



Learning About **ANIMAL WELFARE**

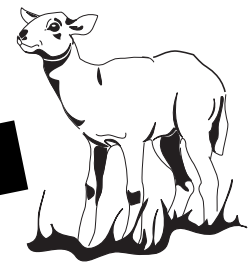


4H
Ontario



 **OFAC**
ONTARIO FARM ANIMAL COUNCIL

Learning about ANIMAL WELFARE (L.A.W.)



Animal welfare is an important topic for most Canadians. 4-H provides great experiences for youth in caring for animals. This meeting topic is suitable for any 4-H club involved with animals, including livestock, poultry, vet, pet or horse clubs.

This meeting topic was produced as a proud partnership of the Ontario Farm Animal Council (OFAC) and 4-H Ontario. This resource was adapted from Alberta's L.A.W. program, with many thanks to Alberta Farm Animal Care and Alberta 4-H.



Learning about ANIMAL WELFARE

Objectives



In this meeting members will learn about animal welfare issues, examine their own practices with their project animals and develop a strategy for responding to animal welfare concerns.

All Members

Learn about animal welfare and their responsibilities as animal owners or caretakers. Be prepared to talk to the public about their project and be able to explain how 4-H members care for their animals.

Senior Members

Understand the animal issues spectrum, including the difference between animal welfare and animal rights. Establish their personal viewpoint on animal welfare issues and prepare to respond to the questions and concerns of the public.

ROLL CALL:

Name a concern the public may have regarding the welfare of ... (your type of project animal).

Possible answers include:

- production practices: neutering, castrating, tail docking, teeth clipping, beak trimming, dehorning, shearing, ear tagging, branding
- housing: confined space, caging, tying, tethering
- shipping, hauling, transportation methods & procedures
- animal handling: use of show sticks, canes, cattle prods
- training of pets and animals
- livestock fairs, rodeo, gymkhanas
- use of animals for recreation or work or food
- exposure of animals to weather, environmental control
- antibiotics, hormones
- veal production
- artificial insemination

Ask the members to consider why people may have those concerns:
Is there a valid concern? Is the issue exaggerated in the media or by special interest groups? Can we do a better job to help reduce public concerns?

The Creed of the 4-H Animal Caretaker

(Adopted from Alberta's Creed of the 4-H Animal Stockkeeper).

I will: Be kind to my animals. I will not take my frustrations out on animals. I will be patient while training my animal. I will never physically abuse my animal and I will only use low-stress handling methods and tools (ie. paddles).

I will: Provide comfortable and sufficient housing for my animals. I will house my animal with enough space to prevent crowding and fighting. When I tie my animal, I will make sure the rope is not too tight and that there is nothing nearby that can harm the animal. This also means that I will help to prevent my animal from being too hot or too cold, both at home or during transport.

I will: Feed my animal on time each day. I will make sure that I can financially afford to feed my animal the right amount and type of feed every day on a regular schedule. This will provide the nutrition my animal needs and ensure the daily comfort of my animal.

I will: Provide my animals with clean water. Every day I will check that the water supply for my animal is clean, free of ice, easily accessible and working properly.

I will: Keep my animals free from disease and parasites. To ensure the good health of my project animal, I will observe it carefully every day, to see that it is eating and behaving normally. If my animal appears unhealthy, I will see that it receives immediate attention. I will keep accurate and complete records of any health problems that occur. I will never subject my animal to undue suffering.

I will: Learn as much as possible about the best methods of feeding and caring for animals. By learning about different methods, my animals will benefit from new ideas that help to ensure that my animals receive the best possible care. I can explore new animal husbandry ideas through reading, asking questions, attending workshops and participating in 4-H activities.

I will: Strive to improve the breeding and quality of my animals. The more structurally sound, efficient and productive our animals are, the less stress will be placed on them.

I will: Always be a good sport in competition. Events, including Achievement Days, are one

way that the public can see how important proper care of our animals is to us. Good manners and a courteous disposition go a long way in presenting a good impression to my fellow members and the public.

I will: Talk to my 4-H volunteers or fellow members about others who are not following this creed and are not setting a good example of animal care.

I will: Complete my project and take part in all the activities of my 4-H club each year. By taking part in all the activities and completing the project each year, I am allowing myself to learn and experience all that I can about my project. This will help me to improve my understanding of animals and my methods of caring for them.

Signature

LEARNING ABOUT ANIMAL WELFARE



People primarily raise animals for human use or benefit, such as cattle and sheep for food or clothing and horses for entertainment. Farmers and

animal owners are morally and legally responsible to care for our animals. We provide them with appropriate food and shelter, and must also ensure our animals are not subjected to unnecessary pain and suffering or excessive stress.

Farmers are responsible for the well-being of the animals in their care and should not tolerate animal neglect or abuse. As farmers and animal owners, we take pride in the fact that we believe in animal welfare because it is the right thing to do and we chose to care for animals.

The **FIVE** Freedoms

Farmers, 4-H members, animal owners and caretakers are all responsible for providing their animals with these five freedoms:

- 1 Freedom** from thirst, hunger and malnutrition by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigor.
- 2 Freedom** from discomfort by providing a suitable environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
- 3 Freedom** from pain, injury and disease by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
- 4 Freedom** to express normal behavior by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind.
- 5 Freedom** from fear and distress by ensuring conditions that avoid mental suffering.

As the owner or caretaker of a 4-H project animal you take on many important responsibilities. These responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that you abide by the Code of Practice, Five Freedoms and the Creed of the 4-H Animal Caretaker at all times.
- Understanding the issues around animal welfare, including animal rights. Recognize that the public has various perceptions of animal welfare that may be different than yours.
- Being prepared to respond to the public's questions and concerns and express your views on animal welfare issues with reason, respect and supporting facts.

L.A.W. ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1

Animal Care Resources

- Review and discuss the *Five Freedoms and the 4-H Animal Caretakers Creed*.
- Have a senior member find and bring a Code of Practice for the Care & Handling booklet for your type of project animals (if available) to show to other members.
- Have the members go to these websites to download the Code of Practice and other relevant farm animal welfare resources for their project. It is important that members are aware of the Codes of Practice and what their purpose is.
www.farmissues.com
www.livestockwelfare.com
www.grandin.com

ACTIVITY 2

Caring for my animals

Have members complete the "Animal Care Checklist" (page 5). Encourage the members to use what they checked in the in the "I want to improve" column to set their goals for the year. Discuss with another member what they want to learn and accomplish in this project regarding animal care.

ACTIVITY 3

Code of Ethics or Event Rules

Have your members adopt the "Creed of the 4-H Animal Caretaker" (page 3) or draft their own Code of Ethics. Members can draft wording about animal welfare to be included in Achievement Program rules or other event rules.

Example: All members must show sportsmanship throughout the show. Horses must be kept under control. Cruelty to, or rough handling of, horses will not be allowed and may result in disqualification.

Discuss what to do if there is a situation of animal mistreatment observed at an event or on a farm or at a stable. Refer to the "Animal Care is our Concern" options on page 8. Remind members that 4-H encourages members to respect animals. 4-H can't always control the actions of individual members, but can help to enforce rules to discourage poor animal care practices.

ACTIVITY 4

Everyone Doesn't Think Alike

Review the Animal Issues Spectrum to explain the different viewpoints and 'many shades of grey' on animal issues. Have members match the different quotes with the different viewpoints on the spectrum.

ACTIVITY 5

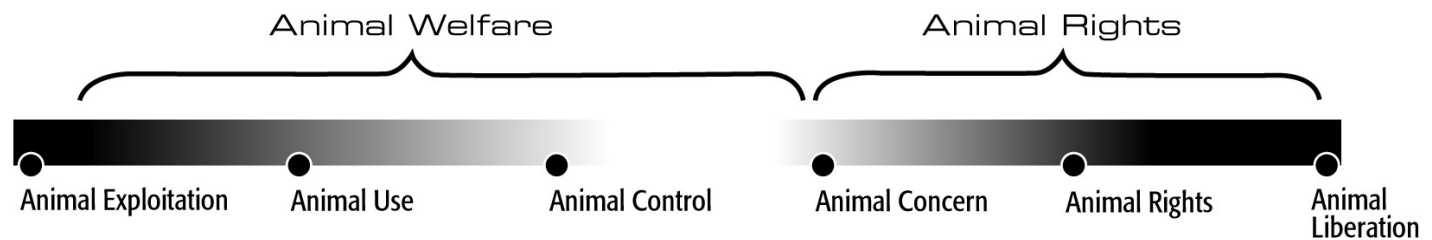
Where do you stand?

Members will evaluate their animal welfare beliefs based on different examples. Put a piece of tape or string (or use your imagination) across the room to represent the animal issue spectrum. Have members physically move to where they believe (ie. extremely for, extremely against, in the middle) on the list of examples below, or make up some of your own. There are no right or wrong answers to these exercises. Encourage the members to discuss their opinions. This will help them understand and defend their own beliefs, while respecting others.

Examples:

- ✓ Dogs for pets
- ✓ Dogs for sport fighting
- ✓ Dogs for helping blind or deaf people
- ✓ Shrimp for food
- ✓ Rabbits for mascara testing
- ✓ Rabbits for testing a cure for cancer
- ✓ Horses for rodeo bronc riding
- ✓ Horses for trail riding
- ✓ Whales in aquariums for entertainment
- ✓ Whales in a research facility for study
- ✓ Cows used for milk
- ✓ Bull calves raised for veal
- ✓ Hens kept in cages for eggs
- ✓ Roosters raised for fighting
- ✓ Mink raised for fur coats
- ✓ Have members come up with their own examples

Points of View Spectrum



Everyone Doesn't Think Alike

Iowa State University Extension, 1991


Match each of the viewpoints below to a place on the Points of View Spectrum. Where do you fit on most animal care issues?

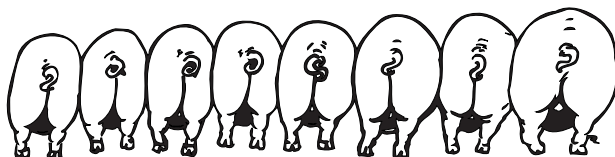
- "Everybody should be required to treat each animal as kindly as possible for the good of the animal"
- "We feel so strongly about animal rights we will break the law to make our views known."
- "Animals are here for our use, but we must be responsible with them to produce as much as possible"
- "Animals are here for our use and abuse"
- "Animals have rights just as humans do"
- "We are here to enforce the laws and regulations made by our lawmakers"



ANIMAL CARE Checklist:

Check the things that you are already doing well to care for your animal. Ask yourself honestly and check which ones you can improve on. Make a plan for improving your animal care practices. What are your challenges?

I'm Already Doing	I Want to Improve	
		Provide adequate housing and bedding.
		Feed my animal daily and on a regular schedule.
		Feed a balanced diet that is right for my animal.
		Provide access to good quality water every day.
		Control internal and external parasites.
		Any invasive procedures (e.g. castration, dehorning, docking) are performed when animals are as young as possible.
		Train animals to lead or be handled at a young age.
		Have a planned health program to prevent disease.
		Observe animals daily and get treatment for sick animals.
		Be aware of the signs that my animal is in pain or suffering.
		Keep feed and treatment records.
		Minimize or eliminate all procedures or circumstances that may cause stress to my animal.
		Take the time to understand the behavioral needs of my animal.
		Sort and load animals safely with concern for them and people involved.
		Treat my animal with kindness at all times.
		Be aware of the importance of good animal care practices at public events.
		Act as a good ambassador for 4-H and animal care at public events.



ANIMAL CARE

Resources & References



The Ontario Farm Animal Council has an extensive library of books and videos and public education displays and resources on the topic of animal welfare, free for borrowing by 4-H Volunteers and members. Contact the OFAC office at: (519)837-1326 or email: info@ofac.org or visit www.ofac.org.

www.farmissues.com: A portal website with lots of information and a photo & video library of farm animals. Virtual farm tours, interactive games, a media centre and a full high school teaching resource make this site worth the visit.

www.grandin.com: Dr. Temple Grandin is a world renowned livestock welfare specialist.

Codes of Practice: There are Recommended Codes of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals for many species including: dairy, beef, poultry, pigs, sheep and horses. See them online at www.ofac.org under the animal care resources button or order a copy of the booklets from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.



More about Animal Rights...



It's important to understand the difference between animal welfare and animal rights. Animal welfare is what most people support – that humans have a right to use animals for their benefit, and a responsibility to care for them. Animal welfare supporters agree that animals should be treated with respect and have the five freedoms met (ie. freedom from hunger, thirst, access to shelter, etc.).

Animal rights is a philosophy that believes it is not acceptable to use animals for human benefit – for food, clothing, entertainment or medical research. Many people support

animal rights groups unknowingly by sending them money for animal welfare causes. If you would like to support a group to help animals, be sure to investigate that your money really goes to help animals (ie. such as a local animal shelter).






How do you talk to someone who has a different view than you?

The key to a good discussion is to respect others' opinions. Here are a few things to consider... Different animals have different needs: a chicken is different than a horse is different than a bat. A bat chooses to live upside down in a dark cave. That wouldn't be suitable for a cow! As animal caretakers, we have to try and provide

our animals with the living conditions that best meet their needs. Animals act out of instinct, they can't choose between right or wrong or be held responsible for their actions. A lion cannot be charged with murder for eating a zebra. Many people forget that humans feel and act differently than animals and can be held responsible for our actions.

We must keep these differences clearly in mind. The more we work with animals the more we learn how their behaviours differ from ours and the ways we may be the same, to help us do a better job of caring for them.

DIGGING DEEPER *Activities:*

-  Moderate a group discussion on the questions posed at the beginning of the articles on page 7: how would you respond?
-  Have a few members experience a media interview with the types of challenging questions provided in these articles. One member can act as a reporter and interview the other members in front of the group. After they have responded to a few questions, ask the other members to provide some feedback and ideas on how to improve the responses given.
-  Have your members make up a number of questions they have either been asked or think they might be asked by someone who does not understand 4-H or animal care practices. Have each member share their questions and take turns practicing answering them.
-  What's online? If online access (with sound) is available at the meeting: have all the members watch the short flash film www.themeatrix.com, list all the issues that are raised in the film and discuss the facts. OR Have each member search a website for information on animal welfare (pro and con) to bring back to the next meeting to discuss. Each member should evaluate the site for content, facts, tone, language and tactics. Suggested examples (Anti-agriculture): www.peta.org, www.hsus.org, www.humanefood.ca, www.vegkids.com Suggested examples (Pro-agriculture): www.farmissues.com, www.ofac.org, www.oafe.org, www.grandin.com
-  Presentation or Workshop: Contact the Ontario Farm Animal Council to host a workshop in your region for members to get training on how to answer difficult questions and become better spokespeople.. Workshops are forty-five minute sessions with small group activities and discussions. They can be modified and expanded to a three or four hour workshop if desired. Call the OFAC office (519)837-1326 or email: info@ofac.org to book a presentation.



DIGGING DEEPER...For Senior Members



Read the two articles below to become informed of some of the issues about animal care.

Ask yourself: How do these make you feel? Is this true? Is this what 4-H is about?
How would you deal with this person if they approached you at a 4-H event with these concerns?

All's not fair at the fair

(Vancouver Sun, Sept. 4, 1993, Nicholas Read)



...if you intend to take in the livestock show, the following might be of some help. It's a guide to what you might see - and also what you might miss - at British Columbia's premier agricultural fair.

What you'll see at the dairy exhibit: Clean straw and water buckets; carefully tended animals; hand-drawn posters of cows with names like Bluebell, Marigold and Buttercup; no bulls.

What you won't see at the dairy exhibit: Cows tethered by steel braces in stalls where the excrement and urine is piled to their knees; male calves taken from their mothers when they are only hours old to be raised and slaughtered as veal; veal crates in which the animals are held virtually motionless for four months while they are fed little else but antibiotic-laced milk; slaughterhouses where the calves are killed to provide gourmet meat to supermarkets and restaurants.

What you'll see at the pig exhibit: Clean straw; buckets filled with fresh water three times a day; a mother sow cosily nursing her newborn piglets; healthy, strong animals with coats as smooth and blemish-free as varnish.

What you won't see at the pig exhibit: Filthy, feces-laden straw; open, festering wounds never treated even when the pigs go to auction; limping animals struck with boards by auctioneers; farrowing crates in which mother pigs are separated from their young by steel bars; dirty, concrete floors; transport trucks so crowded that animals can die of suffocation over 24- or even 48-hour journeys.

What you'll see at the beef exhibit: Clean straw; clean water buckets; healthy, calm animals with no branding marks.

What you won't see at the beef exhibit: Castration and de-horning without anaesthetics; hot-iron branding that can leave wounds so deep and serious that they never heal; feedlots in which cattle, knee-deep in muck, are barely able to walk; animals so badly injured in transport that they can no longer stand and have to be dragged off transport trucks into

slaughterhouses; ritual slaughter in which the animals' throats are cut so that they can bleed to death slowly without the "kindness" of being stunned first.

What you'll see at the poultry exhibit: Clean straw; cages big enough for one or even two birds to turn around, preen themselves and flap their wings; strong healthy birds with all their feathers intact.

What you won't see at the poultry exhibit: Battery cages into which four or five birds are stuffed so tight that they can't turn around, flap their wings, preen themselves or even stand up; birds under such unrelenting stress that half their feathers have fallen out; commercially useless young male birds thrown alive into meat grinders; debeaking of female chicks at birth and then again at adolescence; the wholesale slaughter of so-called "spent" hens - hens that can no longer meet their daily laying quotas - when they are about a year old...

...What you'll see at the PNE food animal barns: The way things should be for Canadian farm animals. What you won't see at the PNE food animal barns: The truth.

Club teaches children to suppress their compassion



The Aug. 28 Vancouver Sun showed a photograph of a tearful young girl wishing farewell to her pet lamb at the 4-H auction at the PNE. The lamb was headed for the chopping block.

The accompanying article described the trauma of many children adjusting to the "realities" of animal agriculture. After a few years of raising and then killing animals, most children outgrow their childish sentimentality, it seems, and learn

how much fun it is to make money in this way.

One mother recalled that when her nine-year old son sold his first lamb at auction he cried for two weeks. Until he got the cheque. "Then the tears were replaced by dollar signs." It seems the function of the 4-H organization is to indoctrinate children into an agricultural system which views animals as inanimate cogs in an economic machine.

The methods of indoctrination are simple: divorce children from their natural compassion for animals, help them "mature" to the point where they can view animals as commercial

objects and replace reverence for life with more useful emotion: lust for money.

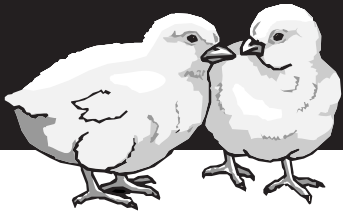
There is no need for meat or dairy products in the human diet - in fact our addiction to these foods has reaped a harvest of cancer, heart disease, and other illnesses. The sooner our society releases itself from this addiction, the better. When that day comes we will no longer have organizations like 4-H training our children to suppress their instincts of compassion.

Letter from The Vancouver Sun, September 13, 1993

Animal Care is Our Concern

Part of practicing good animal welfare is not just looking out for the animals in our care, but looking out for the welfare of all animals. When we see animals that are not having their needs met or are subjected to abuse or neglect it is our responsibility to make sure the animals receive the proper care they need.

What can you do if animals are not being cared for properly?



4-H Ontario



At an Event:

Talk to your 4-H Volunteers or show manager about specific examples of animals being mistreated. Many shows have rules about animal mistreatment, which can include the showperson being disqualified. Animal mistreatment should not be tolerated by 4-H members, volunteers or event organizers.

At a farm or stable:

OFAC Animal Care Helpline: The Helpline is a confidential “farmer helping farmer” service designed for use when farm animal care isn’t the best, but no laws are being broken. This service is for the farmers who need help or advice on how to better care for their animals. The Helpline service is for cattle, poultry, and pigs. It is not for emergencies or animal cruelty cases. Phone: (519)837-1326

OSPCA: The Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has the authority to investigate animal cruelty complaints across Ontario. If you suspect animal cruelty or abuse, contact the Ontario SPCA. For all types of animals, including livestock, horses and pets. Phone: 1-888-ONT-SPCA

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs (OMAFRA): If there are dead animals involved on a farm, there could be deadstock law violations. Phone OMAFRA at: 1-877-424-1300

CFIA Livestock Transport Emergency Hotline: The Canadian Food Inspection Agency runs a hotline service seven days a week to help with Livestock Transport emergencies. Phone: 1-877-814-2342

Conclusion

4-H has always involved animals – that’s what often makes it most challenging and rewarding! Animal welfare is an important part of the 4-H program. The 4-H community must ensure that project animals are treated humanely, become informed about animal care issues, and get involved by educating the public about the good news of 4-H and how we care for our animals. This meeting is a great first step in becoming informed and involved. Your club, your farm or stable and you have to decide where to go from here!

About the Ontario Farm Animal Council...

OFAC is the voice of animal agriculture in Ontario, representing livestock and poultry farmers and associated businesses on issues such as animal care, food safety, environment and biotechnology. Find out more at www.ofac.org or www.farmissues.com.



100 Stone Rd. W, Suite 106
Guelph ON N1G 5L6
(519) 837-1326 • Email: info@ofac.org