Livestock Manager Encyclopedia Article

Livestock Manager

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Livestock Manager

Livestock managers take care of livestock on farms and ranches. Livestock include animals such as beef cattle, swine (pigs and hogs), goats, and sheep. The animals are raised and sold for food, their hides, or breeding purposes. On farms and ranches, the animals may graze in open pastures and be housed in barns or pens.

Animals need to be taken care of every day. Unless they are grazing, they must be fed and watered daily. Livestock managers must be sure their herds are healthy. They routinely examine the animals and may give them vaccinations and medicines. Barns and pens must be repaired and kept clean, and fences around grazing areas must be maintained. The livestock manager may be involved in the planting, harvesting, and storage of different food crops for the livestock. Other activities include branding animals for identification purposes and rotating animals from one pasture to another. Sheep must be routinely sheared so that their wool can be sold.

Livestock managers may also breed animals. This involves picking the best livestock to be bred, artificially inseminating the animals, assisting with the births of the offspring, and feeding and caring for both the parents and offspring. Records must be kept regarding the animals' weights, diets, birth records, and pedigrees. Computers are important for managing this type of data.

Becoming a livestock manager does not necessarily involve formal training or education. A person may acquire the necessary practical knowledge by working under more experienced persons on a farm or ranch. In grade and high school, it is good training to participate in livestock programs run by organizations such as 4-H. A livestock manager would benefit from a university degree. A bachelor's degree in agricultural sciences (the study of farming, producing crops, and raising livestock) with an animal science major provides a thorough understanding of raising livestock. Courses include those in animal sciences (breeding, nutrition, **genetics**), agriculture (entomology, natural resources, veterinary science), and business (economics, accounting, marketing).

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