Controversies in Animal Welfare

What Creates Them?

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

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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
Mismatches in How People Evaluate Welfare

Source: Dr. David Fraser, et al.
People Want Animal Care To Match What They Value

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

Industry: Red
Animal Protection Groups: Blue

$ = Recent unpublished data indicate lower mortality may be achievable in large furnished cages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

PRODUCERS
Intensive Systems

CONSUMERS
Extensive Systems

Physical Indicators of Welfare and Efficiency

Behavioral Indicators of Welfare and “Naturalness”
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)
Consumer Expectations Mismatched to Performance

- Unethical Behavior
  - Abuse
  - Neglect

- "Normal" Care Expectations
  - Animal Welfare
  - Food Quality

- Exceptional &/or Philosophical
  - Dz Free
  - ↑Stnd
  - Green

Unacceptable Handled via Laws
Acceptable Voluntary Programs
Market Advantage
Premium/Customized Voluntary Standards

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

BODY

NATURE

MIND

+ 

HISTORY/TRADITION

ECONOMICS

SCIENCE

Public Opinion
“Social Ethics”

ACCEPTABLE PRACTICES

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