

Extension shopper article for 8-18-15

## **Beef Cattle Institute Collaborates with Merck Animal Health to Produce Educational Modules**

Submitted by: David Kehler, County Extension Director/Agriculture Agent

The Beef Cattle Institute (BCI) at Kansas State University, in conjunction with Merck Animal Health, has released the first module in the CreatingConnections™ Educational Series, which features industry experts who share insights and proven techniques to help ensure low-stress cattle handling. This module, now available at CreatingConnections, focuses on acclimation—specifically how to best help cattle adjust and thrive in a new environment, which is critical to the health and well being of an animal.

A team of experts that included Dan Thomson, a veterinarian and director of the BCI, developed the module. Thomson facilitated a roundtable discussion about acclimation during the video. Other team members included veterinarians Paulo Loureiro with Merck Animal Health and Tom Noffsinger with Production Animal Consultation (PAC).

“CreatingConnections is an opportunity to truly collaborate with industry and practitioners to provide veterinarians and producers tools for improving cattle management,” Thomson said. “The BCI has developed a platform that is used daily by beef producers worldwide, and it is awesome to amplify Merck Animal Health and PAC's visions to bring this information and training on low stress cattle handling to more cattlemen's farms.”

The modules are being developed to help cattle producers, employees and veterinarians give the best possible care for cattle by providing them with education, information and training. Each module includes a learning assessment tool and certificate that can be customized and printed when successfully printed. Participants need to achieve 80 percent or better on the learning assessment to receive the certificate.

The modules are complementary to Merck Animal Health customers via the CreatingConnections.info website. If not a customer, the modules are available for purchase at animalcaretraining.org for \$50 to residents in the U.S. and Canada.

“Producers know relocating cattle can cause stress, which can directly impact suppression of the immune system, susceptibility to health challenges and decreased performance. Minimizing that stress is key,” Loureiro said. “We’ve gathered real-world examples to demonstrate handling techniques that are pivotal to working successfully with cattle and helping them to acclimate more quickly to new surroundings. This video details how to gauge each animal’s individual characteristics, as well as identify the influential animals and work with them to establish trust and confidence throughout the herd.”

Learn more about the new CreatingConnections Educational Series and other available resource materials at <http://www.creatingconnections.info/en-US/Home/Index>