



Farm Animal Welfare Issues & Opportunities

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About the Ontario Farm Animal Council:

The Voice of Animal Agriculture

- Non-profit education organization founded in 1988.
- 8 Founding Members including dairy, beef, turkey, chicken, egg, and pork.
- Core budget of \$400,000
- Funded by memberships and donations: from \$50 - \$55,000
- Individuals, county, provincial, national, businesses, government
- Staff of 2 ½

What's new at OFAC?

- Shift to positive, proactive and professional
- Focus on our strengths: coordination and issue management
- Establish programs and resources where there's a need, without duplication.

Important basics to consider about the average Canadian when it comes to farm animal welfare issues:

- Less than 3% of Canadians farm. They don't know us or what we do.
- They don't get science or studies.
- They love animals.
- They are educated, but not informed.
- They demand safe food. They have never been hungry.
- They get their information from the media and the internet.
- They are concerned about food safety, animal welfare and the environment (in that order).
- They have never heard of Centralia.
- Common sense is not so common. **Perception IS Reality, so we better address some perceptions!**

Key Public Questions and Concerns about Pork Production

- Confinement – sow stalls, farrowing units
- Hormones & antibiotics
- Size of farms – factory farms, corporate control
- “Not natural”; Can't go outside
- Humane stunning and euthanasia
- Handling and transportation

Animal welfare is NOT animal rights.

Every person in the pork industry should be supportive of responsible farm animal welfare - this is the belief that animals can be used for human benefit, but must be treated with care and respect.

Animal rights is the belief that animals should not be used for human benefit, whether its for food, clothing or medical research.

It's very confusing, as groups such as PETA and the Humane Society of the United States and the Canadian Coalition for Farm Animals are really pushing an animal rights agenda, but use welfare arguments to make their case (and generate funds) from the public.

What are the answers to animal welfare issues?

Looking around the world, there seems to be only a few options to study:

- Banning?
- Legislation?
- Voluntary Codes?
- 3rd party auditing?
- Labeling

In North America, our customers are dictating animal welfare demands. We need to ensure our customers have the facts they need to make informed choices. We need to ensure we have the necessary investment in research to back up our facts.

What should we do?

1. If there's a problem – on your farm or in the industry:
 - Know about it.
 - Do something.
 - Do the right thing.
 - Do your chores early.
2. Continue to invest in research and solutions. Check out www.livestockwelfare.com to see a searchable database of welfare related articles and research.
3. Support existing efforts, like OFAC, to help make agriculture's voice louder.
4. Correct misinformation. Speak up for agriculture.
5. Don't accept anything on your farm or in the industry that you wouldn't want to see on the six o'clock news or on the front page.

What is OFAC up to? www.ofac.org

1. Public education: Virtual Farm Tours (www.farmissues.com), Faces of Farming Calendars, Real Dirt on Farming Booklets, "Oprah" the Spokesrobot, public events....and more.

2. Industry partnerships: Livestock Emergency Resources (transportation guide, who to call in case of emergency); information on compromised/unfit livestock, Farm Animal Care Helpline Service...and so much more.