or not to pet
 2. Interpretive goals and objectives
 3. Naming of animals
 4. Define the acceptable level of visitor participation
- D. Driving techniques of draft/carriage animals if appropriate
- E. Visitor and Staff Safety
 1. Around livestock
 2. Facilities
 3. State and local laws
- F. Written resources for reference use.

V. Liability Issues

- A. Insurance
- B. Training and procedures
- C. Equipment
- D. Contractors on the site

VI. Emergency plan

- A. Inclement weather
- B. Disaster- fire, flood, etc...
- C. Contact list
- D. Prioritized plan

For additional information contact the current chair of the FARM professional interest group listed on the ALHFAM website at alhfam.org.

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