**Tools Used for Disbudding of calf**

**Figure 1. Cauterizing hot iron**

This tool is used for both dehorning and disbudding. An iron is heated to red hot, then held firmly to the horn bud for about 10 seconds, destroying the horn-producing cells and preventing further growth.

**Advantages:** Bloodless, can be used in calves up to four months of age.

**Disadvantages:** More painful for the animal than caustic paste; iron may fail to get back up to heat between calves, resulting in ineffective disbudding; requires more physical restraint of animal than paste disbudding; poses a risk of injury to the handler. Can also result in thermal meningitis.



**Figure 2: Caustic Paste Disbudding**

****

The combination of caustic substances in dehorning paste cauterizes tissue and prevents horn growth. Dehorning paste is applied to the horn buds of calves eight weeks of age or younger.

**Advantages:** Bloodless; non-invasive; less painful than hot-iron disbudding\*; less risk of injury to the calf handler.

**Disadvantages:** Calf cannot be exposed to rain or allowed near other animals for six hours; cannot be used in calves over eight weeks of age.