Education in Animal Welfare: why, for who, how, when and by whom?

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DO ANIMALS MATTER?

Sentience
“Suffering” e.g. Pain, Distress, Boredom, Frustration, Fear
NB Includes pleasurable states

Welfare Science
(an evolving multidisciplinary subject)
Ethics
Legislation
Animal welfare is important to the public e.g. Eurobarometer

Public pays for:

Education of Vets
Food (expensive?)
Keeping country free from infectious diseases

Vets have privileged legal position in society
Public’s View of Groups

• Teachers and veterinarians are the most favorably viewed groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>% Ranking Extremely or Very Favorable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School teachers</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinarians</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clergy</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Retailers and Restaurant Managers</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef, Pork, Dairy and Poultry Processors</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmentalists</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of Agriculture</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Rights Activists</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Media</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Corporate Farms</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trial Lawyers</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups Active in Opposing Use of Animals for Food</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q: Thinking about various groups and industries in the U.S., how favorably do you view each of the following groups? Please rate the groups and industries using a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means not favorable at all and 7 means extremely favorable. How favorably do you view…?

Base: Total Sample (n=1002)
Advocate Believability

Treatment of Farm Animals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm Vet</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rancher</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Activists</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politician</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chart shows the advocate believability percentages for different roles in 1998 and 2004.
Animal welfare is important to the public

Includes physical and mental health

Disease can often lead to poor welfare (prevention/treatment by vet)

BUT Mental health can be poor in disease-free animals e.g. laying hens, veal calves (usually ‘inadequate’ environment)

Public’s vision of good welfare is often linked with naturalness and extensive systems

Vet’s vision of good welfare was/is linked only to health and productivity
The veterinary profession has a responsibility to ensure a good education in animal welfare science, ethics and law for:

Undergraduate vets
Postgraduate vets as part of CPD

And including other stakeholders:
Public i.e. Consumers & Citizens
Producers/Farmers/Processors
Retailers and caterers
Media
‘ACTION’ REQUIRED?

PUBLIC CONFIDENCE in the profession (given their privileged position in society)

Vets need to convince public that we take AW seriously e.g. core syllabus, examination, post-graduate specialisation in AWS
Veterinary profession has a responsibility to provide and ensure a good education in animal welfare science, ethics and law

Knowledge (time in the curriculum; ethology)
On-line courses and other forms of CPD, and exams?

Skills (examination, on-line?) what makes a good vet?

Attitude (philosophy, macro- and micro-ethics, moral agency)
02.00 vs 14.00h

Please note the difference between ethics and professional ethics (so called etiquette)
Animal welfare science can raise

Ethical concerns lead to legislation (vet input)

Direction over past 100 years is in one direction only
ANIMAL WELFARE in GB: Past, present and future (FAWC 2009) Recommendation

Quality of Life

A good life

A life worth living

A life not worth living

Good Welfare

Protected label

“A good life”

“Higher welfare”

“Ethical label”

Poor Welfare

Legal minimum
CE mark:
“Conforms to EU standards”
Quality of a Life – a retrospective judgement
Have we got it right?

• A life not worth living - Negative experiences outweigh the positive; literally, the animal would be better off dead than alive.

• A life worth living - Although some pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm may occur, on balance, the animal’s positive experiences outweigh the negative.

• A good life - Positive experiences heavily outweigh the negative beyond any reasonable doubt; certain husbandry practices are proscribed and others prescribed.
Are vets at the forefront or even involved?

EU legislation
EU AW Action Plan and future Strategy
European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)
Scientific Panel on Animal Health and Animal Welfare
EuroFAWC
EBVS and ECAWBSM
Is current veterinary education fit for purpose?

Does it meet public expectations?
Can it be improved?
Who leads?
Suggested modification of the AVMA’s Veterinarian's oath”?

• Being admitted to the profession of veterinary medicine, I solemnly swear to use my scientific knowledge, skills and values for the benefit of society through the protection of animal health, the avoidance and alleviation of animal suffering, the advancement of positive animal wellbeing, the conservation of animal resources, the promotion of public health, and the advancement of medical knowledge.

• I will practice my profession conscientiously, with dignity, and in keeping with the principles of veterinary medical ethics.

• I accept as a lifelong obligation the continual improvement of my professional knowledge and competence.