**Welfare Significance**

Livestock owners and veterinarians recognize that some people consider dehorning offensive. Nonetheless, dehorned cattle create a safer workplace for herdmates, handlers and workers - a benefit that outweighs the short period of discomfort at dehorning time.

1. All methods of physical dehorning cause pain and side effects.
2. Young calves recover quicker and have fewer complications than older calves.
3. There is no evidence to show young calves experience less pain than older calves.
4. Local anaesthesia prior to dehorning eliminates acute pain for a few hours after dehorning.
5. Local anaesthesia, combined with a sedative and an analgesic (pain reliever), may provide the best pain relief.
6. Dehorning without anaesthesia is inhumane and unethical.
7. Use of pain relief is an additional cost for producers. Pain relief may be limited by the availability of drugs for farmers to use and the scarcity of veterinarians in farm animal practice.
8. In Ontario, auxiliaries (technicians) employed by veterinarians may administer local nerve blocks and dehorn cattle less than two months of age while under immediate, direct or indirect, supervision of a veterinarian. They may dehorn cattle greater than two months of age when under immediate or direct supervision.
9. Use of polled bulls is a welfare-friendly alternative to dehorning. Canadian beef producers are increasing their use of polled bulls.
10. Control of bleeding is essential when dehorning older calves.