The Effects of the Human Voice on Cattle

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The cattle industry has seen many changes in the field of animal husbandry over the past century. Recent technological developments in squeeze chutes have been intended to create a more calming environment for cattle to be handled in. These chutes put less stress on the cattle, produce less noise, and lead to increased safety for both the animal and the handler. Studies have shown that less agitated cattle have a higher reproduction rate and higher rate of gain in feed lots. One study has been done on the effects that the human voice and banging pipe have on cattle. The purpose of this study was to compare the effects of calm and aggressive human voice with the sound of banging pipe on cattle. The hypothesis that cattle heart rate would increase when exposed to human voice, calm or aggressive, was supported. When subjected to treatments of human voices at aggressive and calm levels, the average heart rate of cattle increased significantly compared to when the cattle underwent the banging pipe treatment. For future research, studies could be done on whether it is more effective to move cattle through alleyways by human touch or by the use of sorting sticks. It would also be interesting to look at how different chute configurations allow for calmer and more manageable cattle. Ranchers would benefit from calmer cattle by gaining more of a profit when they sell their calves, as well as their fat cattle. They may also get higher prices for calmer heifers and cows. Worker's Compensation claims due to reckless cattle may be decreased and overall safety while working cattle would increase.

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