



Identifying use and non-use values of animal welfare: Evidence from Swedish dairy agriculture



Helena Hansson*, Carl Johan Lagerkvist¹

Department of Economics, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, P.O. Box 7013, SE-75007 Uppsala, Sweden

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 31 January 2014

Received in revised form 1 August 2014

Accepted 9 October 2014

Available online 11 November 2014

Keywords:

Animal welfare of dairy cows

Decision making

Laddering

Means-end chain analysis

Non-use values

Use values

ABSTRACT

In this study, we sought to identify the use and non-use values that underlie farmers' decision making with respect to animal welfare, based on in-depth interviews with 50 dairy farmers in Sweden. We identified use values related to: being able to continue the business, earning a living from the business, not being tied to the farm (i.e. having time available for other things), product quality, and work environment. We also identified non-use values related to avoidance of suffering, being able to further improve the welfare of dairy cows, the dairy farmer feeling good him/herself, ethical considerations, a feeling of doing the right thing, and animals eating properly (i.e. functioning as dairy cows should). Understanding the values underlying dairy farmers' decision making with respect to animal welfare is an important step in understanding why these farmers work with animal welfare. The results are useful in improving communications from authorities and farm advisors to farmers, as a strategy to gain better acceptance for improved animal welfare standards; in designing product certification schemes in the food industry; and in communicating to the public the values influencing production of dairy products.

© 2014 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>).

Introduction

There is increasing concern in society about farm animal welfare (FAW). This has resulted from the increasing degree of industrialisation in primary production (D'Silva, 2009), food safety concerns (European Commission 2002; Evans and Miele, 2008), ethical considerations (European Commission, 2002), concerns about food quality and humans' bonds with pet animals (Evans and Miele, 2008) and most likely also from the increasing knowledge and information about the physiological and psychological requirements of animals. According to Lusk et al. (2007), 62% of representatives of U.S. households report that they believe that farm animal wellbeing should be taken into consideration in situations where humans also suffer, and 64% of representatives of U.S. households believe that farmers and other actors in the food chain put their own profit concerns ahead of humane treatment of animals. In Europe, findings obtained in the Welfare Quality® project and reviewed by Ingenbleek and Immink (2011) provide considerable evidence of consumer concerns about the wellbeing of animals in Europe. On the European market, FAW is regulated in the EU by minimum requirement regulations, specific member state

laws and different types of product certification standards used to obtain product differentiation. Most of these regulatory actions are conceptually based in the *five freedoms* of farm animals (Botreau et al., 2007; Veissner et al., 2008), which stipulate that farm animals should experience freedom: (1) from hunger and thirst; (2) from discomfort; (3) from pain, injury or disease; (4) to express normal behaviour; and (5) from fear and distress (Farm Animal Welfare Council, 2009).

FAW is generally defined as an integral concept in human values (e.g. Fraser, 1995; Rushen, 2003). In the context of economic decision making, FAW is seen as a subset of human wellbeing and thus humans will care about animals to the extent that their own utility is affected by the wellbeing of animals (McInerney, 2004). Decision making by farmers ultimately determines the living conditions of farm animals. Therefore, compliance with various FAW regulations and policy schemes, or even improvements in FAW beyond what is required by regulations, is likely to be highly dependent on the motivation of individual farmers to work on improvements in FAW. In the psychological literature, personal values are viewed as standards which guide selection, thoughts and evaluations of people's behaviours (Rohan, 2000; Bardi and Schwartz, 2003). Personal values provide a rationale for why a certain action was chosen. Understanding the formation of farmers' values for animal welfare would therefore be of particular relevance for the design of policy. With specific reference to

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +46 18 671714.

E-mail addresses: Helena.Hansson@slu.se (H. Hansson), Carl-Johan.Lagerkvist@slu.se (C.J. Lagerkvist).

¹ Tel.: +46 18 671783.

FAW, [McInerney \(2004\)](#) concluded that farmers' decision making may be motivated by economic values not only related to a desire to increase the productivity and profitability of the animal, but also to other considerations based on animals as sentient beings. [McInerney \(2004\)](#) described two categories of economic values (and thus motivators of behaviours with respect to FAW) which farmers may derive directly from FAW, namely use and non-use values. Use values refer to productivity values and govern the improvements in FAW necessary to maintain productivity. Non-use values are all other values the farmer associates with FAW. Farmers' perceptions of, and preferences for, these use and non-use values will thus drive their decisions with respect to FAW. Use values, but in some cases also non-use values, are not ends in themselves, but may be a means to achieve something else. Through this study we sought to identify values underlying farmers' decision making with respect to FAW, in an empirical application based on in-depth interviews with 50 dairy farmers in Sweden.

In the scientific literature, there is considerable interest in farmers' views on FAW, in particular what farmers think about it, i.e. how they conceptualise FAW (e.g. [Te Velde et al., 2002](#); [Dockès and Kling-Eveillard, 2006](#); [Bock and van Huik, 2007](#); [Kauppinen et al., 2010](#)). [Hansson and Lagerkvist \(2014\)](#) reviewed and synthesised the literature relating to how farmers conceptualise FAW and found it to be related to the aspects: "animal health, physiological needs of the animals, natural behaviour of the animals, living environment of the animals, humane and ethical treatment of the animals, profitability of the animals, and the farmer's own wellbeing and knowledge" (p. 54). Other studies have examined whether there are differences in views on FAW depending on production orientation (organic or conventional) (e.g. [Hubbard et al., 2006](#); [Hubbard et al., 2007](#); [Kling-Eveillard et al., 2007](#); [van Huik and Bock, 2007](#)). Furthermore, the type/s of animals kept by the farmer and the purpose of keeping them has been found to influence farmers' attachment to their animals ([Bock et al., 2007](#)), something that may also influence FAW.

While there have been many contributions by previous studies, there appears to have been scant interest in the content and structure of actual values underlying and directing farmers' decision making with respect to FAW. However, uncovering and explicitly understanding the values that govern farmers' decision making with respect to FAW would help provide a better understanding of what motivates farmers to work with FAW. Therefore, policy formulation would benefit especially from understanding these values. In particular, such knowledge can be used by the agriculture sector when developing and targeting advice for improved FAW; by the food industry when developing and targeting FAW policies including product certification schemes, which would be essential to maintain legitimacy of food production throughout the food supply chain; and by government when developing and targeting policy schemes related to FAW. Knowledge about the values that underlie farmers' work with FAW can also be used by agrifood industries when developing marketing strategies to promote their food products, since such knowledge can be used to communicate to consumers the types of value codes under which the food products have been produced.

In order to uncover the values underlying dairy farmers' decision making with respect to FAW, in this study we used the means-end chain (MEC) model ([Gutman 1982](#); [Reynolds and Gutman, 1988](#)). This model has been extensively used in the past to identify the values behind consumption decisions (e.g. [Russell et al., 2004](#); [Westerlund Lind, 2007](#); [Barrena and Sánchez, 2009](#); [Radder and Grunert, 2009](#); [Bitzios et al., 2011](#)). Recently, [Lagerkvist et al. \(2012\)](#) and [Okello et al. \(2014\)](#) adopted MEC analysis to investigate farmers' decision-making with respect to farm inputs and, ultimately, the personal values that drive such

decisions. Our ambition in this study was to facilitate structured identification of values underlying dairy farmers' decision-making with respect to FAW. Through this, we aimed to add to previous literature by examining why dairy farmers make decisions in relation to FAW based on the actual content of their cognitive structure. The MEC approach is particularly appealing because through its systematic interview technique, it allows the researcher to push the respondent into increasingly higher cognitive structures and uncover values they might not have thought of initially. This allows in-depth exploration of the values underlying their behaviour.

As mentioned above, previous studies have found that the type of animal kept by farmers and the purpose of keeping the animals can affect their attachment to the animals ([Bock et al., 2007](#)). This implies in turn that the values underlying farmers' decision-making with respect to FAW may be influenced by the particular species kept by the farmers and by the purpose of keeping the animals. Focusing on dairy farmers, in this paper we examined the values underlying this type of farmers' decision making with respect to FAW. Dairy cows are kept for a relatively long period of time, offering dairy farmers plenty of time to establish relatively strong human-animal relationships. From the perspective of the values underlying farmers' decision making with respect to FAW, we anticipated that focusing on farmers who are able to establish these stronger human-animal relationships and become more attached to their animals would be particularly interesting, because it is plausible to assume that longer relationships and stronger attachment create a greater variety in the types of values in use.

We now continue by presenting the conceptual framework in 'Conceptual framework', the empirical method and data in 'Empirical method and data' and our results in 'Results'. In 'Discussion and conclusions' we discuss our results and report our conclusions.

Conceptual framework

Means-end chain theory in its original form posits that consumption choices are based on the perceived attributes of the products, the consequences associated with these attributes and how consequences can lead to the fulfilment of desired end-states or values ([Gutman, 1982](#); [Reynolds and Gutman, 1988](#)). Consumption is thus undertaken in order to satisfy values, so consumption products are chosen for the values the attributes can help achieve, not for the product attributes per se. There is a hierarchical relationship from attributes to consequences, and finally to values. A central component of the MEC approach is the identification of values directing a decision, based on the identification of attributes of a phenomenon, i.e. what it represents to the decision maker, and the identification of future consequences of the attributes.

MEC theory can thus facilitate understanding of the hierarchical links within mental models between the attributes dairy farmers ascribe to FAW, i.e. what constitutes FAW, the consequences they relate to these attributes and the personal values fulfilled by the consequences. MEC is therefore a relevant framework for uncovering the values that govern dairy farmers' decisions with respect to FAW. Used in the context of dairy farmers' decision making with respect to FAW, the MEC approach posits that dairy farmers make decisions about FAW based on perceived attributes of FAW, the consequences of these attributes and how these consequences help to achieve desired values. This means that the desire to achieve certain values governs their decision making.

As mentioned previously, [McInerney \(2004\)](#) categorised farmers' values related to FAW as use and non-use values. This terminology was useful in our analysis, since it recognises that dairy farmers' decision making with respect to FAW may be

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/5070389>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/5070389>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)