

herdsman, therefore several property owners would join together and turn over their animals which were marked with a special brand to a herdsman for a yearly payment and he would drive them upon the meadows, where he would pasture them during the day and when evening came, he would bring them back to the stalls. The great estates often had many herdsmen under their control and some of the contracts give a list of those and of the number of animals which were entrusted to them.

The most prized and valuable domestic animal was the cow. On the small farms comparatively few cows were found. They were kept mostly for the products of milk, curds and cheese. The beef was less often eaten. Cattle were brought as offerings to the Gods and ritually slaughtered, but for the ordinary man, roast beef was too expensive. The animals were essential for work and it was primarily for this that they were kept. In irrigation, plowing and threshing, cattle were much used. On account of their comparative scarcity they were often loaned out for harvest or for longer periods. The renter was responsible to the owner for the animal. The Code of Hammurabi provides that if a lion tore an ox or if it suffered an unavoidable accident the owner could not collect damages. In any other case the renter was fully responsible. (Sections 244 and 249) If a steer passing through the streets should go wild and kill a passer-by no obligation whatsoever ensued unless the steer had been known to be vicious. (Code of Hammurabi, sections 250-252)

The most common work animal was the ass. These were of various colors. For field work the ass was not as well adapted as the cow but for carrying burdens and