**Developing Countries Farm Radio Network**

Pack 13, Item 10

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**Animals with neck yokes don't go through fences** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Information on this subject area was requested by DCFRN participants in Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Ecuador, Fiji, Guyana, India, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, St. Lucia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Presenter: Barbara Peacock

**Suggested introduction**

We at this radio station are part of a worldwide information network that gathers farming information from developing countries all over the world. It's the Developing Countries Farm Radio Network, sponsored by the Canadian International Development Agency, Massey Ferguson, and the University of Guelph.

Through this Network, we bring you information on ways to increase food supplies for your family, or to sell—ways that other farmers have used successfully.

Here's Barbara Peacock with a hint for people who keep animals.

**PEACOCK:** If you keep animals, you know that it's not always easy to prevent them from pushing and wriggling their way through holes or gaps in fences.

Well here's an easy way that some farmers use to stop their animals from doing this. They make a triangle of wood that fits around the animal's neck. This way the animal isn't able to go through gaps and holes in fences any more.

This triangular "neck yoke," as we'll call it, works well with different kinds of animals—goats, sheep, pigs, and cattle. The exact shape and size of the yoke may vary, depending on the shape and size of the animal's neck and head, and on the kind of fence being used.

As an example, let's say you have a goat that's always squeezing through fences and straying away.

Cut three strong sticks or narrow boards, each about 45 centimetres (18 inches) long. Bamboo is good. The sticks should be strong, but not too heavy. Make them nice and smooth, with no sharp edges or splinters that could damage the animal's skin.

To start with, make the top and sides of the triangular yoke by crossing the upper ends of two of the sticks and tying them together where they cross. Place them on top of the goat's neck so the sticks hang down on each side of the neck.

Now have another person help you hold the animal while you attach the third stick. This goes across under the animal's neck and is attached to the two side sticks. Attach it up high enough that the neck yoke can't slip off the animal's head.

It's important to make sure that the yoke is evenly balanced, so it hangs straight, and isn't too tight. After a few days, check to make sure it fits well and isn't rubbing the skin raw and hurting the animal. If necessary, re-adjust it.

With a young, growing animal, you should check and re-adjust the yoke regularly so it doesn't get too tight. Also, make sure it's not too heavy. You could begin with a lighter yoke, and replace it later with a stronger, heavier one.

Now some farmers make the yoke a little differently, depending on the materials they have, and on the kinds of fences and animals involved.

For instance, I know of a farmer in Central America who uses a forked stick for a neck yoke. It keeps his cow from getting through a wire fence. The closed end of the fork rests on the cow's neck, just behind her head, and the two prongs, which are about 60 centimetres (2 feet) long, slope downward on either side of her neck. Due to the shape of the stick, it fits over the cow's neck very comfortably, and it's strong yet not too heavy. It'sheld in place by a strong cord that passes under the neck and is tied to the sticks on either side.

Another farmer I know of in Cameroon uses quite a different looking neck yoke on his pig. It keeps his pig from pushing through a fence made of closely spaced vertical poles. The most important part of this yoke is the cross-bar. It's a piece of bamboo about 60centimetres (2 feet) long that extends nearly 20 centimetres (8 inches) beyond the pig's head on either side. To avoid making the yoke too heavy with such a long cross-bar, this farmer uses very slender, lightweight side-sticks. It's very effective for the kind of fence he has.

If you decide to make a neck yoke for your animal, just be sure the materials you use are smooth and strong but not too heavy, and that your yoke fits the animal well.

Serving Agriculture, the Basic Industry, this is Barbara Peacock.

**Information sources**

1. DCFRN staff observations in Cameroon, Guatemala, and Nicaragua.

2. Dr. L. Reynolds, Team Leader, Humid Zone Programme, International Livestock Centre for Africa, c/o IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria.