



Tikrit University  
College of Veterinary Medicine

Lec no. 1.

Description and identification  
of farm animals.

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Animal management.

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description and identification of farm animals:

Distinguishing and characterizing animals is an important ‘ necessary requirement and depends on the presence of special distinctive signs on the animal’s body, such as (body colour, the presence of inherited signs that appear at or after birth, as well as acquired signs that appear on the body as a result of some external influences to which the animal is exposed during the different stages of life. The distinctive signs of each animal are of great benefit, as they can distinguish between individuals of the same species and identify its features.

The purpose of description and identification ...

- 1- Preventing the replacement of an animal with another of the same breed or type.
- 2- Distinguish the individuals that have been examined and vaccinated from other individuals.
- 3- Knowing the females used in artificial insemination and the females in oestrus.
- 4- Identifying high-production animals in the herd designated for milk production.
- 5- Recording the specifications and characteristics of each individual when registering animals in special records.
- 6- Identifying the animals that have been contracted or agreed to purchase or import.

Types of identification...

There are two ways to identify animals: ...

A - collective identification:

This type of discrimination is used to identify a group, herd, or group of animals from another group or another herd, such as a herd of cows. This type of discrimination depends on special marks known as trademarks that are given to agencies, farms, and individuals interested in raising and caring for animals. This type is considered one of the easiest types of discrimination to apply, but it is less accurate, because the distinctive signs are susceptible to disappearing over time.

B - Individual identification:

It is the best distinction in terms of accuracy, but it is the most difficult in terms of application. This type is based on visible signs in the body that remain until the end of life and depends on the following...

- 1- The animal's name and number
- 2- Body colour
- 3- The species
- 4- Type or breed
- 5- Sex
- 6- Age
- 7- Height
- 8- Marks on the head, torso, and legs
- 9- Fixed acquired marks

### **identification of equines**

The purpose of identifying horses is to record a comprehensive description that is kept in a special register in breeding places. Identification of horses must include the following points....

1- Animal name:

An animal can be given a specific name, and the animal often gets used to it due to its frequent repetition and responds to the call.

## 2- Number:

Each animal has its own number, and horses are numbered in the following ways.

### 2-1 – firing – branding:

The numbering is done by ironing by using a pointed iron rod that is heated in the fire until the point of redness, then the desired number is written on the upper part of the outer wall of the hoof directly under the hairline (coronet). The number is not placed on the lower part of the hoof because it is susceptible to disappearing quickly as a result of the growth of the hoof and its trimming.

### 2-2 – Tattoo:

This method of numbering is used in farms that raise horses and other animals as an alternative method to numbering by ironing. Tattoo marks are placed on the gums, the upper lip, or the inner wall of the ear. Animals are tattooed with special tools known as tattooing machines, which are manual. These machines can write a number or letter and up to six numbers or letters.

## 3- Family: species

Horses are among the animals of the equines family.

## 4- Type or breed:

You know if the horses are Arab, English, etc., depending on the type.

## 5- Sex:

Remember the scientific names for both sexes according to the different stages of life.

## 6- Age:

The age of the animal is estimated either by dentition, which is an examination of the teeth inside the mouth, or from farm records.

## 7- Animal height:

The animal's height is measured using a graduated height meter, which is a vertical ruler graduated into 19 fists, and each fist is divided into four inches on which it moves up and down a wooden arm with a water scale for balance.

Height is measured from the highest fixed part of the body, which is the withers area. The animal must stand on a flat surface when the measurement is taken, and the hoof must be trimmed before measuring the height.

#### 8- Colour:

Body colour in horses is considered one of the important elements that is relied upon when distinguishing and characterizing. Due to the fact that the body colour of foals changes during the first months of life, it is not recorded at all until the animal reaches the ninth to twelfth month of age.

#### **Identification of cattle:**

Livestock are characterized by the types of discrimination mentioned above (collective and individual). In the case of group discrimination, it depends on registered trademarks that are placed around the neck or hind quarters, etc. In the case of individual discrimination, the system followed is the same system used in horses, in addition to some special signs that are found in cattle.

When conducting individual discrimination of livestock, we follow the following...

##### 1- Name:

Different names can be used for each cow in the herd.

##### 2- Number:

Cattle are numbered in different ways:

A- Ironing: branding – fire

B- Tattooing:

C- Placing metal or plastic sheets bearing the numbers: tagging

In cattle and camels, ironing is called branding. Ironing marks are called brand marks in cattle. They are seen on the shoulders, cheeks, hind quarters, or horns, where the number is fixed on the front of one horn and on the back of the other horn. There is also another method, freeze branding, in which metal numbers with long handles are used and placed in liquid nitrogen at a low temperature of 70-75 below zero, as their use causes the animal's number to be fixed on the body for a long time. This method is commonly used in milk production herds.

### 3- Breed or type:

Remember the breed of the animal (Friesian, Shorthorn, Southern, etc.), and the degree of its purity must also be mentioned (pure, crossbreed, and the degree of crossbreeding).

### 4- Sex:

Terminology is used for the names of cattle at different ages to distinguish sex. It is also necessary to indicate the condition of the females if they are in the milking period or during the drought period, as well as pregnancy and lactation.

### 5- Colour:

Body colour is considered one of the distinguishing signs that is relied upon to distinguish the common colours in cattle: black, white, brown, and spotting in its various forms.

### 6- Age:

The age of the animal is stated when distinguishing, and the best method for estimating age in cattle is by examining the teeth, through special records, the number of births, or the number of rings on the horns. This last method is more common in buffalo than in cattle.

### 7- Marks on the head:

#### A- The star

white mark on the forehead, known as the facial star.

#### B- muzzle

The colour of the muzzle is one of the distinctive signs (flesh, crimson, grey, metallic black, surrounded by a white circle or with white spots on it).

#### C- horns

The presence or absence of horns and observing their shape. Cattle horns have four shapes: ...

A- Extended horns: stretched horns, which are perpendicular to the head, as in a Charolaise.

B- Closed horns: which are curved outward and pointing downward toward the temples, as in the Hereford.

C- Round horns: They are curved outward and facing upward, and their ends may meet, as in jersey.

D- Deer horns: gazel horns, which are slightly curved and point upwards, and the horns are parallel to each other, as in Watsi cattle.

Marks on the tail:

The tuft of hair at the end of the tail, which is known as the sepal, has multiple colours that are used to distinguish between individuals. It may be white or black, or it may be covered by white or black, extending upward to the middle of the tail, while the other half is body colour, or it may be a mixture of Black and white hair.

#### **identification of buffalo:**

Buffalo are distinguished in two ways (group and individual). Group discrimination in buffalo is no different from that in cows, as it is based on the same principles that were followed in cattle, taking into account the following points of difference.

Colours in buffalo:

The dominant colours in buffalo are (grey, black spotted with white. The buffalo of the northern Iraqi regions is characterized by grey in colour, while the black colour is found in the buffalo of the southern regions).

Horns: Buffaloes have three types of horns:

A- Extended horns: They are perpendicular to the head and slightly curved back.

B- Closed horns: closed horns, which are parallel to the neck and then curve inward and point forward.

C- Round horns: Round horns are curved backwards and may meet the upper chest.

## **Identification of sheep:**

1- Collective identification (flock identification, collective identification) is carried out by placing a special mark on the wool using a coloured substance or coloured liquid.

2- Individual identification is done by tattooing on the pinna or upper gum, as well as using aluminium or plastic ear tags. Sometimes, part of the outer edge of the outer ear is cut off in an agreed upon manner, depending on the machine used. In breeds with horns, the number is fixed on the horns by ironing.

Sheep numbering or tagging ...

There are several ways to number sheep for the purpose of determining the animal's personality. It is usually done by placing metal or plastic numbers on the ear or numbers on the body in addition to numbering the ear. It is advisable when numbering the body to use the same ear number in order to benefit from it in the event that the ear number is missing, as the animal can be identified by the number on the body.

The types of numbering are as follows:

1- Body numbering.

There are two ways to number the body in sheep, and in both methods it is recommended to number the sheep after shearing the wool so that they are stable for a longer period.

A- Spraying the body with dye (spraying).

It is a quick method that uses different colours of volatile dyes emitted from spray bottles. The colour and size of the number can be controlled, and one of the characteristics of this type is that it remains on the animal's body for a shorter period than other types.

B- Numbering the body using metal numbers. panel marking

Metal numbers with handles are used, and the size of the number is either small (10-15 cm) for the purpose of numbering young lambs or large (20 cm) for numbering adult sheep. In both cases, a special dye from the following materials must be used. If this is not available, a dye can be used. Ordinary paint.



