

Farmyard freedom

DISCOVERY ACTIVITY

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

- To describe issues around animal welfare in food production
- To identify how compassion may be shown towards animals farmed for food
- To recognise conditions that meet the animals' needs

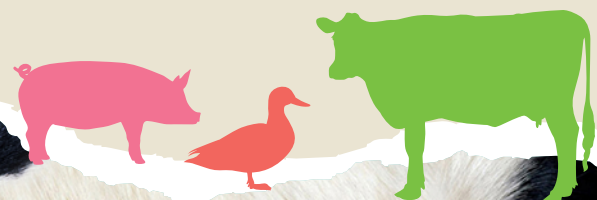
KEY QUESTIONS

- Does it matter how a farm animal is treated?
- How can we improve the lives of farm animals?
- What does the RSPCA do to ensure the needs of farm animals are met?

RESOURCES

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

This resource is predominantly aimed at Key Stage 2 pupils. 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. For information on how to adapt Farmyard Freedom to support pupils with SEND, see guidance on page eight of this document and pages eight and nine of the Teacher Overview.



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STIMULUS

**10
MINS**

Animation about the needs of farm animals

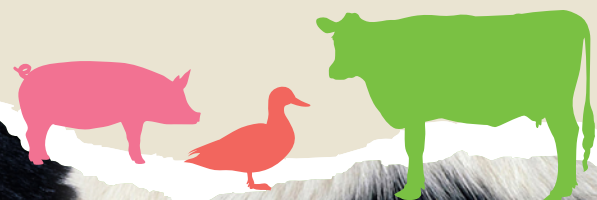
Start by asking the class: Does it matter how a farm animal is treated? What do they need to be happy and healthy? Record their thoughts in the box on slide two or print the slide for pupils to write on. This can be used as a baseline assessment to capture pupils' initial understanding and we encourage you to revisit these thoughts at the end of the session.

As a class, watch the animation on slide three about the living conditions and needs of farm animals and how we can make sure that farm animals live happy and healthy lives. **Pause at around two minutes 18 seconds.** 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 below if needed. You could create a 'word bank', recording new vocabulary and definitions to return to in another session.

If you are working with lower ability or younger groups, you could create the word bank in advance and instead ask children to listen out for the words as they watch. Talk through the meanings of the words using the animation as context to help.

**SLIDE
2-3**

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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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INTRODUCTORY DISCUSSION

5-10
MINS

A blue hand icon with fingers spread, positioned next to the '5-10 MINS' text.

Show slide four and compare the images of the farm animals. The images show a range of different environments that the animals could be kept in but not all of them meet the animals' welfare needs. For example, a hen's needs cannot be met in a caged environment, even if it is an 'enriched cage'.

Move your mouse over each image to reveal if the environment meets the animals' needs.

Using what the class has learnt about the needs of healthy and happy farm animals from the animation, consider what each of the animals in the images on slide four need to live a comfortable life. Encourage children to think about what it would be like to be one of those farm animals.

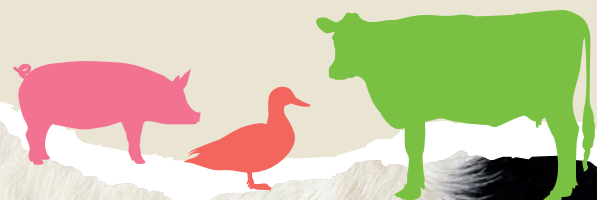
Explain that different farm animals have different needs. For example, a hen needs to dustbathe which is a natural behaviour that is not possible in a cage, while a pig needs straw to root around in. Remind them of the five needs of animals from the earlier session.

Show slide five and explain what the RSPCA thinks about farm animals.

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)

SLIDE
4-5

A purple hand icon with fingers spread, positioned next to the 'SLIDE 4-5' text.

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TASK



Ask children to imagine they are an RSPCA Assured assessor, about to visit a farm which is trying to achieve the RSPCA Assured status by looking after the animals to a very high standard.

In small groups, children should pick a farm animal (e.g. dairy cow, beef cow, pig, laying hen, meat chicken) and come up with five questions they would ask the farmer or a checklist of five things they would look for on the farm to check whether the animals' needs are being met. You can record some of their ideas in the interactive text box on slide six, or print a copy of this slide for each group.

You could model this activity by choosing an animal and coming up with the questions as an example, before splitting the class into groups.

PROMPT QUESTIONS

If they need prompts, think back to the film and ask:

- What do hens and pigs need to stop them getting bored and allow them to perform natural behaviour?
- Can a pig's needs be met if they don't have straw to root around in?
- Can a hen's needs be met if they are kept in small cages?

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the needs of different farm animals and the RSPCA's vision for all farm animals to be treated with compassion and respect, visit:

rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/farm.

To find out more about RSPCA Assured watch the rest of the animation using the link on slide seven. You can also visit: **rspcaassured.org.uk/about-us.**



SLIDE
6-7



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CLASS DISCUSSION: PHILOSOPHICAL EXPLORATION OF HOW HUMANS USE ANIMALS

**10-20
MINS**

Ask children to arrange themselves into a thinking ring. Remind children to listen respectfully to each other, without interruption and to build on the ideas and questions.

KICK OFF QUESTION

- How do we know that animals have thoughts and feelings?

FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS

- Would it be better for an animal to have a shorter life if it was a happier one?
- Is a farm animal's only purpose in life to produce food for humans?
- Should farm animals be treated differently to pets because they produce food for humans?

SESSION SUMMARY

Invite the pupils to revisit their initial responses recorded on slide two. Ask each pupil to think of a thought or question from the session that they would like to explore further, or something new they have discovered today. Encourage pupils to share these with the rest of the class and record them under their initial ideas from the start of the lesson. By saving the PDF, you can return to these thoughts in another session.

You could watch the last section of the animation as a reminder of some of the key concepts from the lesson, found on slide seven.

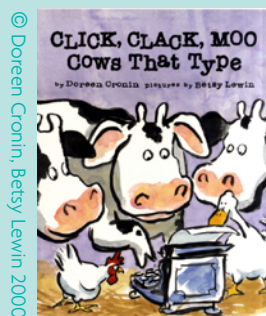
**5
MINS****SLIDE
2****SLIDE
7**

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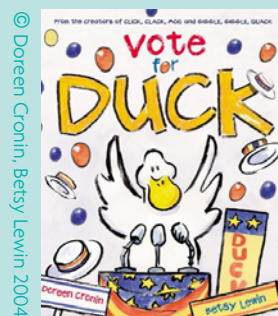
EXTENSION RESOURCES

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

Books



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



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

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ALTERNATIVE RESOURCES TO SUPPORT PUPILS WITH SEND

The activities below are suggestions to help you adapt the Farmyard Freedom activities to support your pupils' needs.

TASK (PAGE FIVE)

To help pupils understand the welfare needs of chickens, show slide eight. The images show two different environments that chickens live in, one where the chickens' welfare is not met, and one that meets RSPCA Assured guidelines. Ask pupils, how are they different? What things does the RSPCA Assured image have that the other does not?

Give pupils a copy of the RSPCA Assured checklist on slide nine and revisit slide four. Ask pupils to use the checklist to decide whether each animal's needs are met. Ask why they think the things on the checklist are important?



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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

