**Deer Park FFA Cattle Project**

**Getting Started**

\*\*\*Every animal is different and this is a *basic* outline for most animals\*\*\*

Phase 1: Approximately Week 1 – Week 3

* Start with a limited amount of feed, especially if changing feeds from breeder preference. Gradually increase feed amount every other day until feeding ~ 2 - 2.5% body weight of animal daily. Feed the amount ½ morning and ½ evening. Keep a consistent feeding time schedule.
* Leave rope halter on animal at all times if animal is not broken to walk before purchase.
* Spend time with animal in stall if safe. 1 hour each day
* Tie animals rope halter to top rail of stall. Rub from distance with show stick. Work in closer when able and rub with hand all over, but NOT on head.
* Do Not take animal out of stall
* Goal is for animal to accept your presence and not be spooky when touched.

Phase 2: Approximately Week 4 – Week 7

* Animal should be on full feed ~ 2 – 2.5% of body weight per day. ½ amount at morning feeding and ½ amount at evening feeding.
* Animal should be willing to accept your presence and allow touching all over.
* Lead the animal around the stall for several days. Do not take out of stall. Hold rope halter about 8inches from cheek of animal when leading, no long rope holds.
* If animal successfully leads in stall without hesitation, begin leading out of stall for short time periods when there is not a lot of activity in the area. DO NOT LET THE ANIMAL GO. If they escape your grasp repeatedly, they will form a bad habit of breaking away. Assistance with this process is important for the first few trips out.
* Rope halter can be removed when animal allows you to approach it in stall without spooking away.
* When leading successfully, take animal to wash rack and wash/rinse. Animal can be drip-dried or can be taken to blow drying station to blow dry. Always start washing at feet and work your way up the legs/body/back/head. When blowing, start from rear of animal with blower nozzle facing straight forward. Work from rear of body towards front of body in consistent pattern to encourage correct hair growth pattern.

Phase 3: Approximately Week 8 – Finish

* Consistent feeding schedule a priority. Same time AM and same time PM daily.
* Rinse/ blow/brush every 2-3 days minimum
* Lead out of stall and practice setting up feet with show stick for ~30 minutes daily

Feeding:

* Common practice is below ~700 lbs feed “ Grower type” feed.
* Common practice is above ~700 lbs feed “Finisher type” feed.
* 2.5 – 3% total body weight daily. Adjusted based on desired end goal weight at show.

What to have when you get started on Day 1

* Large Water Bucket or Automatic Watering Device
* Large feed pan on ground or hanging large animal feeder
* Roper Halter
* Show Stick
* Stiff bristle brush for washing
* Cattle feed (never allow yourself to run out!!! Most feedstores close on Sunday for sure & early Saturday)
* Square bale hay
* T-Handled cattle comb (used while animal has longer hair)