

Minimize Stress for Healthy Animals

One of the best ways to keep your animals healthy is to keep them happy. Contented, well-cared-for animals don't get sick as often. For the most part, the organic standards' requirement to "provide living conditions in keeping with the natural behaviors of the animal and appropriate for its stage of life" implies the provision of low-stress conditions.

Reducing stress also means being aware of animals' social needs and paying attention to the dynamics of your livestock group. Most domesticated livestock species are social animals and need to establish rank and alliances within the herd. For most species, isolation of individuals can cause stress.

Stress can also come from negative interactions with people. Make sure everyone employed on your farm knows how to work with the types of animals in your operation and treats them well. Different species demand different treatment. Protecting your animals from heat and flies will also reduce stress.

For help, check out livestock specialist **[Dr. Temple Grandin's](#)** website for tips on low-stress animal handling and facility design.