

Swimming with the Tide: Animal Welfare in Veterinary Medical Education and Research

Summary and Action

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Swimming with the tide =
Swimming in the sea:

Tides are 2 way

Can be dangerous not
always pleasant like
scotch

on the rocks

Animal Welfare as an evolving multi-disciplinary field of research

The roles of Science and Society

Laws in various countries - laws

AW education and research

Communication and Advocacy

Moving Forward or Catching up? **Summary and action**

and

A few comments from the other
side of the pond(s)

Congratulations to the AVMA

Courage to change and to
embrace that change

DO ANIMALS MATTER & WHY?

Sentience

Pain & Distress

“Suffering”

Rural vs Urban

Welfare Science

Ethics

Legislation

The veterinary profession has a responsibility to its **members** and the public to provide and ensure a good education in animal welfare science, ethics and law

Undergraduates

Postgraduates as part of CPD

Vet techs?

Oaths

Veterinarian's Oath (2004)

- *Being admitted to the profession of veterinary medicine, I solemnly swear to use my scientific knowledge and skills for the benefit of society through the protection of animal health, the relief of animal suffering, 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.*

BUT: No mention of welfare, nor to positive welfare

“Veterinarian's oath and values”?

- *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.*

New Zealand Oath

“Veterinarians have a special **duty** towards animals’ welfare and to alleviate animal suffering”

NB: “Rights” never solve an argument.
A right always depends on others to deliver them.

Duty of care alternative concept

Veterinary profession has a responsibility to the **public** to provide and ensure a good education in animal welfare science, ethics and law

Consumers

Citizens (Ops)

Producers/Farmers/Processors (farm assurance schemes)

Retailers and caterers

Media

NGOs (Socrates' gnat?) here to stay! Goals may differ

What are the qualities of a "good vet"

CONFIDENCE in the profession

(given their privileged position in society)

Need to convince them we take AW seriously e.g. ACAW

Veterinary profession has a responsibility to provide and ensure a **good education** in animal welfare science, ethics and law

Knowledge (time in the curriculum?)
On line courses and exams?

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

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

Veterinary profession has a responsibility to its members and the public to provide and ensure a good education in **animal welfare science**, ethics and law

***Recognition** of a welfare problem

Assessment of the impact

Severity (intensity and duration),

Numbers affected (surveillance)

Outcomes vs resources

Alleviation

Prevention

*Morton & Griffiths 1985 Vet Rec. 116, 431-436

WQ Figures

- 17 million Euro (25M US\$), EC contribution 14.6 million Euro (2004-2009)
- 19 Countries (EU and 4 S Amer.)
- 44 institutes and universities (~250 scientists)
- Cattle (beef and dairy), pigs, and poultry (broiler chickens and laying hens).
- 600 + farms
- Integrated AW assessment, but also includes perceptions and concerns of consumers, retailers and producers
- On farm assessments - time concerns so KWIs, abattoir measures

Principle	Welfare criteria	Examples of potential measures
Good feeding	1 Absence of prolonged hunger	Body condition score
	2 Absence of prolonged thirst	Presence of drinker and routine for checking function
Good housing	3 Comfort around resting	Frequencies of different lying positions, standing up and lying down behaviour
	4 Thermal comfort	Panting, shivering
	5 Ease of Movement	Slipping or falling
Good health	6 Absence of injuries	Clinical scoring if integument, carcass damage, lameness
	7 Absence of diseases	Enteric problems, downgrades at slaughter
	8 Absence of pain induced by management procedures	Evidence of routine mutilations such as tail docking, dehorning, stunning effectiveness at slaughter
Appropriate behaviour	9 Expression of social behaviours	Social licking, aggression
	10 Expression of other behaviours	Play, abnormal behaviour
	11 Good human-animal relationship	Approach and/or avoidance tests
	12 Absence of general fear	Novel object test

Veterinary profession has a responsibility to its members to ensure a good education in **ethics** and law

Ethics

The journey!

Shared and non-shared non-scientific values

Recognise an ethical dilemma (*can vs ought*)

Need to be based on good science when available, but when not???

Communication, argument, logic, rhetoric

“Cannot be a ‘good’ veterinarian unless welfare and ethics are incorporated into clinical practice”

Economics?

Animal **first** priority for the veterinarian, client 2nd

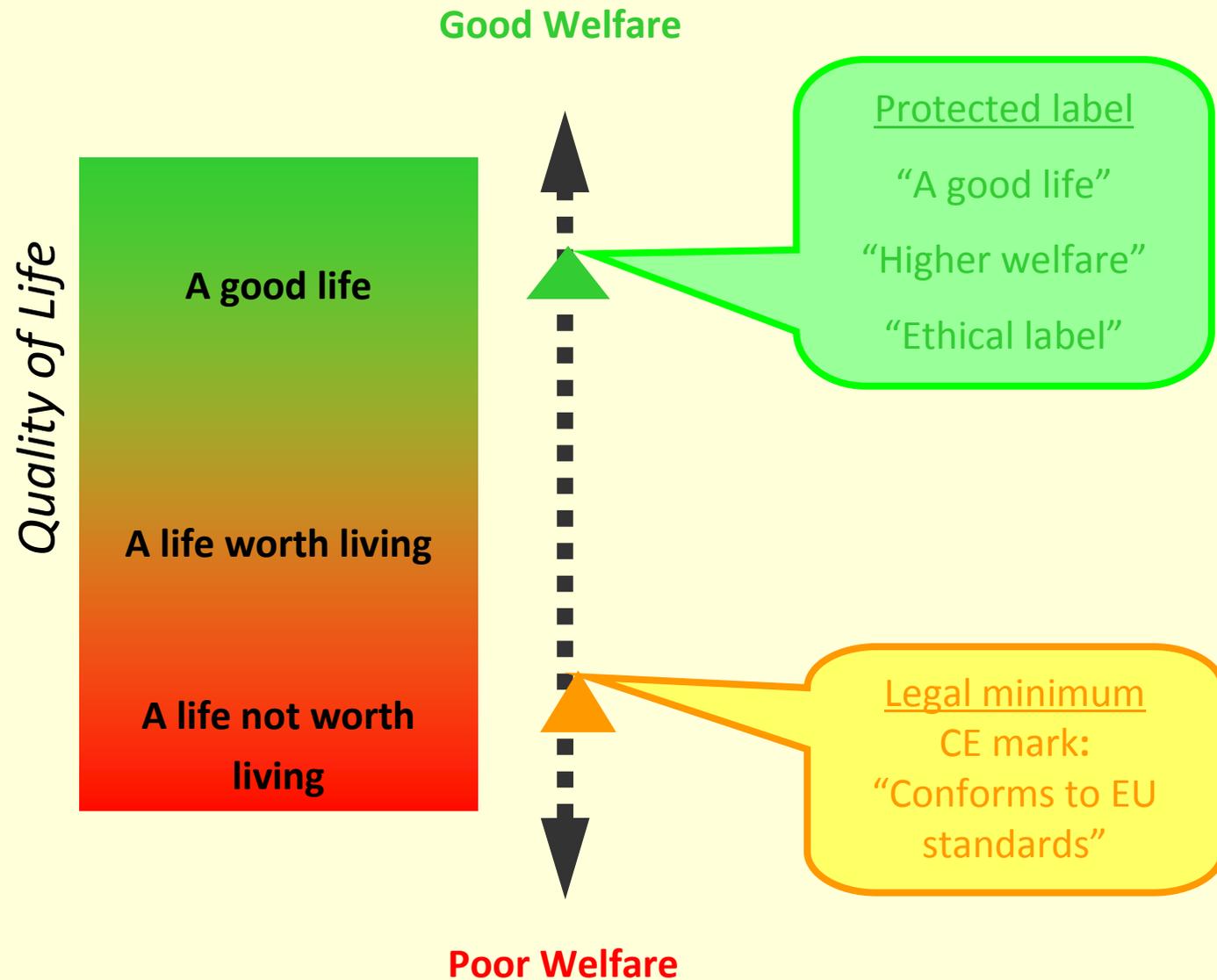
Veterinary profession has a responsibility to the
its members to ensure a good education in
ethics and **law**

Ethical concerns lead to legislation (vet input)

Direction over past 100 years is in one direction
only

Careful drafting to allow for exceptions

ANIMAL WELFARE in GB: Past, present and future (FAWC 2009) Recommendation



Quality of a Life – Proposed definitions a retrospective judgement (can apply to all uses of animals

- **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.

Table 2. Opportunities for promoting positive experiences of farm animals.

Valued opportunity	Example of resource that could be provided to enable an animal to have a goodlife	Positive outcomes that indicate that the animal valued the opportunity	Possible negative outcomes that would need to be managed to avoid potential harm
Comfort	A range of (comfortable) environmental temperatures within an animal house	Animal choose to lie in an area with a higher or lower temperature	Competition with other animals that might also prefer certain temperatures
Pleasure	Diet with varied constituents	Animal choose to consume different foods	Dietary imbalance (e.g. excess body condition) if constituents of the overall ration were not controlled
Interest	Novel object provided for inquisitive animals	Animal choose to play with or investigate the object	Competition with other animals that might also want to play with or investigate the object
Confidence	Housing design that enabled intermittent avoidance of other animals or people	Animals choose to avoid or to be with other animals	Animals unwilling to leave a quiet zone to access other resources such as food and water

“The primary aim of the future strategy for farm animal welfare should be to ensure that every farm animal has a life worth living and that a growing number enjoys a good life, with a higher standard of welfare than the minimum pre-scribed by the law.”

Government and industry should continue to develop improved, national schemes of public and private welfare surveillance, respectively. They should work together to coordinate surveillance to eliminate duplication and maximise the uses of surveillance data.

Improvements are needed in analysis and interpretation of the collected data and summaries of the principal findings should be published.

NOT MENTIONED but of note?

Risk Assessment approach to welfare (EFSA - European Food Standards Authority)

Poor (good) welfare is a consequence of exposure to a hazard

The degree of poor welfare is determined

The character and frequency of exposure to the hazard

The number of animals affected

Evaluate quality of evidence

Helps prioritise key and important issues e.g. high severity, numbers affected, HACCP

Additional issues (time)?

“Advanced” surgery, Quality vs
Quantity of Life
(can vs ought)

Fish farming and slaughter

Breed standards

Companion Animals e.g. Breed Standards for dogs

TV documentary on dog breeding
focussed on Cavalier KC, bulldogs

In top 50 breeds, a total of 322 inherited
disorders have been identified

TV ban on Cruft's dog show

Independent report commissioned

Government Ctte

Where were the vets?

Potential Actions by AVMA/AAVMA

INTERNAL FACTORS

- To build welfare and ethics into vet school curricula and make them core subjects
- Set up a group for vets to exchange and promote welfare and veterinary ethics programs, and support welfare science research e.g. ACAW, USAD Ctr?
- To promote harmonisation within the profession - foster students - revisit oath “to promote positive welfare”
- To provide information on pros and cons on welfare issues and have position statements available, **ADVOCACY**
- To have a clear set of values in regard to animals and have clear ideas on harms and benefits analysis
- To broaden debate to include other states of suffering

Potential Actions by AVMA/AAVMA

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (EXTERNAL)

Reaffirm the public that vets take mental health (welfare) seriously

To promote discussion groups with interested parties (e.g. other non-vet AW scientists, SHs (retailers, producers, politicians) to promote AW

To condemn obvious abuses and inform on others

To note that Vets have to EARN their place at the table (but have a head start but can do better)

To be aware of other related issues e.g. human welfare, environmental protection and pollution, sustainability, etc.

Potential Actions by AVMA/AAVMA

1. To promote welfare and ethics within the profession at all levels (PG - CPD/UG) and promoting harmonisation
2. To build welfare and ethics into vet school curricula and make them core subjects so demonstrating that vets take (mental health) welfare seriously
3. To provide information on welfare issues - outreach - opinion leader
4. To promote discussion with SHs and advocacy and be involved in media, making public policy, identifying gaps
5. To keep up with developments outside the US (e.g. EU, NOZ, OIE, FAO, etc!
6. Think about how to measure success!

Last speaker: Thanks from us

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