



Controversies in Animal Welfare

What Creates Them?

Gail C. Golab, PhD, DVM, MANZCVS, DACAW
Director, Animal Welfare Division
American Veterinary Medical Association

2013 National Food Policy Conference
April 15, 2013, Washington, DC



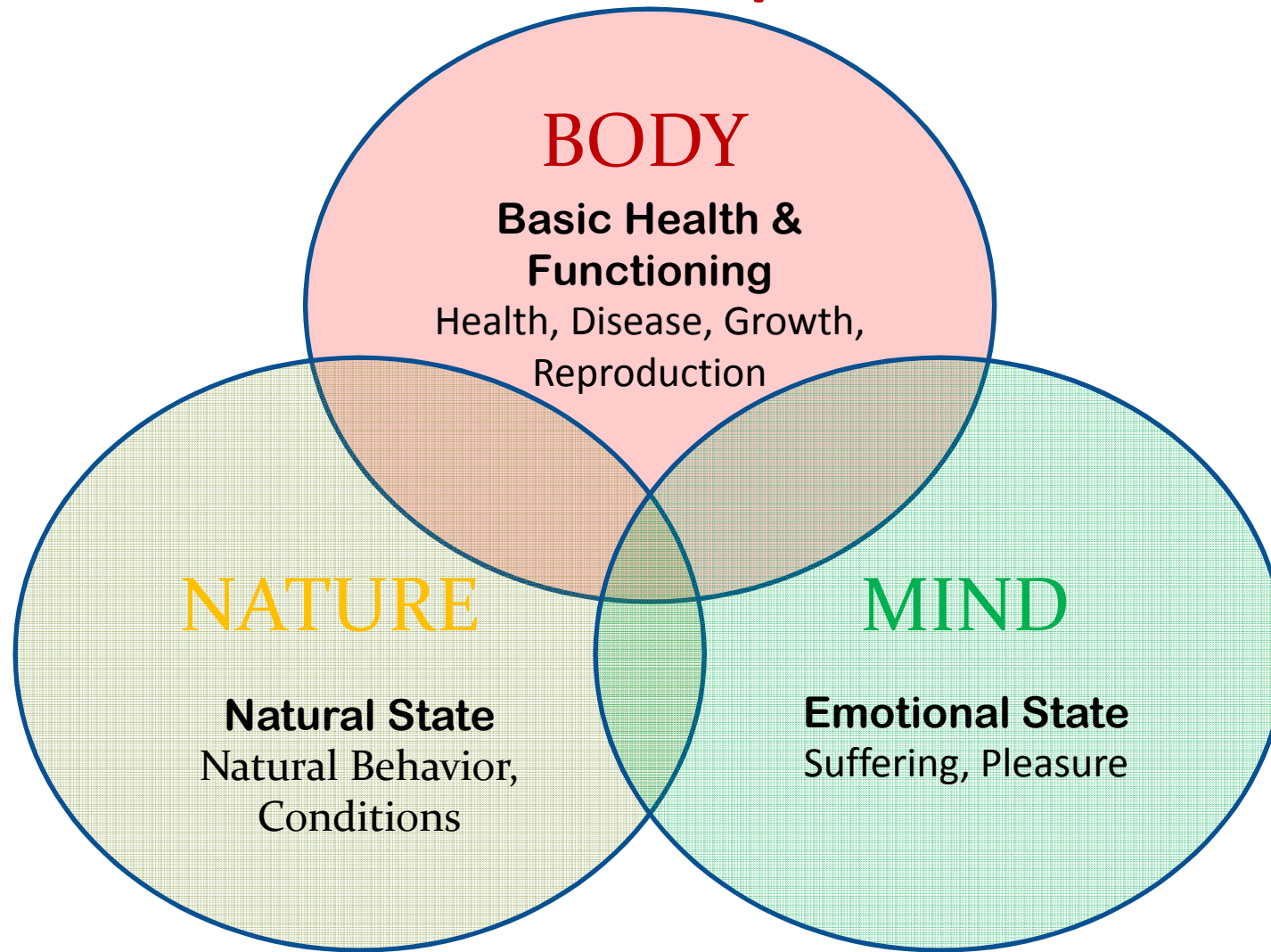
Three Things → Trouble

- When people evaluate animals' welfare differently
- When we don't proactively recognize and address public concerns when it comes to animal care
- When consumer expectations and values don't match the reality—or their perceptions—of industry performance

#1



Mismatches in How People Evaluate Welfare



Source: Dr. David Fraser, et al.



People Want Animal Care To Match What They Value



| Indicators | Conventional Cage | Furnished Cage | | | Non-cage (Barn) | | Outdoor (Free-range) |
|---|-------------------|----------------|--------|-------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| | | Small | Medium | Large | Single Level | Multiple Levels | |
| Mortality (%) | Good | Medium | Medium | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| Mortality from feather pecking and cannibalism | Good | Medium | Medium | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| Bone strength and fractures | Good | Medium | Medium | Good | Medium | Medium | Medium |
| Exposure to disease vectors (e.g., wild birds) | Good | Medium | Medium | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| Internal parasites (e.g., coccidia, roundworms) | Good | Medium | Medium | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| External parasites | Good | Medium | Medium | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| Bumblefoot | Good | Medium | Medium | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| Feather loss | Good | Medium | Medium | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| Hen hysteria and piling/smothering | Good | Medium | Medium | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| Risk of predation | Good | Medium | Medium | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| Level of egg production and cleanliness | Good | Medium | Medium | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| Use of nest boxes | Good | Medium | Medium | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| Use of perches | Good | Medium | Medium | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| Foraging behavior | Good | Medium | Medium | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| Dustbathing behavior | Good | Medium | Medium | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| Air quality (e.g., dust, ammonia) | Good | Medium | Medium | Good | Good | Good | Good |

INDUSTRY

ANIMAL PROTECTION GROUPS

§ = Recent unpublished data indicate lower mortality may be achievable in large furnished cages

† = Reduced bone strength, fractures when birds are caught

* = bones stronger from perch use but increased incidence of deformation of the keel

‡ = More fractures during lay despite stronger bones

¥ = Variable, depending on whether loose litter is dispensed; litter presents challenges for maintaining air quality

How well welfare measures are met:

| | | | |
|------|--------|------|-------------|
| Good | Medium | Poor | Insuff Data |
|------|--------|------|-------------|



People Want Animal Care To Match What They Value



Intensive
Systems

Extensive
Systems

Physical Indicators of Welfare and Efficiency

Behavioral Indicators of Welfare and “Naturalness”

#2



Failure to Proactively Address Public Concerns

- Housing (boxes and restraints)
- Management practices (cutting things off and other modifications, especially without pain control)
- Injury and death (why, how, when)



#3



Consumer Expectations Mismatched to Performance

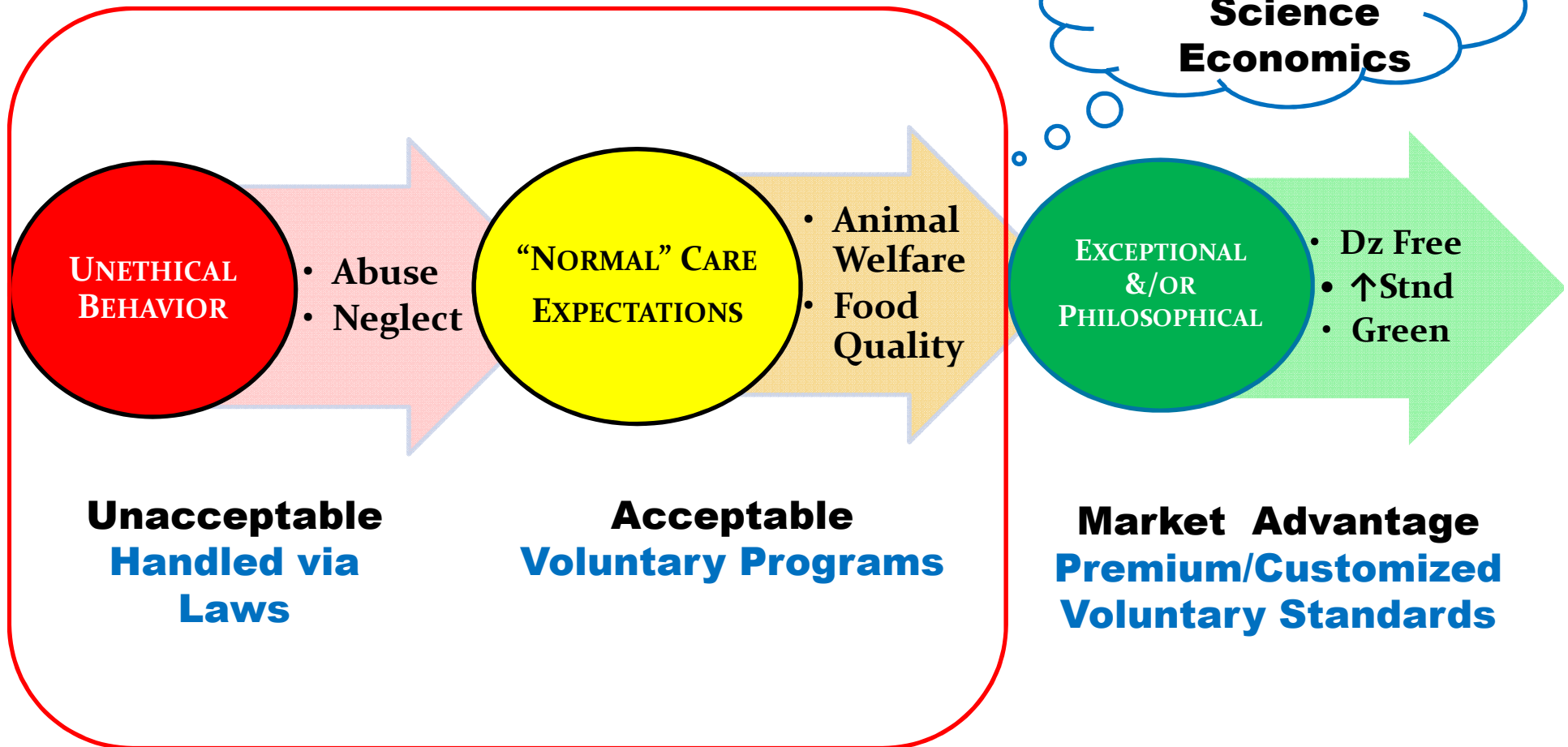
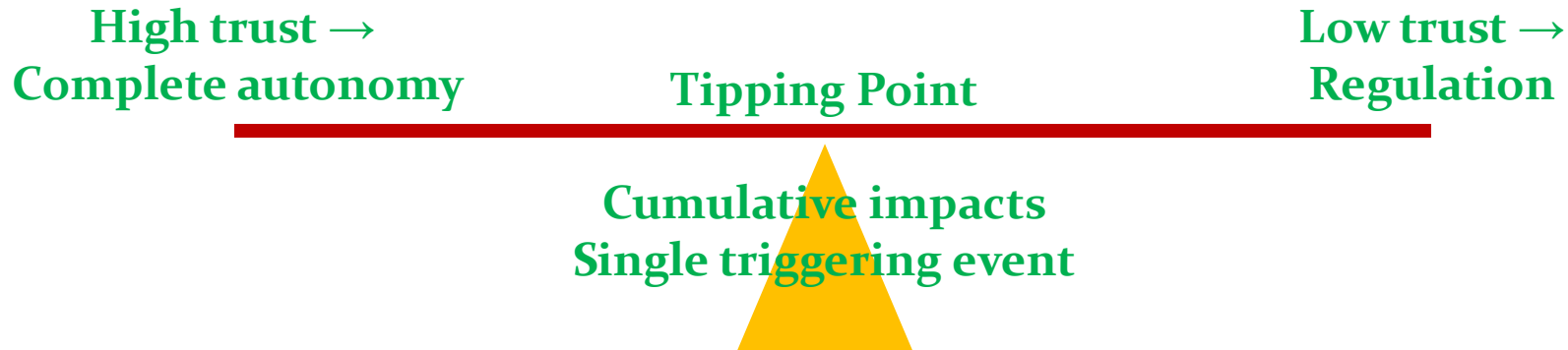


Figure adapted from J. Walker, 2012



When the Mismatch is Sufficiently Severe Voluntary Can Move to Regulatory



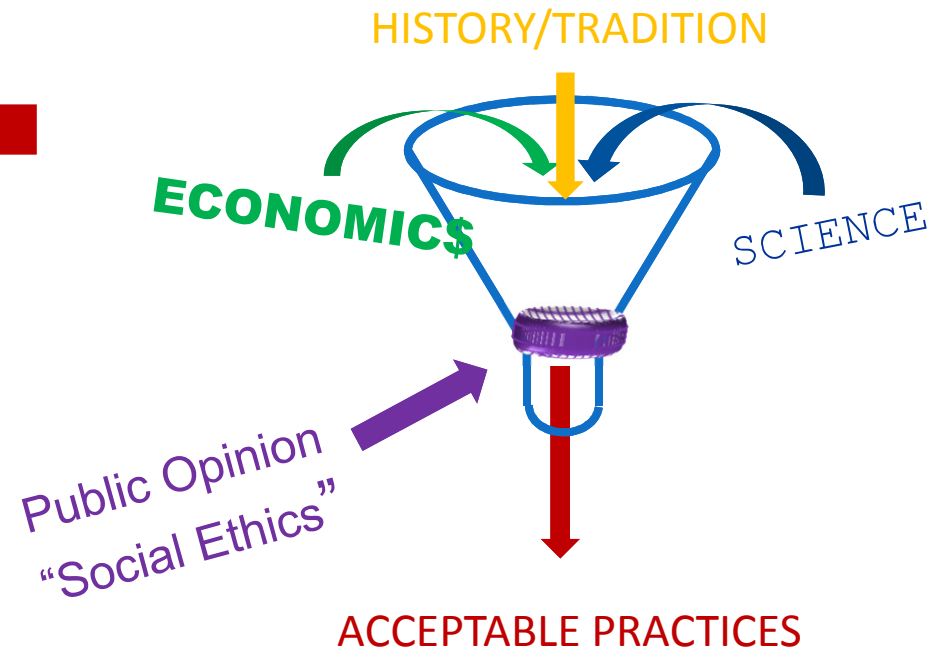
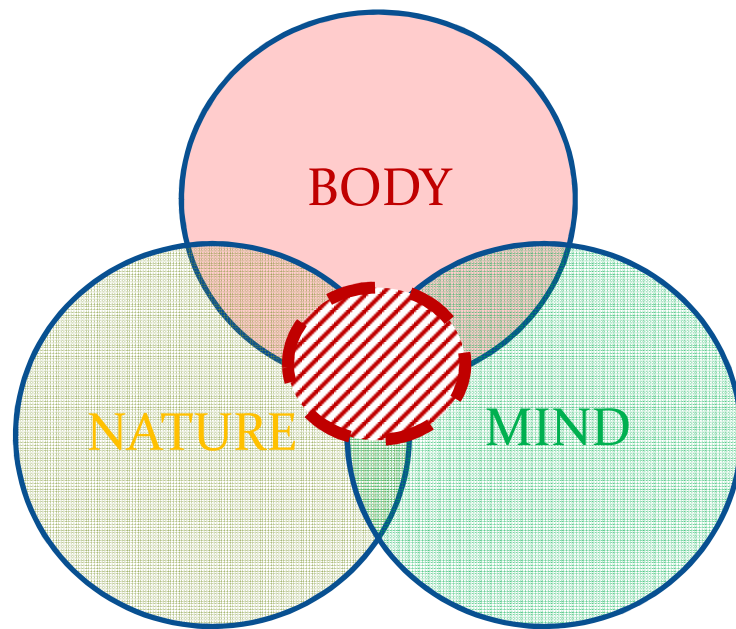
- US public typically values freedom to operate
- But...
- Cumulative impacts (e.g., activism—raises awareness, creates/reinforces different expectations)
- Triggering events
 - Bad actors/incidents, failure to condemn them
 - Perceived or real voluntary program failures



Figure adapted from C. Arnot, 2009



AVMA's Approach



Productive and Responsible
Solutions



Thank you for the opportunity... and your time



Two virtues that
generally always
serve us well...

**Patience and
Wisdom**

Questions?
ggolab@avma.org