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Monthly Safety Blast

Produced by the Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education

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Don't Stick Yourself

Imagine this: You are in the barn immunizing beef cattle. As you move forward to administer a shot, the animal spooks and rears back. Just then, you feel a pinch in your arm and you realize that the needle missed its mark. You have just injected yourself instead of the steer.



So what?

Some producers may not think twice when they are accidentally pricked by a needle while administering livestock vaccinations and/or medications. Frankly, farmers and ranchers have all experienced far worse pain, but what about those vaccines that are helpful to animals but harmful to humans? For example, Micotil 300® is an antibiotic used to prevent a bovine and ovine respiratory disease nicknamed "shipping fever". If a human is injected with a high volume of this antibiotic it can cause respiratory failure, as well as, cardiac arrest.

All livestock will need medications or vaccinations at some point. Make sure you are taking all possible precautions to prevent an accidental needle stick.

- Secure the animal you are injecting in a stock or squeeze chute.
- Make sure you have the needle cap on the syringe before injecting the animal and immediately after injecting the animal to prevent a needle stick/prick.
- Never put the syringe in your mouth.
- Properly dispose of used needles and syringes in a proper container to prevent future accidents.
- Always keep the area you will be laying the syringes clear of any mess so as not to misplace any used needles or syringes.
- Make sure you know the proper way/location to inject your animal.
- If you are not comfortable administering an injection, call your veterinarian.

Resources:

- Preventing Worker Deaths and Injuries When Handling Micotil 300®:
<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/wp-solutions/2007-124/pdfs/2007-124.pdf>
- Tips for Safe Vaccine Administration and Patient Care:
<http://veterinaryteam.dvm360.com/tips-safe-vaccine-administration-and-patient-care>
- Doc Walker's Practical Tips on Vaccination:
<http://www.usjersey.com/Reference/vaccination.pdf>

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