Creating Livestock Groups

Every animal is an individual with unique needs, but Farmbrite knows that it is sometimes easier to work with multiple animals together as a herd or group. Specifically, you might do this to save time - it's quicker to treat, feed, and move a herd with one action than it is to move them individually. Creating a group also allows you to associate Tasks and activities with it, so you can more easily assign work that is specific to a group of animals to your workers. You can even create groups to work with multiple animals as a single record, like a flock of chickens or a hive of bees.
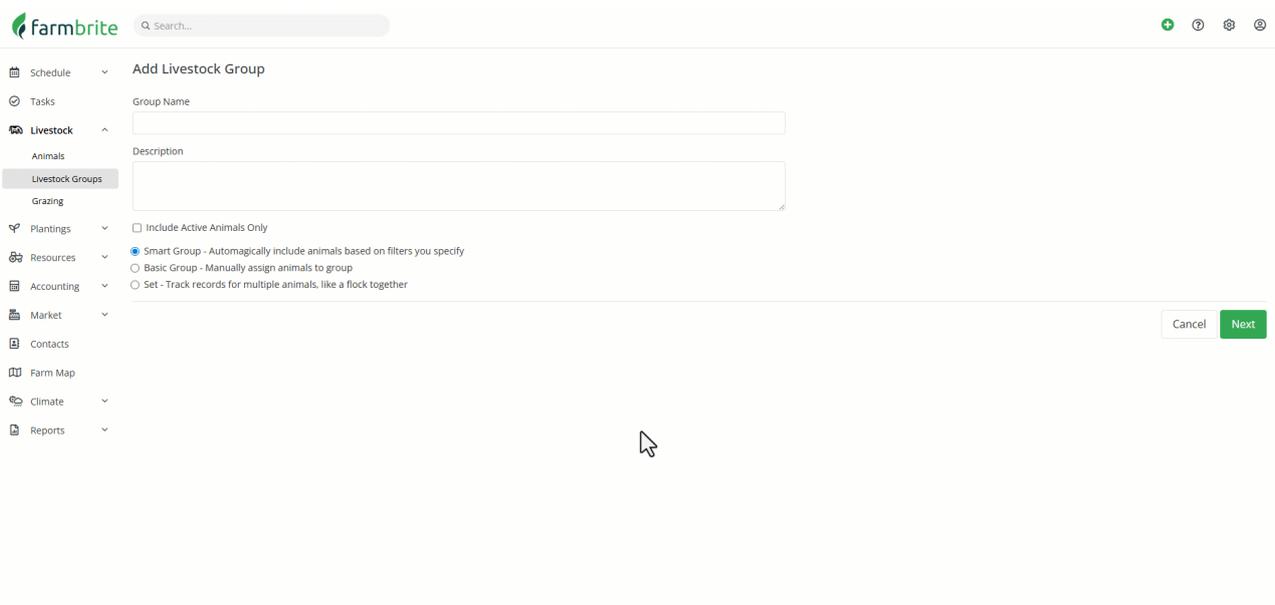
To get started creating a group, navigate to Livestock on the left and then choose Groups. Any groups that already exist in your Farmbrite account will be displayed; to create a new group, click the **Add Livestock Group button.** On the next page, you'll give the group a name and description, and then decide if it should only include active animals. If you don't check this box, your smart groups could potentially include deceased and sold animals if you don't filter them (we'll see more about that later!)
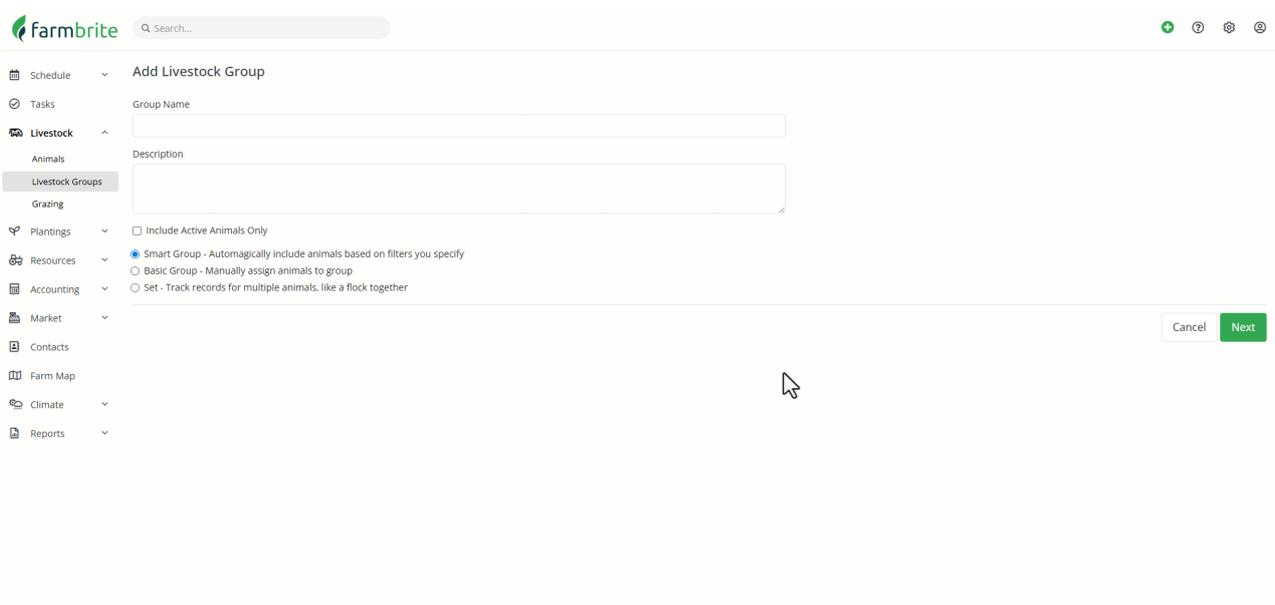

You'll then choose if you'd like to create a Smart, Basic, or Set group. Immediately be aware that Smart and Basic groups will combine existing individual animal records into a group, while a Set group is its own unique record. So while you might have Cow 1, Cow 2, and Cow 3 existing records combined in a Smart or Basic group, a set group would be used to create a single record for a group of animals that you will only track as the group, and not work with individually.

Let's go over the uses and capabilities of each group type below.
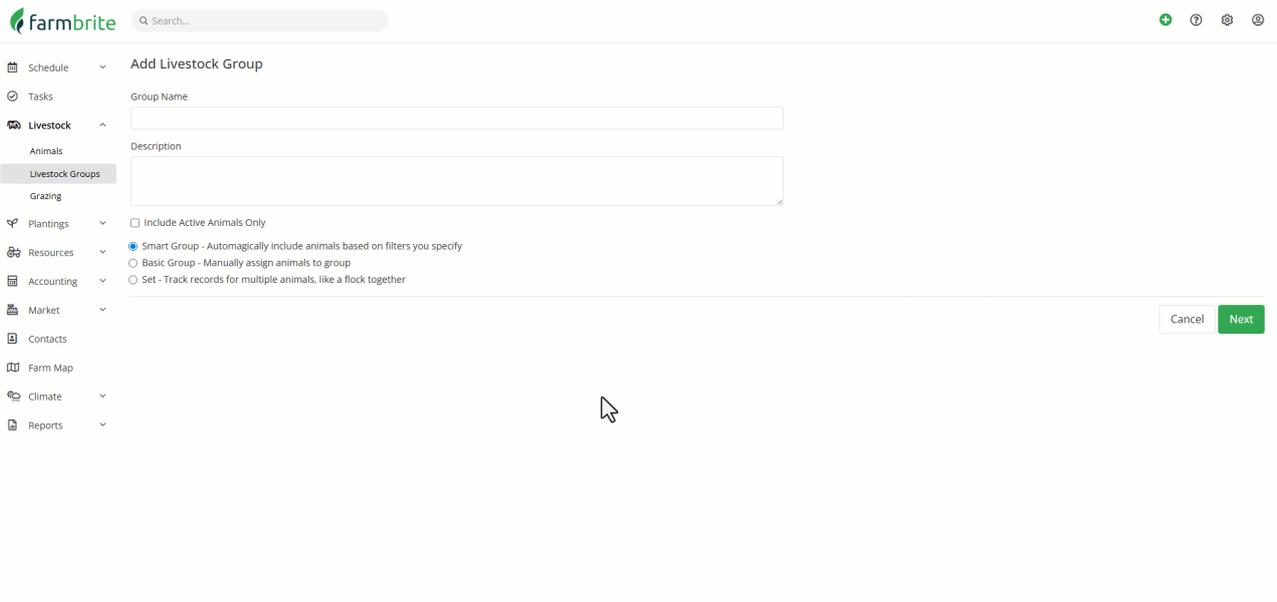
A Basic Group is a manually created group. You'll create the group, and then hand-pick what animals will be added to it. The choice of which animals are in the group is entirely up to you; you can add and remove them as you wish. Maybe your group is unique, where the animals do not have common characteristics you can filter on - perhaps you are putting a donkey or a dog in with a group of goats for protection, or with a horse for social companionship. It is important to note that animals can only be assigned to a single basic group at a time; they can remove them from one and add them to a different one, but they cannot be assigned to two at once.

A Smart Group uses filters to automatically assign individual animal records to this group. Rather than you picking each individual animal to add, you'll set filters to include all the animals that meet your filter criteria. Perhaps you'll filter by type, breed, sex, status, breeding status, keywords, birthdate, or other important classification information. You can use any combination of filters to find just the animals you are looking for. New animals that you add after creating the Smart Group that still meet this criteria will automatically be added to the group as well. As opposed to Basic groups, animals can be in multiple Smart groups at the same time.

A Set Group is used when you don't need to track every individual animal in the group. The group itself is effectively the animal record. A good example of this might be chickens- you probably won't track every individual chicken in a flock, but rather think of the flock as a whole. When you choose Set Group from the Group Type and click Next, your group will immediately be created. You can add additional information about it on the next screen - maybe you'd supply a breed, or how many are in the group.

You're now more familiar with adding groups, so take a look at our additional article about working with each group type. If you do have any additional questions about how to use them, please reach out to us.