



Unit 16 Farm Animals

* Glossary

Lame: unable to walk without difficulty as the result of an injury or illness affecting the leg or foot

Behaviour: the way in which one acts or conducts oneself

Stall: a covered area

What is animal sentience?

Sentient animals are aware of their feelings and emotions. These can be negative feelings such as pain, frustration and fear. It is logical to suppose that sentient animals also enjoy feelings of comfort, satisfaction and perhaps even great pleasure and joy.

Science shows us some interesting abilities found in farm animals:

- sheep can recognize up to 50 other sheep's faces and remember them for two years;
- cows show excitement when they discover how to open a gate leading to a food reward;
- mother hens teach their chicks which foods are good to eat;
- **lame** chickens choose to eat foods which contain painkillers.

Scientists believe that sentience is necessary because it helps animals to survive by:

- learning more effectively from experience in order to cope with the world;
- distinguishing and choosing between different objects, animals and situations such as deciding who is helpful or who might cause them harm;
- understanding social relationships and the **behaviour** of other individuals.

The growing scientific interest in animal sentience is showing what many people have long thought to be the case – that a wide range of animals are thinking, feeling beings. What happens to them matters to them.

Why animal sentience matters

Most animals have evolved to cope as successfully as possible with life in a natural environment. Thousands of years of domestication of farm animals has left their basic motivations and behaviour patterns relatively uncharged.

Industrial-type farming often fails to appreciate animals' needs and their capacity to suffer. This can mean that very large numbers of sentient animals are routinely subjected to pain and deprivation.

Globally we farm 70 billion farm animals each year for meat, milk and eggs. The majority of commercially-farmed animals are confined to cages, narrow **stalls** or overcrowded sheds. In such confinement, there is little or no opportunity to carry out the natural behaviours which are so important to them.

It is urgent that farming systems and practices adopt methods which recognise animal sentience and pay full regard to the animals' needs.

(Adapted from: J. Balcombe, *What is Animal Sentience?*, <http://www.ciwf.org.uk>, 2016)





Understanding the text

1. Read the text and provide the terms and expressions required.

- 1. Animals mentioned:,,,
- 2. Negative feelings:,,
- 3. Positive feelings:,,
- 4. Places where animals are usually kept:,

2. Place each preposition next to the correct verb. When you have finished translate the verbs that you do not understand.

to • by • with • out • of • in

- 1. Be aware
- 2. Lead
- 3. Survive
- 4. Cope
- 5. Confine
- 6. Carry

3. Complete the following sentences. Your answers must be related to the text.

- 1. has become a topic of great interest to biologists.
- 2. The concept of animals being sentient means they are capable of experiencing
- 3. Examples of farm animal abilities include
- 4. Unfortunately, today factory farm animals are
- 5. These capacities have to be taken into account and different should be adopted.