

## **Beef Producers Must Select Proper Needles For Injections**

Size and length are important considerations in the selection of needles to use when giving injections to beef cattle.

For injections given subcutaneously, a producer should select a needle that is one-half or three-fourth inch long. Using a needle that is longer may result in the muscle being penetrated with the tip.

Needles that are one to one and one half inches in length should be used for giving intramuscular injections. Medication that is to be given intramuscularly needs to be injected deep enough to prevent the medication from seeping out of the muscle. A needle that is less than one inch in length will not place the medication deep enough in the muscle.

Needle diameter is also very important. Producers should use an 18 gauge needle. Remember that as the gauge of the needle increases, the diameter of the needle decreases. With this in mind, a producer should use a small diameter needle to minimize the possibility of tissue damage. Do not select a needle that is too small because it will have a greater tendency to break and may be difficult to push medication through.

Producers should always discard needles that have been bent. The bending weakens the needle and makes it much more likely to break. Producers must avoid breaking a needle off in an animal.

Good handling facilities are needed to minimize the movement of animals. The more an animal moves, the greater the possibility that the needle will cut the animal. For more information on selection of needles and other information on producing a quality product, contact your local Extension agent.