**The relationship between agriculture and animals**

**Pillar 3 A. Discover the difference between animal welfare and animal rights**

(9th – 12th Grade)

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| **Website**: <http://www.agclassroom.org/teacher/matrix/lessonplan.cfm?lpid=394&grade=9&author_state=0> |

**FARMLAND: Animal Welfare**

**Purpose**

With the film *FARMLAND*, students will learn about the care of livestock on farms and consider regulations and the government’s role in the industry.

**Materials**

**Activity 1**

* *Debate Organizer*

**Activity 2**

* *FARMLAND* documentary, short version, clip from 26:50-28:30
  + This documentary is available for purchase in DVD format from Walmart or Amazon. It is also available for online streaming from Amazon Prime, iTunes, Netflix, YouTube, and more. The film is available in the full documentary format (77-minutes) or the short, education version lasting 44 minutes. The time stamps indicated for the lesson correspond to the 44-minute educational version.
* *Debate Organizer*
* Computer access

**Essential Files (maps, charts, pictures, or documents)**

* [Debate Organizer](http://naitc-api.usu.edu/media/uploads/2016/04/28/Debate_Organizer.pdf" \t "_blank)

**Vocabulary**

**Animal Welfare Act:** signed into federal law in 1966 for regulating the treatment of animals in research, exhibition, transport, and by dealers.

**Animal rights:** a philosophical view that animals have rights similar to or the same as humans; true animal rights proponents believe that humans do not have the right to use animals at all; animal rights proponents wish to ban all use of animals by humans

**Animal welfare:** as defined by the American Veterinary Medical Association, is a human responsibility that encompasses all aspects of animal well-being, including proper housing, management, disease prevention and treatment, responsible care, humane handling, and, when necessary, humane euthanasia

**Law:** is a system of rules that are enforced through social institutions to govern behavior and can be made by a collective legislature or by a single legislator

**Did you know? (Ag Facts)**

* In 1959, it took hog farmers eight pigs to produce 1000 lbs. of pork while today that number has decreased to five pigs. Today, hog farmers use 78% less land and 41% less water for producing pork.1
* From 2005 - 2011 cattle farmers have achieved a 7% improvement in the area of environmental sustainability for producing beef.1
* For over 40 years, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved the use of antibiotics in livestock and poultry with four layers of protection to include: and FDA approval process, continuous government oversight, risks assessments, and judicious use programs.2

**Background Agricultural Connections**

A farmer or rancher is a livestock caretaker. Farmers/Ranchers [hereafter noted just as farmer] who raise animals are responsible for meeting the needs of their animals on a daily basis. Specifically, farmers work with nutritionists to provide the appropriate feed ration for animals, monitor animals health, keep their barns clean and comfortable, ensure the health of animals who are giving birth, make decisions regarding the genetics of the animals, and work with veterinarians to protect animal health with vaccines and treat sick or injured animals, among other things. Farmers abide by state-by-state animal cruelty statutes.

**Interest Approach – Engagement**

1. Ask your students, "What are ethics?" *(a set of moral principles; a belief of what is right and what is wrong.)*Allow students to offer their ideas.
2. Explain that ethics (a belief of what is right and what is wrong) are determined on many levels. At a minimum, ethics can be determined by local, state, or federal laws. For example in the United States it is against the law (unethical) to steal something that does not belong to you. It is also illegal (unethical) to physically or otherwise abuse another person.
3. Ask your students, "Do some people operate on a higher level of ethics than simply what is required by law?" *(Yes, individuals can choose to believe and follow a higher standard.)*
4. Ask your students, "Where do we learn ethics?" *(We learn through our own personal experiences, we are often taught by family or other respected individuals, we can also learn from the values taught in schools, churches we might attend, or other organizations we are a part of.)*
5. Ask students, "What kind of ethics do you think farmers have in regard to the care of their animals?" Allow students to offer their ideas using their own background knowledge. Inform students that they will be learning about the ethics and beliefs of farmers in relation to the care of animals.

**Procedures**

**Activity 1: Introduction to Laws**

1. Explain to your class that laws govern some of the behavior of individuals. Laws are set in place after a series of steps are taken. However, it all begins when someone identifies a behavior or action that is considered unethical, or wrong.
2. To illustrate a few examples, have students stand in a line in the middle of the classroom. Read the following scenarios to the students. If they believe the government’s action is appropriate, they should move to the left. If they think the action is inappropriate, they move to the right. After each scenario, briefly allow students to share their thoughts, opinions, and supporting arguments.
   * **Scenario 1:** The government is advised that many people are being injured after not wearing seatbelts in the backseat of cars. They decide to make it illegal to ride in a car without a seatbelt, and fine the driver if a passenger is not wearing their seatbelt.
   * **Scenario 2:** The government is advised that many children are becoming violent following the excessive playing of violent video games. Despite opposition, the government makes it illegal to create video games depicting the killing or purposeful injury of humans.
   * **Scenario 3:** The government is advised that many American children are obese and this is causing health risks including heart disease and diabetes. The government decides to mandate that every school lunch served to a child must have under 500 calories and have a fruit and a vegetable. They also make it illegal to serve pizza or ice cream in school cafeterias more than once a month.
   * **Scenario 4:** The government is advised that many people feel that the slaughter of horses is ethically wrong, even in situations where the owner of the horse can no longer afford the animal. The government outlaws the slaughter of horses.
3. Use the jigsaw teaching strategy to break up students into 4 jigsaw groups, one group per scenario. Group 1 would be assigned to *Scenario 1*, group 2 would be given *Scenario 2,* and continue in that order for groups 3 and 4.
4. Hand out the *Debate Organizer* to each student. Instruct each student to write their assigned scenario number in the center of the organizer along with the name of the issue. These names would consist of; "Seatbelts" for Scenario 1, "Video Games" for Scenario 2, "Child Obesity" for Scenario 3, and "Slaughtering Horses" for Scenario 4.
5. Assign each student in the groups to complete one segment of the *Debate Organizer*. These segments would include, supporters, opponents, classmate's opinion, and my opinion found on the *Debate Organizer*. They are to only fill out their assigned segment.
6. Next, have each student assigned to the same segment meet and discuss their responses based on the scenario of their group. For example, students within each group assigned to completing the section on the supporters beliefs would convene in one group and discuss their responses. Remind students to utilize this time for making changes or edits based on feedback from the various jigsaw groups.
7. Finally, have students move back to their original jigsaw group and present their segment to the group. Encourage others to ask questions for clarification as they fill in each section of the *Debate Organizer*.
8. Select one student from each group to give an oral summary for their scenario. During this time, allow other groups to ask questions.

**Activity 2: Agricultural Animal Laws**

1. Introduce the idea of agricultural laws to students. All farmers have to abide by laws to protect animals, the environment, the consumer, and the community. Many people have thoughts and ideas about the way the government should regulate day to day activities both on and off the farm. One of the most debated topics is animal welfare.
2. Show the clip from *FARMLAND* outlined in the *Materials* section. Give students 5-10 minutes to reflect and share their thoughts and opinions.
3. Assign students a state. Let students use a computer, phone or tablet (or have them do this as homework) to visit the [National Ag Law Center](http://nationalaglawcenter.org/research-by-topic/animal-welfare/" \t "_blank) to research animal cruelty laws. They may also visit the webpage outlining [animal cruelty statues by state](http://nationalaglawcenter.org/state-compilations/animal-cruelty/" \t "_blank). Have them write a list of the key points in the law for their state and be prepared to share with the class, so that the whole class has an idea of the standard for animal cruelty laws across the United States. Examples of some of these key points could be:
   * The laws not only cover the use of animals in animal agriculture, but also in K-12 education, hunting, fishing and trapping, research, and veterinary care outside of licensed veterinary clinics.
   * Agriculture use and pet owners are not under the control of the law for buying and selling animals.
   * Animals being transported across state lines must be unloaded every 28 hours for food, water and rest unless they have access to food, water and space to rest in the vehicle in which they are being transported.
   * The focus of the animal welfare act is on pets and research animals – agriculture use animals are far less regulated.
   * Depending on the state and the severity of the cruelty, punishment for animal cruelty can be anywhere from 5 days to 2 years in jail and/or up to $100,000 fine.
   * In Iowa, livestock abuse is defined as intentionally administering drugs or poisons to animals or disabling livestock with a firearm or trap.
   * In Iowa, livestock neglect is considered failing to provide livestock with care consistent with customary livestock husbandry practices, depriving animals of necessary sustenance, or causing harm to the animal in a manner inconsistent with animal husbandry practices.
   * The Federal Humane Slaughter Act states that: “in the case of cattle, calves, horses, mules, sheep, swine, and other livestock, all animals are rendered insensible to pain by a single blow or gunshot or an electrical, chemical or other means that is rapid and effective, before being shackled, hoisted, thrown, cast, or cut;”
4. Once students have shared their key points, teach your students the difference between animal welfare and animal rights. Refer back to the definitions of these two terms in the *Background*. Have students share their thoughts and experiences with these terms, focusing on ethics and values. How do the laws relate to animal welfare vs. animal rights? How does this situation relate to the scenarios presented at the beginning of the lesson? Should government be involved in animal agriculture?
5. Give each student a blank copy of the *Debate Organizer* and place the topic "Animal Agriculture" in the center. Place students in pairs and have them think, pair, and share thoughts, opinions, and supporting arguments by filling out their organizer.
6. Lastly, have students write a position paper of at least one page answering the question: “How is there too much or not enough regulation in the animal agriculture industry?” or “How much does animal rights differ from animal welfare and how should it be regulated?”
7. Allow the students to use their *Debate Organizers* for support in addition to the evidence from the film, the state laws, or other sources. Students should cite their sources.

**Concept Elaboration and Evaluation:**

At the conclusion of this activity, review and summarize the following key concepts:

* Learning the facts regarding a debatable topic provides individuals with the correct information for forming an opinion.
* Farmers and ranchers abide by state and federal laws to provide safe and healthy environments for their livestock animals; identified as animal welfare.
* Livestock animals provide humans with food commodities such as meat, eggs, milk, and many other helpful by-products to help sustain man's diet. In return, these animals are given appropriate feed rations, comfortable living spaces, and responsible medical attention to grow and develop to their fullest potential.

**Enriching Activities**

* Have students create their own laws, using appropriate legal language, to outline what should and should not be considered against the law for animal caretakers. Have them explain the key points of their arguments. This activity could be used to assess the lesson plan standards and objectives.
* Have students in the class formally debate the issues with assigned positions. One side of the class would represent the opinion that more government regulation is needed and the other side of the class would represent the opposing view. The debate could continue additionally to include animal rights vs. animal welfare.
* Have students speak to a farmer, or bring a farmer into the classroom, to discuss the day-to-day care of animals, the regulations they have to abide by, and their opinions on animal welfare vs. animal rights.

**Sources/Credits**

1. http://www.animalagalliance.org/engage/
2. http://www.ahi.org/issues-advocacy/animal-antibiotics/