

# Branding

## AgSafe Safe Work Procedure

### Pre-Inspection

1. Thoroughly review and understand information provided in the branding iron operator's manual with particular attention given to descriptions of safety procedures.
2. Before using, always inspect the branding iron for damage or disrepair. For an electric branding iron, inspect the electrical cord and plug for defects.
3. If a branding iron fails the pre-use inspection, notify your supervisor and remove the branding iron from service by attaching a red tag that states "DO NOT USE." Complete red tag with appropriate information.
4. Plan out your branding, know what job will be performed by what individual and ensure that they are familiar with the task, have been adequately trained and that they are capable of the job asked of them.
5. Have first aid kits available and first aid attendants identified to branding party.
6. Ensure fire suppression is immediately available at the site and persons in the vicinity of hot irons are aware of fire suppression methods.
7. Ensure facility is ready to receive cattle, pens, chutes squeezes, ground tethers, gates are all in good working order.
8. If working from horseback ensure that the horse is ready for the job, the persons roping are aware of the procedure to follow and that the ground crew know where the horseback workers will be.
9. If you have multiple ropers, ensure that they know their path to the ground crew or tether and avoid too many ropers in too small an area.
10. Ensure area for castration, dehorning, or banding and related supplies are readily available and accessible with a minimal amount of movement to obtain required items.
11. Remove all tripping hazards in the work area.
12. Ensure that squeezes are operated by trained individual.

13. Ensure all squeeze levers and head gate parts are working well and are locking into place to avoid unintended release of handle or animal.
14. Ensure you have obtained available or required insurance coverage for additional workers.

### **Operating**

1. As necessary, wear boots, gloves, long pants, and eye and head protection when conducting livestock branding operations.
2. Do not wear loose clothing or jewelry in the vicinity of livestock branding operations. Tie back long hair or wear under a cap or hard hat.
3. Prior to branding, clip long livestock hair in the target branding area.
4. Never conduct electric branding in wet conditions or while you or the animal are standing in mud or water.
5. Use moderate pressure when applying a branding iron. Apply the branding iron about 10 seconds until the animal's skin turns a dark coppery color.
6. Always set a heated branding iron on a stand or clean non-thermal conductive or non- flammable surface.
7. Never set an electric branding iron in dirt or other substances that may cause it to overheat.
8. Avoid startling or spooking cattle during branding operations.
9. Be alert and aware of potential sudden changes in conditions when handling livestock.
10. Always utilize good animal husbandry practices when handling livestock.
11. If an electric shock is experienced when using an electric branding iron, immediately discontinue use of the iron.
12. Use caution if castrating with a knife, allow the operator plenty of room to move and cut stay focused when viable use protective gloves

Please use the following **Safe Work Procedures** as a guideline to building your own safe work procedures.