



AABP PRINCIPLES OF CATTLE WELFARE

Bovine veterinarians are in key positions to promote the humane treatment and welfare of cattle. Veterinarians who successfully integrate the following principles in their practice will serve as credible examples who can support and advise clients in implementing appropriate animal care protocols, husbandry practices and handling methods that benefit cattle welfare.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The AABP supports the humane use of cattle for the benefit of society through food, fiber, recreation, research and teaching. The AABP recognizes our ethical obligation to strive for optimum welfare in all of these situations.
- The AABP promotes the humane care and handling of cattle throughout the entirety of their lives through advocacy and education. This should be the hallmark of the veterinary profession.
- The AABP supports the World Organization for Animal Health (2019) definition that cattle experience good welfare if they are:
 - Healthy
 - Comfortable
 - Well-nourished
 - Safe
 - Able to express innate behavior
 - Not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear, and distress.
- The AABP believes that management systems, medical practices and surgical procedures should minimize, or if possible, eliminate pain, discomfort and distress by utilizing current scientific and expert opinion.

THE ROLE OF THE AABP AS AN ORGANIZATION PROMOTING CATTLE WELFARE

- Provide and encourage members to pursue opportunities and resources to become informed and remain current on issues of cattle welfare.
- Represent bovine practitioners through the development of guidelines and position statements related to cattle welfare.
- Identify issues in bovine practice and husbandry

that could benefit from additional research and seek input and expertise of those trained in animal behavior, animal welfare, neuroscience and pharmacology.

- Facilitate education of the general public including students, producer groups, agricultural groups and other professional organizations on methods to optimize the welfare of cattle.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of guidelines for the humane care and handling of cattle.

THE ROLE OF VETERINARIANS IN PROMOTING CATTLE WELFARE

- Always optimize the welfare of cattle when practicing veterinary medicine, including management, surgical and medical procedures and euthanasia.¹
- Remain current regarding the science and understanding of cattle welfare.
- Provide cattle owners and handlers with advice, information and technology necessary to optimize the welfare of cattle in their production systems.
- It is the responsibility of the veterinarian to recognize, correct and appropriately report the willful mistreatment or neglect of cattle if there is evidence of such abuse or it is directly observed.
- Improve understanding between those with conflicting views and values regarding the use of cattle.

¹ AABP has additional guidelines on these practices. Please see http://aabp.org/about/Guidelines_PositionStatements.asp

RESOURCE

■ *World Organizations for Animal Health. 2019. Introduction to the recommendations for animal welfare. Article 7.1.4 in Terrestrial Animal Health Code 2019. World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), Paris, France.*

Revised and approved by AABP Board of Directors 2021