

A minute with Farmer Fred gates

Farmer Fred: Walk with me to the stockyard as I let the wethers out into a fresh paddock. I'll tell you a few things about my gates that rogainers need to know.

Ronald Rogainer: Sure, I'd love to hear more about what we can do to avoid any problems.

FF: Gates are one of the vital parts of my whole farm animal management process. I keep gates closed to isolate the different groups of sheep and cows. I don't want the bulls to fight one another, and I certainly do not want my cows having unplanned calves to the wrong bull. I also separate off groups that are about to go to market.

RR: That all makes sense to me.

FF: If your rogaining friends leave a gate open then they can cause considerable problems for me and the stock, so please ask them to shut the gates. Obviously if a gate is wired back so it stays open that will be because I want my animals to have access to more than one paddock at a time; this might be so they can access water all the time.

RR: We will stress to all rogainers how important closing your gates is.

FF: You might find the occasional gate is locked shut. Swinging on the free end, or climbing over this end, works like a level and bends my gate. After this bending, they will not close properly and I need to spend some time fixing them or buying another. I am not keen to have rogainers back after this happens. Could you ask everyone who has to climb over a gate to climb on the end that is hinged, by that I mean the end from which the gate is hung and connected to the large post. If I need to be more explicit, ask them not to climb over the end at which they would stand if they were going to open the gate.

RR: We will certainly tell people about the proper use of your gates.

FF: Just stand back and remain still while I let the wethers out of the stock yard. They will run past you towards that open paddock. ... All done. And we have finished talking gates too. But come back next month as I want to talk about my fences.