



## FARM ANIMAL WELL-BEING

### Rationale:

Scientists and animal producers have an ethical obligation to provide environments for farm animals that promote animal well-being. Determination of the animal's well-being is only gained through understanding the science of farm animal needs. The production of safe and high-quality animal-based food and fiber in a sustainable manner is essential for consumers as well as livestock and poultry producers. It is in the interest of animal industries and research and teaching organizations to use science-based standards to provide the best possible animal care.

- Animal scientists have conducted scientific investigations that establish and refine management practices that provide for optimal care, handling, housing, nutrition, and husbandry practices for farm animals.
- FASS has published a compilation of the scientific literature directed at sound farm animal care at universities, government laboratories, and research companies in its Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Teaching and Research, the Ag Guide. The Ag Guide provides up-to-date information on science-based farm animal care in agricultural and biomedical teaching and research<sup>1</sup>. Although other guides are available, the Ag Guide is the most comprehensive, current, science-based document authored by dozens of professional animal scientists and peer reviewed by individuals and organizations.
- FASS encourages those involved in commercial animal agriculture and oversight of teaching and research programs to use science-based criteria to develop and refine guidelines for farm animal care.
- Companies in the food marketing chain are encouraged to support science-based animal care standards as they implement animal care programs.
- Animal scientists are investigating current and new production systems to promote sound farm animal care. Changes in farm animal care practices need to be considered in the context of impacts on the environment, food safety, and societal views. Understanding and considering societal concerns will lead to more sustainable production systems.

Continued improvement in husbandry practices enhances the well-being of animals and is a necessary part of satisfying the increasing world demand for animal-based food and fiber. The public has a legitimate interest in the potential environmental, food safety, and animal welfare implications of livestock and poultry production. The animal science community must faithfully, and in an unbiased manner, examine those implications in a scientifically rigorous fashion—investigating, teaching, and implementing those practices and technologies found to maximize production efficiency while providing for the well-being of the animal.

### Policy Statement:

*The Federation of Animal Science Societies (FASS) encourages the use of management practices and technologies that have been developed through scientific investigations and have been shown to promote animal well-being.*

### Policy Objectives:

- Support the use of science-based practices such as described in the Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching (1) and/or other science based appropriate standards that promote animal-well being in farm animals in all settings.
- Support the use of science-based practices that promote animal-well being in laboratory animals in research settings.
- Support the use of harmonized guidelines for farm animal care at universities, government laboratories, and industry research facilities.

### References:

1. FASS. 2010. Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Teaching and Research. 3rd ed. Federation of Animal Science Societies, Champaign, IL. Available online: <http://www.fass.org/page.asp?pageID=216>.

*Adopted by the FASS Board of Directors on August 12, 2010*

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