



Farmyard Freedom

DISCOVERY ACTIVITY

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

- To understand how animals used in farming need to be well looked after
- To understand what we mean by 'meeting their needs' and how, by doing so, we can improve their lives
- To explore why it matters how a farm animal is treated
- To gain some insight into how the RSPCA ensures the needs of farm animals are met
- To identify how compassion may be shown towards animals farmed for food

RESOURCES

- Interactive PDF slides 'Farmyard freedom' to guide pupils through the activities
- Scrap paper or post-its
- Whiteboard for class discussions

Due to the topics covered in the Compassionate Class programme, it is important to consider how different children may react. For more information on creating a safe teaching and learning environment, see guidance on pages five to seven of the Teacher Overview downloadable at: rspca.org.uk/ccresources.

These activities could be delivered in the same lesson or spread over a few sessions, depending on the needs of your students. We have not specified timings to allow for flexibility for different settings.





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INTRODUCTION

The concept of food on a table actually coming from an animal is possibly something many of the children haven't thought of. For some, the concept may be abstract and difficult to grasp. For others, it may be upsetting. You may decide to do some groundwork first to plant the seed. It may also be useful to send some homework back with them so parents can help explore this area before we come to talk about animal lives on the farm.

Start by asking the group what we mean by farm animals.

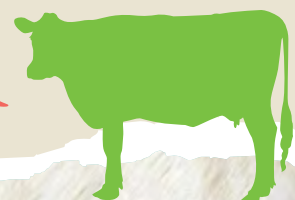
Use **slide two** or write thoughts on a whiteboard.

Make a list of all the farm animals the children can think of. Make sure the main groups are represented. 'Pigs, chickens, cows, sheep and fish'. What do these animals need to be happy and healthy?

To explore the needs of farm animals, start by equating their own personal needs to those of the animals they have listed. Use the examples on **slides 3-7** to help them understand how human needs might be similar to farm animals, and other animals like their pets.



**SLIDES
2-7**





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STIMULUS

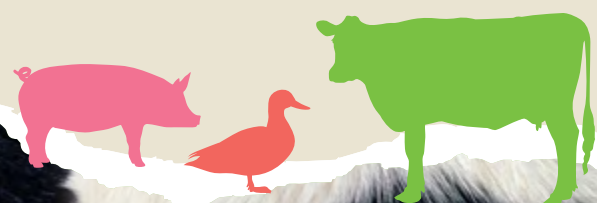
Farm animals animation (Slide 8)

The animation includes some complex language and concepts. You may want to watch it first and make the decision whether to include it or not. If you have a mixture of more able children in the class, you may want to split them into two groups and let some of them watch. Pause at around 02:18. There will be time to watch the rest of the animation later on.

As they watch, ask children to make a note of the ways that farm animals' needs can be met. Allow a few minutes afterwards for children to share what they noticed. Explain any words they may be unsure of, and use the information in the box on the next page if needed. You could create a 'word bank', recording new vocabulary and definitions to return to in another session. Or you could create the word bank in advance and instead ask children to listen out for the words as they watch.



SLIDE
8

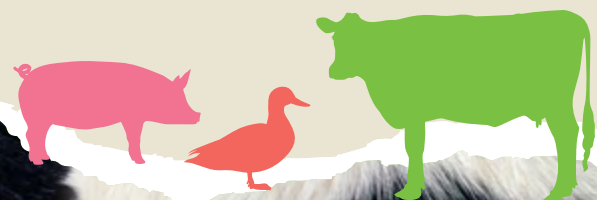




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FARM ANIMALS FACT BOX

- The RSPCA respects those who choose a vegetarian or vegan lifestyle but recognises that the majority of the general public do eat animal products, so aims to raise awareness of the welfare of farm animals and improve the lives of as many farm animals as possible
- The RSPCA has developed standards for farm animal species, covering every stage of an animal's life. RSPCA Assured is the RSPCA's farm assurance and food labelling scheme that assesses and approves farms, hauliers and abattoirs that meet all of the applicable welfare standards
- Meeting an animal's welfare needs requires, amongst other things:
 - Sufficient space
 - Adequate lighting
 - Comfortable resting areas
 - Environmental enrichment to stop them from getting bored and allow them to perform their natural behaviours
 - Shade and shelter
- Farm animals are 'sentient', which means they are aware of their feelings and emotions, so to keep them happy and healthy, their needs must be met





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ACTIVITY

Use the images on **slides 9 – 16** and ask the children if they think the needs of the animals are being met. Get a general agreement and see if they are right. Discuss each one before moving on to the next.

For example, a hen's needs cannot be met in a caged environment, even if it is an 'enriched cage'. Using what the class has learnt about the needs of healthy and happy farm animals from the animation, consider what each of the animals need to live a comfortable life. If they haven't watched the animation, ask them to think about the needs mentioned in the earlier slides. Encourage children to think about what it would be like to be one of those farm animals. Explain that different farm animals have different needs. For example, a hen needs to dustbathe which is a natural behaviour that is not possible in a cage, while a pig needs straw to root around in.

Use the below prompt questions (differentiate as necessary)

PROMPT QUESTIONS

- Why do we keep farm animals? What do they provide for us?
- What responsibilities do humans have for different types of farm animals?
- Do you know how many of the things you eat come from animals?
- Can you think of some things that come from animals that you don't eat? (e.g. shoes and bags made of leather from cows and clothes made of sheep's wool)

**SLIDES
9-16**





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DISCUSSION

What does the RSPCA think?

Some people don't eat meat, but many people do. If appropriate, introduce the terms vegetarian or vegan, and discuss. They make sure that the animals live as good a life as they can. The RSPCA tries to make ways to help us to help the animals like labelling food that comes from farms that they have inspected so we can choose to buy our meat from places where the animals' needs are being met.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Can they find any labels like this (slide 17) when they go shopping? Can they convince their parents to buy it? Can they take a photo and bring it in to show they've done their homework?

Look through slides 18-23 which explain what the RSPCA sets out as standards. Compare these to the needs explored earlier.

ACTIVITY

Pretend you are all going to a farm. Children can be split into groups. Each group can choose a farm animal. What would they need to check to make sure each animal was well looked after? You could use the internet to research their behaviours and needs to help those who may struggle with this task.

Add your thoughts to slide 24 or on a whiteboard, and use the assured checklist on slide 25 as a reminder.

Watch the rest of the film with the children who saw the first half and recap some of the learning if you have time. Re-visit the thoughts from the beginning of the session and use this as consolidation.

SLIDES
17-26





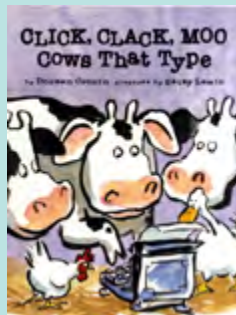
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EXTENSION RESOURCES

To take the learning from this discovery session further, you could explore our suggested extension activities.

Books

© Doreen Cronin, Betsy Lewin 2000



Click, clack, moo, cows that type by Doreen Cronin

© Doreen Cronin, Betsy Lewin 2004



Vote for duck by Doreen Cronin

- Take the role of RSPCA Assured assessor further, and challenge children to help a farmer plan a perfect environment for a chosen farm animal. Think about how the five needs can be met to ensure the animal is happy, healthy and comfortable. Groups could draw a map that shows the features of the farm.
- Research and report on the role the RSPCA plays in ensuring the welfare of farm animals, considering RSPCA Assured. The RSPCA develops welfare standards for farm animals and RSPCA Assured is the RSPCA's farm assurance and food labelling scheme. RSPCA Assured assesses and approves farms, hauliers and abattoirs that meet all of the applicable RSPCA welfare standards.
- Get the whole school involved by delivering a **Farm Animals Assembly**

Online Resources

- For more information about farm animals and the RSPCA Assured, check out rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/farm and: rspcaassured.org.uk/about-us
- If you want to inspire your class with more films about animal welfare, take a look at the RSPCA's YouTube channel youtube.com/rspcauk



**COMPASSIONATE
CLASS**

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WHAT NEXT?

If this is your first Discovery activity, pick another stimulating activity to complete with your pupils.

If you've already completed at least two Discovery activities, choose an Advocacy activity that will provide your pupils with an entry for the Compassionate Class competition. We have included suggested Advocacy activities below which link to this Discovery activity.



Advocacy Activities

IF YOU LIKED THE 'FARM ANIMALS' DISCOVERY ACTIVITY, WHY NOT TRY THESE ACTIVITIES



BRITAIN'S BEST FARMER

In groups, children imagine that they are holding a competition to find the best farmer in the country. They need to come up with the criteria and work out how they would judge the winner. What would the prize be?

- Create checklist posters to promote the competition and write a letter to send to farmers explaining what they need to do on their farm to be in with a chance of winning
- Imagine they can interview some of the animals that live and work on the winning farm. Split the groups in two, with some children writing the questions they would ask the different animals and the others writing the answers. Encourage them to ask about how the farmer meets the needs of the different animals

MINDFUL SHOPPING

In pairs, children carry out research to find out all the ways that humans use animals, for example honey, leather, milk and eggs. Include the animals you might find more commonly farmed in different countries, or at different times of year, for example turkeys.

- Create checklist posters that demonstrate what they have learnt about meeting the needs of a particular farm animal, with some top tips to help people choose animal products that come from healthy, happy animals when shopping

