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## OTHER CAUSES OF HIDE DAMAGE

- ✓ Grubs can result in hide damage and trim losses of up to \$150/head. In the 1999 beef quality audit, grubs were rarely found. Control of grubs is through the control of warble flies. Cattle can also be routinely treated using an appropriate external parasecticide that provides grub control.
- ✓ Insect bites, mange, ringworm, and warts can also cause hide damage. Insects can be controlled by keeping the environment clean and dry and using fly tags and oilers where necessary. Mange can be treated effectively with external parasecticides. Ringworm and warts can also be treated. Contact your local veterinarian for details on treatment.
- ✓ Stock prods, barbwire, and excessive scratching can also cause hide damage. Use stock prods sparingly. Consider use of alternative wires for fencing. If cattle are scratching a lot, have your veterinarian examine them to determine the cause and treat appropriately (e.g. lice).



*produced by CCA; developed by Dr. Joyce Van Donkersgoed*

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## PREVENTION OF HIDE DAMAGE



**You can make a  
difference right now  
and improve your  
returns!**

**Canadian Cattlemen  
Quality Starts Here** ✓

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# Canadian Cattlemen Quality Starts Here

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## TAG

Tag is the descriptive name for dirt and manure on the hide of cattle. Hide damage can occur with a prolonged buildup of tag. Permanent staining from tag will lower the quality and the value of the hide. As well, it is a food safety concern because bacteria may be present in the tag and could contaminate the carcass during processing. If there is visual contamination such as mud on the carcass during hide removal, it must be trimmed. This can result in increased labour costs to the packer and losses to producers due to reductions in meat yield. In the 1999 beef audit, tag cost the Canadian beef industry an estimated \$30.6 million.

## PREVENTION

- ✓ Keep pens, alleys, loading and unloading areas clean and dry
- ✓ Keep transport trucks clean and dry
- ✓ Clean pens frequently and provide adequate bedding, such as wood chips or straw
- ✓ Design pens and working areas to ensure good drainage

## BRANDING

Branding is a form of permanent animal identification that has been used for many years in the industry. Branding will damage the hide by creating permanent scars. In the 1999 beef audit, brands were found on 47% of steers, 53% of heifers, and 57% of cows. Losses in the hide value are estimated at \$15.8 million annually. Branding is considered to be a painful procedure, and is an animal welfare issue. Limiting the number and location of brands on the animal can reduce losses.

## PREVENTION

- ✓ Locate brands on the hip or shoulder to reduce the extent of the damage
  - ✓ Use smaller brands
  - ✓ Consider freeze branding
  - ✓ Use alternative forms of identification, such as an eartag or tattoo
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