

ANALYZING THE ETHICS OF ANIMAL FARMING AND ANIMAL RIGHTS IN AGRICULTURE

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ABSTRACT

Animal welfare activists' views need serious consideration by agronomists because of the importance of ethical considerations in evaluating animal production systems. More than that, they provide the moral justification for certain conclusions in favor of animal welfare. To that end, it is crucial to define and create standards for measuring animal wellbeing, and to recognize when production practices are insufficient to suit animals' needs. A primary goal of this research is to demonstrate that the preservation of animals' legal rights is necessary for achieving true animal welfare, as opposed to the current system's sole focus on freedom. Prohibition of animal cruelty act of 1960 additionally, when integrating technology in cattle husbandry, social context becomes crucial to overcome ethics.

KEYWORDS: Ethics, Animal Farming, Animal Rights, Agriculture and Humans

INTRODUCTION

The morality of animal experimentation may be more important than technological advances in determining the future of animal agriculture. How should we interact with animals? There are many different points of view on this issue, ranging from the extreme position that animals should have the same rights as people to the position that humans should have no say in how animals are treated. Disagreement arises over the use of pesticides to kill insects, the confinement of cattle, and even the consumption of meat as a result of these divergent worldviews.

Animal welfare is becoming an increasingly prominent problem, and state laws and regulations are beginning to reflect that. The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, the NIH, and the FDA are just a few of the federal bodies responsible for overseeing and regulating how animals are treated. Ethical concerns are often dismissed as illogical or unreasonable by those with vested professional or financial interests in animal husbandry. However, many judicial and legislative choices rest on similar principles. Policy improvements that benefit both humans and animals may be made with more precision if ethical questions are resolved.

Today's cattle business has significant challenges in the realm of ethics. In the United States, at least 200 animal rights groups advocate for more government oversight of animal housing, research, transportation, and killing. There is a coalition of 18 groups that reflect producer concerns regarding the animal rights movement. Federal Policy Shifts Assuming that most people care for animals and don't think it's right for humans to abuse them, the discussion isn't about how to better ensure their well-being. An issue emerges due to divergent worldviews about what constitutes a healthy human-animal interaction, which are seldom exposed or addressed. Animal welfare is a sensitive topic, thus the discussion tends to become intense and sometimes personal. Two opposing philosophies on animal welfare are "animal rights" and "responsible human actions." Both of these perspectives have a concern for animals, but they come from different philosophical traditions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Jena, Nibedita. (2017). Animal welfare laws and philosophical justifications for the humane treatment of animals were developed in response to the widespread maltreatment and inhumane treatment of animals in a variety of human-led industries. Animal welfare advocates believe that before an animal is killed, it should be given some measure of comfort and freedom of movement. Focusing on the animal's independence, this idea highlights the animal's physiology, psychology, and the natural environment. But surprisingly, it doesn't care about animals' rights or even whether they live or die. Those who advocate for the rights of animals worry that animals would gain the least from such measures. Since rights and freedom are crucial for the upkeep of a normal existence, it appears doubtful to demand comfort for a being in life while not securing its real life. The purpose of this study is threefold: (a) to provide a critical analysis of the animal welfare system, which places

exclusive importance on freedom; (b) to show that animal wellbeing is insufficient without animal rights and that the two are intrinsically linked; and (c) to provide a bridge between animal welfare and animal rights.

Bos, Jacqueline et.al (2018). Precision livestock farming (PLF) is the practice of herd management that employs process engineering techniques and tools. Parameters such as animal development, product yield (e.g., milk, eggs), illness, animal behavior, and physical environment (e.g. thermal micro-environment, ammonia emissions) are all crucial to PLF monitoring. Critics of PLF, among other things, highlight the possible disruption of human-animal interactions, while proponents of PLF see it as a win-win approach that blends production efficiency with environmental objectives and animal welfare. This research explores the argument that PLF's anthropomorphization of animals affects how traditional industrial farming evolves. We compare the issues of objectification in feminist ethics and animal ethics to perform a conceptual study. We find that instrumentalization, de-animalization, alienation, commercialization, and quantification of animals all fall under the umbrella of objectification in the field of animal ethics. These discussions are related to foundational concepts in care ethics because of the emphasis on sociopolitical context and relationality. To evaluate the effects of the livestock industry's increasing reliance on animals as commodities, we take a care ethics stance. It is argued that in contrast to abstract and instrumental thinking, where the quest of knowledge is connected with the desire of control, as in mainstream PLF, the sensory knowledge symbolised by the farmers' unity of hand, brain, and heart would make it tougher to objectify animals.

Balzani, Agnese et.al (2020). There has been research on farm animal welfare (FAW) to influence policy and practice for over 30 years. The problem of improving FAW persists despite the abundance of evidence for doing so. Stakeholders, and farmers in particular, play a crucial position in enhancing FAW. To answer the questions, "what do farmers think (farmer's general view) about farm animal welfare?" and "what are the factors that influence their thinking?", this semi-systematic study compiles research published over the last 30 years throughout the globe. To determine what elements drove the spread of FAW innovation, a theme analysis was carried out. Eleven internal factors, such as farmer knowledge, empathy, personality, values, and the human-animal bond, and fifteen external factors, such as economic benefits, communication, time, and labor, influenced the perception of FAW, as extracted from 96 peer-reviewed publications on a variety of livestock species. Among the several causes mentioned, farmers' familiarity with FAW and its financial ramifications were most often cited. The assessment also emphasizes the need of encouraging multidisciplinary cooperation and the involvement of stakeholders. This research provides recommendations for enhancing FAW, such as instruments to facilitate behavioral changes among farmers.

Bassi, Emilie et.al (2019). Albertans are generally supportive of the cattle and dairy industries, but there are persistent worries about issues like farm animal care. Farmers may see modifications and improvements prescribed by codes of practice and animal care committees as a reasonable response to public concerns about animal welfare. However, rules of practice don't solve every problem when it comes to animal care, and new problems may always crop up. This article examines branding, dehorning, weaning, and on-farm handling and movement as four animal husbandry techniques, drawing on social practice theory and extensive field research with 36 cattle and dairy producers. Branding and dehorning are shown to be deeply ingrained in ranching history and communities of practice, despite modest but steady evolution with attention to pain control. More rapid changes in weaning and animal handling procedures may be attributed to the increased focus on adapting to new materials, attitudes, and values within producer groups.

Hampton, Jordan et.al (2021). In post-industrial societies, the importance of making ethical food choices has grown. Many shoppers give serious consideration to how their food choices affect the well-being of animals. Recent developments, such as the "One Welfare" theory, are expanding the scope of animal welfare to include non-domesticated species. This method entails taking into account the fact that negative consequences (harms) might be direct and evident (like the killing of cattle) or indirect and inadvertent (like land clearance), with both having an effect on wildlife. This is particularly true in the Anthropocene, when human actions nearly always have some kind of negative effect on non-human life. Here, we provide a paradigm for evaluating the scope (rather than the severity) of harms imposed by numerous prevalent food production systems, all of which we evaluated using the "harms" model of animal welfare evaluation. We accounted for both direct and

indirect injury to both wild and domestic animals. We outlined 21 different negative impacts and discussed how they correlate with 16 distinct methods of food production. According to our research, all methods of producing food have some negative effects on animals, although wild animals are more likely to suffer than domesticated ones.

HISTORY OF ANIMAL WELFARE

Concern for animals over a long period of time is simple to prove. For instance, in 1864, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was established. Humane treatment laws were enacted in England as early as 1822. The Cruelty to Animals Act, passed in that nation in 1876, was a major breakthrough in ensuring the fair treatment of all animals. American law was inspired by English law. The primary goals of the Animal Welfare Act of 1966 were to protect people's pets from being stolen and to ensure that research animals were treated humanely. Dogs, cats, nonhuman primates, guinea pigs, hamsters, and rabbits were all included by the act's regulations for shipping, selling, housing, and caring for the animals. Animals used for commercial purposes, including those kept as pets or on display, were eventually included within the purview of the statute. Each year, Congress and other legislative bodies review a plethora of bills addressing various aspects of animal welfare.

THE ECONOMICS OF AGRICULTURAL ANIMAL WELFARE

Issues of nutrition, housing, reproduction, confinement, illness, research, and killing all contribute to the well-being of animals. There are three main categories in which these problems might be placed: the treatment of animals in agricultural settings, the use of animals in scientific research, and the nature of human-animal interactions. Humane treatment, housing, feeding, watering, castrating, dehorning, docking, breeding, shipping, slaughtering, disease prevention, and treatment are all facets of animal usage in our food production system that raise ethical considerations and concerns.

Do the benefits of confinement, such as reduced stress and simpler pest and disease management, outweigh the drawbacks of limiting inmates' freedom of movement and expression? Is dehorning terrible because it seems to hurt the animal, or helpful because it prevents other creatures from being hurt or killed? Human discretion is required in weighing the merits of the contending viewpoints on these issues. Anthropomorphism, the human predisposition to attribute human traits such as emotion, personality, and reasoning to animals, plays a role in shaping people's sensitivity. Human evaluation of animal wellbeing may be quantified using economics. Starting with the premise that an animal or animal product is an economic good that has value to humans allows us to think about animal welfare in terms of economics.

The usefulness and price of an economic product are based on its characteristics, such as the flavor and appearance of a beefsteak. The ease and contentment of an animal may be considered a characteristic of a product if animal welfare is seen as a means to human aims. Beefsteaks, for instance, may be classified not only by their color and tenderness, but also by their origin and treatment before slaughter, such as "range-raised," "without steroids," "kosher," or "gently slaughtered." Some buyers place a high value on these features, which might lead to higher prices for the final product. Economics and utilitarian ethics have a common heritage. For instance, the 18th-century philosopher Jeremy Bentham is often credited with establishing the utilitarian foundations of economics and advocating for the rights of animals. However, utilitarianism is deeply embedded in economics, thus any consideration for animal welfare is limited to that context. Furthermore, the animal rights perspective rejects the utilitarian approach to animal care because of its emphasis on methods over outcomes.

ANIMAL RIGHTS IN AGRICULTURE

Farm animals should not be given any legal protections. There should be no debate about whether an ox should be used to drive a cart or a plough. Horses should not be given the option to decide for themselves whether or not they should be slaughtered. Sheep don't get to decide whether they want their wool shorn or not. If a cow has no baby to care for, it has no right to insist on being milked repeatedly.

By "rights," I refer to the inherent human capacity to make autonomous decisions. Due to their status as property, like a house or vehicle, animals are not afforded the same protections as people. They are not considered "people" under the law. This, however, does not imply that there is not a system in place to ensure their safety and well-being.

Animal Rights or Responsible Action

Animal rights advocates compare animal rights to the inalienable rights of humans, as those guaranteed by the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. Animal rights activist and author Tom Regan bases much of his case on animals' "right to respectful treatment." He argues that the worth of this right does not rely on the preferences of others; rather, it is intrinsic. Moral actors (those who act) and moral patients (those who are acted upon or for, such as children, the disabled, and animals) both deserve respect, according to Regan. While there is more nuance to some of the arguments, the fundamental tenet of animal rights is that we cannot trust humans to do the right thing when it comes to animal welfare. Humans should have a clear and complete understanding of the rights of animals. Animal rights are the duty of a human who acts as the animal's representative and enforcer since the rights of animals are dependent on human interpretations. Since "responsible action" is contingent on human interpretation and enforcement, it rejects the concept of innate, inalienable animal rights. Instead, it stresses the need of people acting ethically while dealing with animals. When comparing animal rights with responsible action, the main dividing line is between an individual's internal and external authorities.

Humane treatment of animals is essential to the protection of animal rights. A person's moral compass serves as the compass for responsible activity. The treatment of animals is a moral matter, and the case for action is that only people are moral actors. Beyond personal conscience, social accountability for animal-related actions rests with the larger human society. Responsible behavior is both easier and more complicated to implement than animal rights. The abstract notion of animal rights may be applied without specifying the details, making responsible action easier to do. Acts of responsibility just assert that people "do right" by animals. However, "do right" is harder for a person to do since he or she must rely on his or her own faculties to deduce, evaluate, and settle on the appropriate course of action. There is no easy checklist of things to remember.

DISCUSS ETHICAL ISSUES

The discussion of the case for animal rights and responsible conduct serves to promote a deeper comprehension of fundamental principles. Finding acceptable answers to moral dilemmas might be aided by using ethical reasoning. Emotional emotions may cloud rational thought, leading to conflicts when people disagree over seemingly similar findings. It's possible that shared aims may be lost in the midst of divisive language and actions. Policies will emerge from the abstractions and arguments, followed by rules, and finally, awareness and conduct will emerge from the rules. Animal rights, or responsible behavior, or both, may be the inspiration for the regulations and conduct. Beliefs and actions are governed by values. Therefore, the morality of animal experimentation has the potential to affect agriculture more than any technological, chemical, or biological advances. Potentially devastating effects on laboratory practices may result from restrictions on the use of animals in research.

More than the creation and usage of growth hormones, the vegetarian worldview of food may have an impact on the cattle sector. Opposition to animal confinement may have a greater impact on the chicken and veal industries than advances in feeding and processing technologies. Animal agricultural ethics is a subset of animal usage ethics. Pets, participants in experiments, zoo exhibits, game for hunters and anglers, and even guard animals may spark discussions on our place in the natural world. When animals are used, what kind of obligations come along with that? Does respect need to be part of duty, or may ideas of compassionate treatment suffice? Albert Schweitzer once said, "Whenever an animal is in any way forced into the service of man, every one of us must be concerned with the sufferings which for that reason it has to thereby undergo. Let no one regard as light the burden of that responsibility." This could be a thought for the farmer, the shipper, the butcher, and the backyard barbecuer.

THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACT, 1960

The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act of 1960 is India's primary anti-cruelty statute. The purpose of the Act is to update the legislation for the prevention of cruelty to animals and to ensure that no animal is subjected to needless pain or suffering. Any non-human form of life is considered a "animal" under the Act's terms.

The Government of India formed the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) to carry out some of the following duties in line of the Act:

1. recommending changes and guidelines to the federal government to reduce the suffering of animals during shipping, testing, and confinement.
2. Promote funding for senior animal care facilities, adoption of senior pets, and rescue of senior pets.
3. Thirdly, providing government advice on veterinary medicine and hospital rules.
4. Increasing people's knowledge and understanding of the importance of animal welfare.
5. Serving as a resource for the federal government on animal welfare issues in general

Section 11 of the Act specifies the following behaviors as examples of animal cruelty:

- a. Inflicting unwarranted physical suffering on an animal by means of physical abuse such as beatings, kicks, overpowering them, etc.
- b. Putting a sick, wounded, or otherwise unsuitable animal to work (both the owner and the worker are subject to the penalty).
- c. Giving an animal a harmful medication.
- b) When an animal is transported in a manner that causes it physical or mental distress.
 - a. Confinement of any animal without enough space for exercise.
 - b. Keeping an animal for an excessive amount of time on an excessively long or heavy chain.
 - c. Keeping an animal in constant confinement without providing it with enough space to roam.
 - d. Failing as a responsible pet owner by not giving the animal enough to eat, drink, or shelter.
- c) Intentionally or otherwise leaving an animal to perish.
- d) Knowingly allowing a pet to be free to wander the streets, or abandoning a pet on the street because of illness, old age, or incapacity.
- e) Putting up for sale an animal that has been harmed in some way, such as by mutilation, hunger, dehydration, overcrowding, or other mistreatment.
- f) Using inhumane methods to mutilate or kill animals, such as injecting them with strychnine.
- g) For the sake of amusement, luring another animal with the promise of food.
- h) the business of setting up, running, or supervising avenue where animals are fought.
- i) Killing a wild animal that has been let free for that reason.

However, the Act does not see as cruel the dehorning or castration of cattle in the approved method, the annihilation of stray dogs in lethal chambers in the permitted manner, or the extinction of any animal with the authority of law. There is considerable wiggle room provided by this Section.

THE ETHICS OF DLF

When considering DLF, it is important to take into account ethical considerations [14]. There are a number of considerations in this area that highlight the ethical challenges introduced by DLF. Several of those problems are addressed here.

Effects on the Environment By eliminating wastage, maximizing resource efficiency, and lessening the environmental toll of livestock production, digital livestock farming has the potential to boost environmental sustainability in the livestock industry. However, the manufacture, maintenance, and disposal of digital equipment and infrastructure may result in increased energy consumption, e-waste, and carbon emissions when used in animal husbandry. As a result, sustainable procedures must be implemented to lessen the negative consequences of digital livestock farming on the environment. Some examples include switching to renewable energy, properly recycling and disposing of electronic trash, and cutting down on energy use when it's not essential.

Issues of Society

Concerning the social aspect of DLF, we should discuss the ways in which the adoption and development of digital technologies for animal husbandry vary based on our perspective. It is crucial to consider the larger societal context of technical progress (Table 1). Dairy farms, for instance, may make use of comfort technology like the DeLaval brushes and milking machines. The use of these technologies has been shown to increase milk production in cows. However, it's possible that we'll look beyond that to the broader societal implications of these technologies instead. When technology is designed to make animals as comfortable as possible, how does this reflect on cultural norms? Is it as simple as trying to get more done?

Table 1. Overview of the Ethical implications of Digital Livestock Farming per level.

Level	Potential Improvements	Concerns and Knowledge Gaps
Animal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automatic and continuous sampling of objective parameters to improve health and welfare; Potential for increased autonomy, such as choosing when to be milked. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This could lead to increased objectification of animals, being just another part of the system and through digitalization of the habitat; Decreases human-animal interactions; Accuracy, reliability, and efficiency of the machinery needs to be validated; Algorithms and target values must be carefully considered to take into account individual differences; A holistic, multi-modal approach has to be taken to assess each platform per species, e.g., through a bioethical analysis.
Farmer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limits repetitive, time- and labor-consuming tasks done by the farmer; Increases productivity while minimizing environmental impact leading to potentially more income after initial investment; Automatic and constant monitoring of the entire farm, even remotely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for a new specialist, digital skills and advisory support; Reduces farmer's autonomy as they depend more on technology; Changes the job and will lead to job losses; Interpretation of complex systems can increase mental workload; Lack of trust between farmers and tech companies; Lack of a framework regarding data ownership, usage, storage and misuse.
Society and the Planet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses the increasing customer demand for better animal welfare; Decreases farm animal and human health issues by reducing disease and the need for antibiotics; It can aid in reducing pollution, emissions of greenhouse gases and energy consumption. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides more transparency toward the customer due to increased traceability; Lack of public acceptance, but society is also relatively unaware of the advantages and disadvantages of PLF; Other attitudes are still unknown, such as those of veterinarians and stakeholders; The added value of PLF has not been quantified yet, and there is a need for Life Cycle Assessment.

Human–Animal Relationships

The magic of visualization platforms (Figure 1) enabled by digital technology may help overcome the knowledge gap between farm animals and farmers. Visualization techniques may provide paths toward more clarity in understanding the complicated vocalization of farm animals, both in terms of the verbal depth and breadth involved. Given that alienation and dehumanization are two of the main contemporary problems surrounding farming, this may lead to a more humane style of farming, which is of fundamental relevance. Furthermore, productive human-animal interactions are crucial to farming. Traditional human-animal interactions are being reimagined as digital technology are introduced into livestock husbandry. The farmer's position changes from caretaker to supervisor as a result of real-time monitoring, automated decision-making, and predictive analytics. This prompts inquiries on the significance of human-animal bonds and if digital technologies contribute to the commodification of animals.

Another way that digital technology might have a detrimental effect on animal welfare is by reducing the amount of time that humans spend interacting with animals. Animals kept in fully automated facilities, for instance, run the risk of missing out on the physical touch and socializing that is essential to their health and happiness. Therefore, it is crucial to make sure that animals still get the care and socializing they need even as more and more people utilize digital devices.

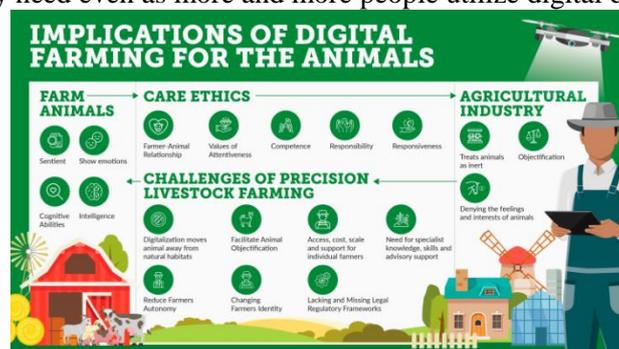


Figure 1. Implications of digital livestock farming for the animals. Animal Contentment

When animals are happy, they tend to produce more. As the old adage goes, "A happy cow is a productive cow". Farmers and the agricultural industry have a moral obligation to provide animals the best possible lives throughout their brief existence. This includes allowing the animals to engage in normal, instinctual behaviors like play and exploring their environments. Because of its potential use in improving animal welfare, DLF includes this worry into the creation of remedies. It's true that our culture may be callous at times, with efficiency and profit maximization taking precedence above the well-being of animals. However, as academics, we know that profit alone is not a sustainable objective in cattle production, and DLF is an effective instrument in this moral quest. Here are some of DLF's contributions to this end: Controlled administration: DLF can monitor animal health, behavior, and productivity in real time. This data may be utilized to spot health issues or changes in behavior that may be caused by stress, pain, or other unpleasant sensations. Farmers will be able to better ensure the health and well-being of their animals and increase their output if they have access to this data.

CONCLUSION

By exploring how rights, freedom, and well-being are intertwined, this article has corrected a widespread misconception of the animal welfare concept. Putting animal needs above animal rights has been shown to be inadequate. Animal welfare requires more nuance than just "freedom," though. The absence of consideration for animals' rights in the development of an animal welfare policy betrays an anthropocentric worldview. This article has claimed that safeguarding the animals' rights is as important as granting them freedom in order to assure their real well-being. Reasonable animal welfare laws may be crafted to guarantee that no animal is denied access to fundamental necessities by placing preservation of rights like freedom at the forefront. More will be done to prevent cruelty to animals and save their lives in the long term if animal welfare groups prioritize this issue. The ethics of animal care lie at the heart of this strategy. It considers not only the physical and environmental aspects of their lives, but also the emotional aspects, in order to guarantee their true well-being and, most importantly, to provide security for their lives. The use of digital technology in animal agriculture raises important ethical questions, and a new area is developing to address them: the ethics of digital livestock farming.

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