HOW TO TAIL BLEED CATTLE

1. Prepare bleeding supplies. Screw the Vacutainer needle onto the needle holder.
2. Insert Vacutainer tube into the other end of the needle holder until the stopper just touches the back portion of the needle. DO NOT puncture the stopper as the vacuum in the tube will be released and it will no longer work for blood collection. Hold these assembled materials in one hand. (Note- Blood can also be drawn with a 3 cc syringe. You just need to work quickly to transfer blood from syringe to tube to avoid clotting.)
3. Lift the cow’s tail with the other hand.
4. Insert the needle about ½ inch deep and perpendicular to the tail at the underside, midline and at about 3 to 6 inches from the base of the tail. In this region, there is a longitudinal, midline ridge of skin through which you push the needle.
5. Once the needle is inserted, push the blood tube gently upward until the needle has punctured the stopper.
6. Blood will appear in the tube when the vein is punctured. If it does not appear, pull the needle out slightly and insert in a different direction until the vein is punctured. DO NOT pull the needle out of the skin until you have collected your sample. If the needle comes all the way out, the vacuum in the tube will be lost, and you will need a new tube to collect the sample.
7. Collect 2 cc or more of blood.
8. Withdraw the needle from the skin and remove the tube from the tube holder.
9. Label the tube with the sequence number and the animal identification.
10. Discard the needle into a sharps container and re-use the needle holder. Use a new needle and tube for each cow.
11. Place tubes in an ice rack or refrigerator until shipment.