



Abstract

Training of dairy animals for improved performance and welfare

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Training involves the development of desirable responses and effective deletion of unwanted responses; learning is permanent change in response over time as a result of practice or experience. Training of dairy animals is important for improving the performance and as well as animal welfare; we should train the animals for establishing behaviors which are more compatible with farming operations (automatic milking system, automatic feeder, and cubical usage) and for the safety of handlers and veterinarians and training of animals is time saving labor efficient, it gives opportunity for animals to earn a reward. We can train animals by different methods like habituation, operant conditioning, classical conditioning, social learning and many other reinforcement techniques like feed rewards, electric and audio cues are used. Animals can be trained to activate automatic feeding machine by offering rewards and also by offering rewards animals are encouraged to enter into the milking unit in response to acoustic signals, Prepartum Habituation of cattle shows improved productivity in postpartum periods, We can train cattle to avoid a specific location using electrical cues and along with auditory stimuli, We can train the animals to approach feed source in response to auditory signals, we can train animals to void dung in specific area by offering some feed reward, We can train animal to avoid eating of poisonous plants by conditioned food aversion, and also we can train heifers to use cubicles by giving proper bedding and feed as reward, Housing young calves with an older weaned companion stimulates feeding behavior and growth before and after weaning (observational learning). By training the animals we can establish behaviors more compatible with farming operations.

KEY WORDS: Aversion, classical conditioning, habituation, operant conditioning, reinforcement, reward