

Symposium: Bioethics: How Do We Integrate Bioethics into Our Food Animal System?

255 ASAS Centennial Presentation: History and future perspectives of bioethics in food animal agriculture. W. R. Stricklin*, *University of Maryland, College Park.*

During the past 100 years, American animal agriculture has experienced a rapid transformation. Husbandry practices changed more dramatically than during the previous 15 thousand years of human-animal relationships. This transformation freed Americans from stoop-labor once needed for food production and made safe, healthful food available at relatively low costs. But modern confinement practices also brought forth ethically-based concerns about animal welfare, environmental impact, loss of the rural community, and the possible impact of new genetic technologies. Some persons contend that science and technology have been used in an ever striving effort for cheaper food, with the concepts of stewardship and shepherding having been given over to that of dominionism over animals and the environment. In short, some critics contend that ethical costs such as animal suffering, environmental pollution, etc. have been largely ignored by animal scientists who have instead tended to focus more on increased productivity per animal unit. A common response has been that such issues should be resolved by "science alone." Animal scientists can best serve American animal agriculture by acknowledging that ethical considerations are critical, and always included, in decisions about current and future practices in food animal systems. Ultimately, ethics is said to be about "doing the right thing" and from the time of Socrates it has argued that the right thing to do is that with the best reasons for doing. Thus, appropriate ethical decisions are consistent with scientific information but also extend appropriate consideration to animals, the environment, and to persons associated with animal agriculture at the farm level.

Key Words: Bioethics, Animal Welfare, Animal Science

256 Bioethics from 1995-2008: How far have we come? R. Anthony*, *University of Alaska, Anchorage.*

Three prominent varieties of bioethics (broadly construed), namely moral humanism, humane moralism and holism, inspired our moral imagination during the mid-nineties and the decade to follow. They continue to underpin much of how we think about the meaning and form of our obligations to others, including nonhuman animals, and how we perform the complex balancing of different moral concerns. In terms of animal agriculture, the meaning and moral structures of these varieties have had a significant impact on contemporary "animal liberation" ethic, agrarianism, pastoralism and environmental holism. As a way to assess just how far we have come in terms of our commitment towards a more just and compassionate animal food system two important questions remain:

- a. How should we address diffusion of moral responsibility, procrastination and bystanding in the food system, that is, the problem of moral denial?
- b. How should we respond to our current philosophy of technology? That is, how should we explore the epistemological and framing assumptions behind the relationship between ethics and technology in order to provide a just and humane policy response to technology's opportunities and challenges?

Key Words: Bioethics, Animal Ethics, Food Animal Welfare

257 Bridging the DVM and PhD Gap. P. Ruegg*, *University of Wisconsin, Madison.*

The objective of this paper is to discuss similarities and differences in attitudes about animal use between veterinarians and animal scientists. There is a shrinking pool of professionals that serve animal agriculture and their domains are increasingly overlapping. The interests of students that select careers as food animal veterinarians tend to be different from students that focus on research careers. While there are few differences in personality characteristics, students interested in becoming veterinarians tend to be more interested in clinical activities associated with individual animals and less interested in research. These differences can translate into significant differences in interpretation of welfare criteria and may create tension when evaluating animal well-being or research usage. Important welfare issues vary by species but overall attitudes of veterinarians and animal scientists tend to be fairly consistent when evaluating philosophical concepts. However, academic veterinarians seem to indicate that they are more concerned about welfare aspects of many common agricultural practices as compared to faculty in animal science departments. Many practicing veterinarians are uncomfortable discussing animal welfare issues with their clients because of perceived lack of interest or negative economic impact. The official welfare statement of the American Association of Bovine Practitioners states: "Bovine veterinarians are expected to simultaneously represent the individual and herd welfare, the economic and production interests of producers and consumer concerns." The tension produced by this statement is lived everyday by veterinarians and is probably not well appreciated by animal scientists. The American Association of Bovine Practitioners' statement on tail docking is representative of this tension as it minimizes a coherent body of existing research in favor of perceived client preferences. In general, increased communication and respect along with enhanced cooperative activities related to training of future food animal veterinarians & animal scientists should be pursued in order to fully optimize both professions and ultimately animal well-being.

Key Words: Bioethics, Animal Welfare, Animal Use

258 How to talk truthfully with the public regarding bioethical and animal welfare issues. W. Jamison*, *University of Florida, Gainesville.*

Agriculturalists should be truth-tellers who overcome the incongruence between the reality of animal production/processing and the perception of animals and their role in society. Conversely, many successes of animal protection groups derive from their prowess in illuminating this gap. Market capitalism and economic rationalism force animal producers to maximize economies and minimize costs in order to maintain competitive advantages, while consumers increasingly view animals as idealized repositories of human values. This creates centrifugal forces within animal agriculture, which must maximize production efficiencies while withdrawing images of production and processing that would cause cognitive dissonance among consumers. This 'legitimacy gap' is unsustainable, and therefore leaders in animal agriculture should use two-way symmetry to communicate the reality of modern animal production and processing.

Key Words: Incongruence, Bioethics, Alignment

259 Roles of surveys and foundation reports in policy decisions. F. B. Norwood* and J. L. Lusk, *Oklahoma State University, Stillwater*.

Farm animal welfare policy emerges from a complex mix of industry interests, interest group pressure, and consumer concerns. To some extent, the interests of industry and interest groups represent consumer concerns, but in other cases do not. This research discusses how industry

and interest group foundation reports and consumer surveys influence policy and set the tone for farm animal welfare debates.

The paper will discuss consumer survey results that have important implications for farm animal welfare policy, and how the results are used and misused by different industry and livestock groups.

Key Words: Farm Animal Welfare, Foundation Reports, Surveys