



Farm animal safety

Curriculum Links:

- **Science:** Living things
- **Geography:** Human environments
- **SPHE:** Myself and the wider world

Introduction

Irish farmers have many different types of animals on the farm. Some of the animals you might find on an Irish farm include cattle, sheep, pigs and poultry. Farmers care for their animals and provide them with the food and shelter they need. The farmer also makes sure that visitors to the farm are safe around the farm and the animals.

Lesson objectives

To make students aware of the dangers that they could encounter around farm animals and the ways in which they can stay safe around these animals.

Teacher guidelines:

90% of farm accidents involve an unsafe act. Livestock (farm animals) are the third most common cause of farm accidents in Ireland. It is suggested that the teacher revises the different types of farm animals examined in previous lesson plans as well as introducing pupils to the vocabulary and basic concepts of safety before starting the lesson.

Keywords:

tame

dangerous

pet

touch

chute

newborn

Farm animals

Farms are busy and exciting places with lots of animals. All farm animals can be dangerous and it is important that we are very careful around these animals, from hens and roosters to cows and bulls.

How should we approach farm animals?

You should always ask permission from the farmer before entering a farm or approaching any of the farm animals. Animals may be housed in sheds or in fields. We should never enter a field where there might be animals or play in sheds where animals are housed.

Animals may look friendly and **tame** but you never know when they might snap, bite, stamp or kick. Some male animals like bulls, rams or boars can be very violent and could be **dangerous**. Stay calm, speak quietly and move slowly around these animals. You should avoid making sudden movements, shouting, screaming or running around the animals. Always wash your hands after handling farm animals or visiting the farm. Under the farmer's supervision, he or she may allow you to **pet, touch** or even handle some of the farm animals. Listen to the farmers instructions on how to approach and hold the animals (e.g. baby chicks or newborn lambs).



Introduction to the dangers of approaching and handling cows and sheep

Cows and sheep can be housed in fields or in sheds. During the summer, they are usually outdoors. When it is cold in the winter, they are housed in sheds. We should not enter a field or a shed where these animals are being kept without the farmer's permission. If a cow or a sheep is in a **chute**, stay a safe distance away from the animal as they could kick you.

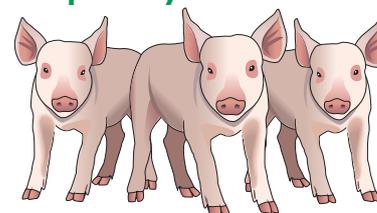


Sheep

Most lambs are born in spring. Ewes (female sheep), usually give birth to either one or two lambs at a time. The lambs will stay with their mother until they are about five months old. If you are allowed to touch a **newborn** lamb be gentle with it and make sure not to hold it too tightly. You should always wash your hands after being on the farm.

Dangers associated with approaching and handling pigs and poultry

Pigs can be kept indoors in sheds or outdoors in fields. If you are allowed to pet, hold or touch a piglet, be gentle and do not squeeze it. Piglets usually squeal if you try to catch them so be careful not to frighten them. Make sure not to chase chickens as this can frighten them. If you are allowed to hold newborn chicks, use both hands, be gentle and do not drop them. Take care to place them back gently.



Suggested activities

- Photocopy the activity sheet on page 52
- Discuss the different types of farm animals that the students have seen
- Sing the song 'Old Macdonald had a farm' and see how many farm animals the students can come up with
- Revise the ways in which we can stay safe around farm animals
- Invite a local farmer into the classroom to talk about his or her animals
- Have the students draw and colour the different types of farm animals discussed in this lesson
- Discuss the students' favourite farm animal and why
- Sign your class up to participate in the "Farm Safe Schools" interactive programme. For more information on how to register your class, visit: www.farmsafeschools.ie

Learning outcomes:

At the end of this lesson, students should know that farm animals can be potentially dangerous and they should know the ways to stay safe around these animals.

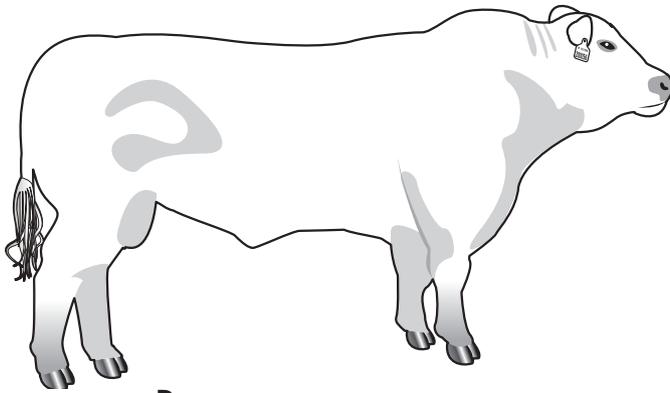


Farm animal safety

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Date: _____

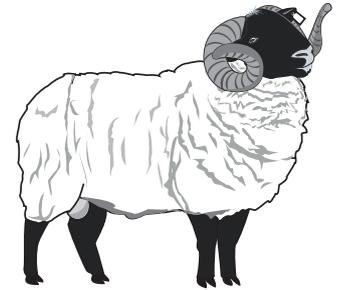
1 Match the picture to the word:



Rooster

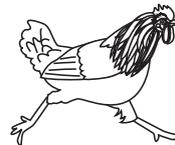
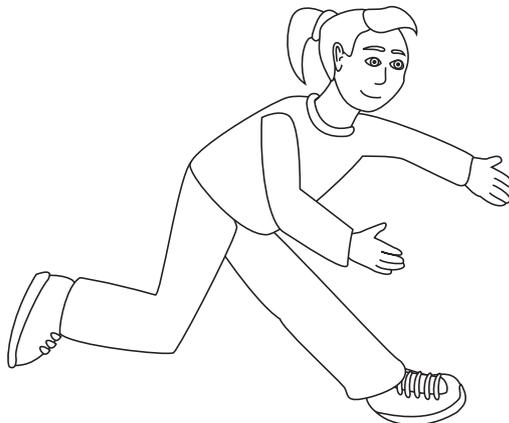


Ram



Bull

2 Can you see what is wrong in this picture? What should you do?



* To be used with teacher guidelines, page 24