609.551 RUSTLING AND LIVESTOCK THEFT; PENALTIES.

Subdivision 1. **Crime defined; stealing cattle; penalties.** Whoever intentionally and without claim of right shoots, kills, takes, uses, transfers, conceals or retains possession of live cattle, swine or sheep or the carcasses thereof belonging to another without the other's consent and with the intent to permanently deprive the owner thereof may be sentenced as follows:

(a) if the value of the animals which are shot, killed, taken, used, transferred, concealed, or retained exceeds $2,500, the defendant may be sentenced to imprisonment for not more than ten years, and may be fined up to $20,000;

(b) if the value of the animals which are shot, killed, taken, used, transferred, concealed, or retained exceeds $300 but is less than $2,500, the defendant may be sentenced to imprisonment for not more than five years, and may be fined up to $10,000;

(c) if the value of the animals which are shot, killed, taken, used, transferred, concealed, or retained is $300 or less, the defendant may be sentenced to imprisonment for not more than 90 days or to payment of a fine of not more than $300 or both.

Subd. 2. **Crime defined; selling stolen cattle.** Whoever knowingly buys, sells, transports, or otherwise handles cattle, swine, or sheep illegally acquired under subdivision 1 or knowingly aids or abets another in the violation of subdivision 1 shall be sentenced as in subdivision 1, clauses (a), (b), and (c).

Subd. 3. **Aggregation.** In any prosecution under this section the value of the animals which are shot, killed, taken, used, transferred, concealed, or retained within any six-month period may be aggregated and the defendant charged accordingly in applying the provisions of this section.

Subd. 4. **Amount of action.** Any person who has been injured by violation of this section may bring an action for three times the amount of actual damages sustained by the plaintiff, costs of suit and reasonable attorney's fees.

History: *1975 c 314 s 2; 1977 c 355 s 8; 1984 c 628 art 3 s 11; 1986 c 444*