IDENTIFICATION OF FARM ANIMALS

Identification and description of animals

 are essential and necessary requirements due to their great benefits. Through these methods, it is possible to distinguish individuals of the same species and identify their features

Purposes of Identifying and Describing Farm Animals:

1.   Prevent the replacement of one animal with another of the same species and breed.

2.   Distinguish animals that have been inspected and vaccinated from others.

3.   Identify sires used in artificial insemination and females in estrus.

4.   Recognize high-producing animals in the dairy herd or individuals with distinctive traits.

5.   Record the traits and features of each individual when registering animals and opening their records.

6.   Identify animals imported from abroad.

7.   Record the descriptions of each animal for insurance purposes in countries with animal insurance systems.

Types of Identification:

1. Collective Identification

Used to recognize a group or herd of animals of the same species by applying a colored mark around the neck, on the hindquarters, or elsewhere. This method is easy to apply but less accurate because the mark may fade over time.

2. Individual Identification

This method is more precise but harder to implement. It relies on the visible, permanent marks on the animal's body and includes the following features:

- Name & Number

- Body Color

- Species

- Breed

- Sex

- Age

- Height

- Physical marks on the trunk, head, or limbs

- Acquired permanent marks

Identification of Cattle

Cattle are identified using the same collective and individual methods as mentioned above. For individual identification, the process is similar to that used for horses, with some additional cattle-specific markers such as:

1. Assigning different names for each animal in the herd.

2. Numbering using branding (firing), tattooing, or tagging with metal plates bearing numbers.

3. Mentioning the breed (e.g., Friesian, Shorthorn, etc.).

4. Differentiating gender using specific terms for cattle of different ages.

5. Identifying body colors (yellow, red, black, white, gray).

6. Determining age via teeth examination, birth records, calving history, or horn ring counts (common in buffalo).

7. Observing head markings like stars, horn presence/absence, muzzle features, and specific horn shapes associated with breeds.

8. Tail markings.

NEW

Animal Tagging

Tagging involves assigning a number to an animal that it retains for life. This allows tracking of its productive, health, and genealogical history. In Iraq, animal tagging was not widely practiced among breeders and farmers. Traditional methods included ear notching or skin branding. In larger stations, animals were tagged using various techniques to maintain their distinct identity. Common tagging methods include:

A. Skin Branding:
Burning numbers or letters onto the animal's skin using heated metal tools. This method is suitable for cattle and buffalo and is typically done at one year of age.

- **Hot Branding:** Uses heated iron to create marks on the skin, often resulting in skin damage and reduced hide value.

- **Freeze Branding:** Uses nitrogen-cooled tools applied to a shaved area, creating a permanent mark without skin damage.

Hot Branding

Freeze Branding

•**Metal Tags:** Iron or aluminum tags fixed in specific locations using tools
•.
•**Plastic Tags:** Large, colorful tags often attached to the ear with special tools. These tags are prone to falling off or being damaged.

•**Numbering on Neck Collars or Straps:** Used to identify calves. These collars are prone to falling off or getting caught.

•**Tattooing:** A traditional method where a number or mark is tattooed on the inside of the ear or the upper lip. Special tools are required, and the tattoo remains for life, though it may be difficult to read on dark skin.

•**Hoof or Horn Marking:** A reliable method where numbers are ironed onto the hoof or horns. The mark remains as long as the animal is alive.

Neck Collars

Horn Marking

Thanks
for
Attention