



ANIMAL CARE AND WELL-BEING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

DAIRY CATTLE



Q. Why are dairy cows so thin compared to beef cattle?

A. Healthy dairy cows have less musculing and body fat and look skinnier than beef cattle. Dairy cows that are too heavy may have trouble giving birth and might develop health problems.

Q. Do cows like to be around other cows?

A. Yes, cows like to hang out with each other because they're very social, herd animals! If cows can't see, hear, smell or touch other cows, it is stressful to them.

Q. Why do the cows have tags in their ears?

A. Every cow has an identification number printed on her ear tag. Farmers use the number to find a cow quickly and to track things like how much milk she gives, how much to feed her and when her next calf is due.

Q. Does milking a cow hurt her?

A. When done properly, milking doesn't hurt the cow, it actually makes her feel better. When her udder is full of milk, she may be carrying around as much as 70 extra pounds! Milking takes away the extra weight so she's more comfortable. The bonus is that milking gives humans a healthy, wholesome food.

Q. Why do cows lie down so much?

A. When cows are comfortable and relaxed, they lie down for about 12 hours a day. Lying down helps them to digest their food and produce milk.



ANIMAL CARE AND WELL-BEING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

HORSE



Q. Why do riders use crops or whips?

A. Crops and whips are aids that provide the rider an extension of his or her hand. Riders don't use them often but when they do, they use them to encourage horses to go forward, or in some cases, to go faster.

Q. Why do riders use spurs?

A. Spurs provide an extension to the rider's leg. Riders use them most often to encourage a horse to go forward. Some horses have also been taught to slow down or stop when spurs are used.

Q. Do shoes and bits hurt?

A. Properly applied shoes do not hurt and actually protect the horses' feet from bruising or excessive wear. Horseshoes are nailed into the horse's hoof wall, which is much like a human fingernail. Your nails don't hurt when you cut them if you do it correctly. Riders use bits to communicate with horses and to guide them. Properly fitted bits typically do not hurt the horse unless the rider pulls excessively or with poor timing.

Q. Do horses bite?

A. Horses sometimes bite accidentally, because they can't see things placed directly below their mouth, and can't distinguish between fingers and carrots. Less often, horses will bite in an effort to defend themselves from predators.



ANIMAL CARE AND WELL-BEING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

GENERAL ANIMAL WELL-BEING

Q. What is animal well-being?

A. *Animal well-being*, or *animal welfare*, refers to an animal's condition or the treatment it receives. When a person protects an animal's well-being, he or she makes sure to meet both its physical and mental needs. *Animal care*, *animal husbandry* and *humane treatment* are other terms used when people discuss the condition and treatment of animals.

Q. Why is protecting an animal's well-being important?

A. It's the right thing to do. Animals that have good welfare are healthier. It also makes good business sense because farmers who take good care of their animals produce a better quality product.

Q. Should I wash my hands after I touch an animal?

A. Absolutely! Many animals carry germs that can be spread to people. Washing your hands is the best way to keep those germs from spreading to keep both animals and people healthy.

Q. Can animals be happy or sad?

A. Animals have the basic emotions of seeking, rage, fear, panic, lust, care and play. Animals react when their needs are met or not met. When they react, they can seem happy or sad to us. For example, when an animal's play emotion is met, it looks happy to us (Grandin & Johnson, 2010).

Q. How do you know if an animal is comfortable?

A. Animal caretakers can tell based on what they know about how that species normally acts. Caretakers must meet not only the animal's physical needs but its mental needs as well. For example as with most animals, cats want a soft, comfortable space to rest to meet their physical needs. That spot must also meet their mental needs. It should be a raised surface so the cat can have a higher point to watch its surroundings or be partially covered to allow for a hiding space. When animals begin to behave in a way that is not normal for their species, animal caretakers make changes to the animals' surroundings so that their behavior becomes normal.

Q. Do all animals need the same things?

A. Yes and no. All animals require Brambell's Five Freedoms: 1) freedom from hunger and thirst; 2) freedom from discomfort; 3) freedom from pain, injury or disease; 4) freedom to express natural behaviors and 5) freedom from fear and distress. The way those freedoms are met for each species can differ. For example, although ducks and chickens are both poultry, ducks need a pool of water to express their natural behavior, but chickens don't (Brambell, 1965).



Q. How do you know how to take care of an animal?

A. 4-H members learn how to take proper care of their animals through 4-H. Bringing an animal to the fair is part of the learning experience. 4-H'ers learn to show animals and present them to the judge, who will ask questions regarding the animals' care.

Q. How do you decide what is good animal well-being?

A. A person can assess the animal's situation by using Brambell's Five Freedoms to ask the following questions: 1) Does the animal have food and water? 2) Is the animal free from discomfort? 3) Is the animal free from pain, injury or disease? 4) Is the animal free to express its natural behavior? and 5) Is the animal free from fear and distress? Animal well-being is a continuum, meaning it can range from very good to very poor and be anywhere along the imaginary line.



Q. Do these animals at the fair have good well-being?

A. Yes, in fact, fairs are a way to show animals with good well-being. However, fairs can be stressful environments for the animals. They are not used to the noises and number of people that come through the barns to learn about them. When you as a fair goer treat them with respect, it helps us with their good well-being and gives us a chance to teach you about them.

Q. Whom do I talk to if I'm concerned about an animal's care or well-being?

A. If you are concerned about an animal here at the fair, find the barn manager and speak to him or her about your concerns. If you are concerned about the well-being of an animal outside of the fair, try speaking with the animal owner or caretaker first. There might be a good reason why an animal is housed or cared for in a certain way. People house and care for animals in many ways, some that may be different from what you might do. There are many methods to properly care for an animal. If after speaking with the owner or caretaker you still have concerns, speak with another adult you trust to assess the situation to see if other authorities should be contacted.

REFERENCES

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Grandin, T., & Johnson, C. (2010). *Animals make us human: Creating the best life for animals*. New York: Mariner Books.



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Q. Why do some horses wear blankets?

A. Horses wear sheets or blankets at horse shows most often to keep their hair coats clean. Handlers must take care to make sure that horses don't get too hot or sweat under the sheet or blanket.

Q. Why does that horse have a collar?

A. Some horses have a bad habit called *cribbing*. The horse will set its teeth on an object such as a fence and suck in air. This behavior can wear down the teeth or sometimes cause other negative issues. Some horses wear a collar, or a *crib strap*, to prevent them from cribbing. The collar does not hurt or change how a horse breathes, but simply prevents it from being able to suck in the air.

Q. Can I feed fair food to the horse?

A. No. The horse's digestive tract is sensitive to changes and unusual foods. Feeding them fair food could make them sick. You should never feed a horse anything without asking the owner's permission.

Q. Why does the horse have a blindfold?

A. What looks like a blindfold is actually a *fly mask* made with small holes that the horse can see through. A fly mask protects the horse's eyes and face from flies or other biting insects.

Q. Does that horse with the bandages have a broken leg?

A. No. What appear to be bandages are actually *leg wraps*. Leg wraps protect the legs from cuts and scrapes, provide support, keep the legs clean or sometimes protect cuts from getting dirty. A horse wearing leg wraps is not injured.

Q. Why are the horses in stalls most of the day?

A. When horses are at shows, exhibitions or fairs, you'll often see them in stalls when not being ridden or shown. This keeps them safe and gives them a chance to rest from their work. While at home, horses are housed in a variety of situations. They may be in stalls part of the time and spend part of the time turned out to the field or pasture.



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Q. Why are the cows lying on piles of straw?

A. Just like people, cows want comfortable beds. The thick layer of straw bedding used at fairs and shows gives the cows a comfortable cushion to stand and rest on. Straw is also easy for exhibitors to move and clean.

Q. Why are the cows chewing gum?

A. They're not really chewing gum, they're *chewing their cud* - or in scientific terms, *ruminating*. Cows, sheep, goats and camels are *ruminant animals*. That means the animal has a four-chambered stomach and can digest feed that a single-chambered human stomach can't handle. A cow's *cud* is food it has belched up from her first stomach chamber. Chewing the food again grinds it into very small pieces that are more easily digested in the next stomach chamber, the *rumen*.

Q. How can you tell when a cow is sick?

A. Farmers carefully watch their cattle's normal behavior, so they can often tell when a cow isn't feeling well just by the way she's acting. Sick cows eat and drink less and rest a lot more than usual. They may also have a fever or show other symptoms. If farmers recognize any of these signs of illness, they can take appropriate action to help the cow get better.

Q. Why won't cows walk through puddles?

A. Cows see the world very differently than humans do. They have poor depth perception, which means they can't easily tell how deep a shiny puddle is. Contrasting colors, like white lines on dark concrete, also make it hard for a cow to tell if she's walking on stable ground or about to fall in a hole.

Q. Why are there fans in the cow barn?

A. Cows develop heat stress in hot, humid weather, which causes them to eat and drink less and produce less milk than usual. So we put fans in cow barns to help keep them cool, comfortable and healthy.



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**ANIMAL CARE AND WELL-BEING
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**

SWINE



Q. Why do hogs' ears look ruffled?

A. What look like ruffles are actually *ear notches*. Notches in the hog's right ear identify the litter it belongs to. Notches in the left ear give the hog a unique individual number. Ear notches allow the farmer to record treatment and other important information about each particular hog as it moves about the farm. Ear notching should be done when a hog is between 1 and 4 days old.

Q. Do hogs bite?

A. Yes, hogs will bite. Biting behavior in a hog depends upon the hog's experiences. Generally, a hog will bite when frightened. However, a hog may bite out of frustration or because of a bad experience in the past.

Q. Why do some hogs have a curly tail and some almost no tail?

A. Some farmers choose to remove, or *dock*, their hogs' tails during the first week of life. Docking prevents hogs from biting each other's tails. It is hard to know if or when tail biting will begin, and if it does, how often it will occur. If a hog has a bitten tail, it can be painful because the tail, and sometimes the spine, can become infected.

Q. Why are there scratches on the hog?

A. Hogs like to scratch and rub on things. They also like to root and play with other hogs. The breeds that have lighter skin show the scratches from these natural behaviors more than others do. This is not a sign of abuse or neglect.



**ANIMAL CARE AND WELL-BEING
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**

SHEEP



Q. Why are the sheep chewing gum?

A. They're not really chewing gum, they're *chewing their cud* – or in scientific terms, *ruminating*. Sheep, cattle, goats and camels are *ruminant animals*. That means the animal has a four-chambered stomach and can digest feed that a single-chambered human stomach can't handle. A sheep's *cud* is food it has belched up from the first stomach chamber. Chewing the food again grinds it into very small pieces that are more easily digested in the next stomach chamber, the *rumen*.

Q. Why are there more than one sheep in one pen?

A. Sheep like to hang out with each other in a pen because they're very social, herd animals! If sheep can't see, hear, smell or touch other sheep is stressful to them.

Q. Do sheep have tails?

A. Sheep are born with tails, but they are often removed, or *docked*, when they are young to keep them healthy. Manure and urine can collect in the wool by their tails. This dirty area can attract flies, which burrow in the sheep's skin and lay eggs there. This creates a painful illness called *fly strike*, which can kill sheep. Docking the tails keeps manure from collecting and protects the sheep from getting fly strike.

Q. How can you tell if a sheep is sick?

A. Farmers carefully watch their sheep's normal behavior, so they can often tell when an animal isn't feeling well just by the way it's acting. Sick sheep eat and drink less and rest a lot more than usual. They may also have a fever or show other symptoms. If farmers recognize any of these signs of illness, they can take appropriate action to help the sheep get better.



**ANIMAL CARE AND WELL-BEING
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**

BEEF CATTLE



Q. Why are beef cattle so big compared to dairy cows?

A. Beef cattle are raised for their meat, while dairy cows are not. Farmers feed beef cattle to reach a *market weight* of about 1,200 to 1,400 pounds. They need a lot of muscle and fat to grow that big!

Q. Why are there fans and misters in the beef barn?

A. Beef cattle can develop *heat stress* in hot, humid weather, which causes them to eat and drink less. Farmers put fans and misters in barns to help keep cattle cool, comfortable and healthy.

Q. How much space do beef cattle need?

A. Beef cattle need enough space to stand and lie down comfortably. During the day, fair exhibitors will exercise their animals so they can stretch their legs.

Q. Do cattle like to be around other cattle?

A. Yes, cattle like to hang out with each other because they're very social, herd animals! If cattle can't see, hear, smell or touch other cattle, it is stressful to them.

Q. Is it normal for cattle to be this quiet?

A. A lot of *vocalization* or *mooring* means cattle are stressed or afraid. If the barns are quiet, it means the cattle are comfortable in their surroundings.



Q. What is that stick that is used with beef cattle?

A. The helpful tool is called a *show stick*. Handlers use it as an arm extension to assist with placing an animal's feet in a comfortable stance. They also use it to scratch cattle in the ring to keep them relaxed.

Q. Do you milk these cattle?

A. No. These are beef cattle not dairy cows. Beef cattle have heavy muscling and a good amount of fat coverage. We get milk from dairy cows, which have much less muscling and fat coverage, and much larger udders.

Q. Why are the cattle chewing gum?

A. They're not really chewing gum, they're *chewing their cud* – or in scientific terms, *ruminating*. Cattle, sheep, goats and camels are *ruminant animals*. That means the animal has a four-chambered stomach and can digest feed that a single-chambered human stomach can't handle. The *cud* is food that is belched up from the first stomach chamber. Chewing the food again grinds it into very small pieces that are more easily digested in the next stomach chamber, the *rumen*.

Q. Why do you wash your beef cattle?

A. In the show ring, an animal's hair coat will reflect proper care, nutrition, and grooming. Making sure the animal is receiving a well-balanced diet and adequate water is an important part of providing excellent care for cattle. This excellent care will show in the coat after proper washing. The washing also helps keep the animal clean and cool in the warm weather.

Q. How can you tell when cattle are sick?

A. Farmers carefully watch their cattle's normal behavior, so they can often tell when an animal isn't feeling well just by the way it's acting. Sick cattle eat and drink less and rest a lot more than usual. They may also have a fever or show other symptoms. If farmers recognize any of these signs of illness, they can take appropriate action to help the animal get better.



Q. What are the tags in the sheep ears?

A. Every sheep has an identification number printed on its ear tag. Farmers use the number to find a sheep quickly. If there is a disease outbreak, veterinarians can use these tags to track sick animals.

Q. Do sheep always make this much noise?

A. Sheep are quite vocal. They use different sounds to communicate with other sheep. Because sheep are social animals, they may become fearful when alone in the pen if they don't see other sheep. If a sheep can hear another sheep, then it will know it's not alone. Sheep also warn other sheep of any danger, and *ewes*, or mother sheep, call to their lambs.

Q. Does it hurt your sheep when you hold on to its head and neck when you show it?

A. Applying gentle pressure on the sheep's neck and behind the head is called *bracing*. To the sheep, it feels as if it's wearing a halter. It does not hurt the sheep if done correctly. If the sheep moves away or begins to cough, the handler should release pressure and try again to make sure the sheep is comfortable. Positioning a sheep in this way shows off its muscling and design to the judge.

Q. Do the sheep with wool feel hot?

A. No. Wool is an amazing fiber! It helps to insulate and keep sheep warm and dry in the winter, and cool in the summer because it holds air in between all the individual fibers.

Q. Does it hurt sheep when their wool is cut off?

A. No. Cutting the wool of sheep, or *shearing* them, does not hurt them. Shearing is similar to when you get a haircut – you don't feel anything! Shearing sheep is a learned skilled that takes a lot of patience and practice. A sheep may be sheared in a stand with its head held in a similar position to the *brace* or while it's being held on the ground.

Q. Why do the sheep wear coats?

A. The coats or blankets help keep the sheep clean while they are at the fair. This reduces the time that the handlers need to groom them before showing. Both *meat breeds*, sheep that will be used primarily as food, and *wool breeds*, sheep used primarily to produce fiber, can wear coats or blankets to reduce the amount of dirt, manure and feed on their fleeces. Young animals that do not have long wool may also wear coats or blankets during the winter to keep warm.



Q. Do hogs always make this much noise?

A. Hogs have a lot to say, especially to other hogs. If you listen, you will hear different sounds and tones in the noises they make. These different noises all have meanings to other hogs.

Q. Why are canes or whips used with the hogs?

A. Touch is the best way to communicate to hogs where to move. Hogs are the only class of large animals that exhibitors are not allowed to lead into the ring with a halter and rope. Instead, they must teach hogs to respond to commands using a cane or whip. For example, the hog may learn that a tap on the side of the head means to turn in a specific direction. An exhibitor uses the cane or whip to touch the animal firmly enough to make it move, but not so hard that it hurts. Some exhibitors use one firm tap and some use many light taps to direct their animals. Hogs are very smart and learn quickly when properly trained.

Q. Why are the hogs rolling around on the wet concrete?

A. Barns are built to keep hogs cool. On a hot day, sometimes the hogs like to roll in the water for extra cooling like you might jump in a swimming pool or play in a sprinkler.

Q. Why are some hogs penned alone and others are together?

A. The hogs in pens with others have lived together before, so they are already familiar with one another. Hogs are able to recognize other hogs and if they are not familiar with each other, they may fight to establish a social order.

Q. Why are the hogs different colors?

A. There are many different breeds of hogs, just as there are different breeds of dogs, cats and other animals. The color of the hog can help you tell what breed it is. You can also tell the breed by looking at the ears. Some breeds have ears that are down, while others have ears that stand up.

Q. How can you tell if your hog is sick?

A. Farmers carefully watch their hogs' normal behavior, so they can often tell when a hog isn't feeling well just by the way it's acting. Sick hogs eat and drink less and rest a lot more than usual. They may also have a fever or show other symptoms. If farmers recognize any of these signs of illness, they can take appropriate action to help the hog get better.



ANIMAL CARE AND WELL-BEING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

GUINEA PIG (CAVY)



Q. Why do guinea pigs hide in the hut so much?

A. Guinea pigs, also known as *cavies*, are a *prey* species. This means they have natural enemies (called *predators*) that hunt them. Guinea pigs hide to avoid being hunted, even when no predators are around. Naturally timid animals, they may sometimes find the fair a scary experience. Hiding in the hut helps them feel safe and protected.

Q. Why do some cavies have colored water?

A. Guinea pigs naturally don't have enough Vitamin C, so the vitamin needs to be included in their diets. Their pelleted food contains Vitamin C, but some people may give more to their cavies by mixing a little orange juice in their water, giving it color.

Q. Why do cavies live alone?

A. Guinea pigs prefer to have another guinea pig to live with, but that might not always be possible. Two cavies that don't know each other might fight and could hurt each other. Just as some people do not get along and cannot share a room, not all guinea pigs can share a cage with another animal. Although having guinea pigs live together is recommended, sometimes they need to live alone so they stay healthy and safe.

Q. Why do they have things to chew in the cage?

A. Guinea pigs are members of the rodent family, so like mice and rats, their front teeth constantly grow. They need things to chew on to wear down their teeth and keep them from biting the insides of their mouths, which could become infected and make them sick.



ANIMAL CARE AND WELL-BEING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

RABBIT



Q. Can I feed the rabbit my food?

A. No, it's not good to feed rabbits food that their owners do not know about. Just as with other animals, or even people, certain foods might make them sick.

Q. Why do some of the rabbits have colored water?

A. The colored liquid is a sports drink mixed with water. This provides the rabbit with extra electrolytes, something important for its health. This helps the rabbit cope with the new and different surroundings while away from home.

Q. Why do some rabbits have frozen water bottles?

A. Just as people get warm in the summer, so do rabbits. Some owners choose to put frozen bottles in the cage to help keep the rabbits cool as they rest against them.

Q. Does the wire floor hurt their feet?

A. No, it shouldn't under most circumstances. Rabbits are comfortable on wire. Wire flooring is more sanitary than any other form of flooring because it allows *urine* (pee) and *feces* (poop) to drop below the cage floor.

Q. Why are some of the rabbits losing their fur?

A. Rabbits, like many birds, go through a *molting* phase in which their fur falls out. This natural process happens every year both seasonally and at various stages of life. Heavy molting usually takes place at the end of summer allowing the rabbit to grow a thicker coat for the winter to keep it warm in colder temperatures. Molting can vary from breed to breed and even from rabbit to rabbit.



ANIMAL CARE AND WELL-BEING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

COMPANION ANIMAL



Q. What are companion animals?

A. Companion animals are animals people own and care for as pets rather than raise for other purposes, such as food or work. Dogs and cats are traditionally considered companion animals, but other animals also fit into this category.

Q. Is it easy to train companion animals to participate in shows or other events?

A. Training animals can be easy, but it takes a lot of patience and time to do it correctly. In most cases, training should start long before the event. Do not try to teach a dog or cat everything at once. Instead, break down what you want them to do into smaller steps. Use rewards, such as treats or praise, to show the animal they are doing the correct action. Training sessions are also a great way to form trust with an animal and bond with it.

Q. Why don't companion animals live at the fair like other animals?

A. Living at the fair would be stressful for dogs and cats and that may make them sick. It is also a safety concern for fair visitors and the animals. All the people and noises as well as the different environment might overwhelm dogs and cats – even those that are very social. This could lead to their acting in a fearful manner possibly causing harm to other animals or to people. It is best for companion animals to come to the fair for a few hours to compete in their events and then return home.

Q. How can you tell when a dog or cat is sick?

A. Pet owners know how their animal normally behaves and can tell right away when something is not right. Sick dogs and cats eat and drink less, and rest a lot more than usual. They may also have a fever, throw up, show other symptoms or not want to play. When dog or cat owners recognize any of these signs of illness, they should take their pet to the veterinarian.



Q. Do dogs like to be around other animals?

A. Yes, dogs generally enjoy the company of animals, especially other dogs. Dogs evolved from wolves, which are *pack* animals. This means they live in groups. Dogs do not have the same social structure as wolves, but they do like to be around other dogs, other animals or people. However, not all dogs will get along. People need to be careful when introducing animals that have not met before.

Q. Do cats like to be around other animals?

A. Cats are different from dogs and may prefer to be the only pet in a home. Domestic cats evolved from big cats (such as tigers and mountain lions), most of which are solitary animals. This means they live alone most of the time. Some cats enjoy the company of cats or other animals, but it will take time to know what a cat prefers. When introducing a cat to other animals, especially another cat, you must do it slowly and in a way that allows both cats to hide and escape from each other if they want to.

Q. Are companion animals part of the fair?

A. Yes, many fairs involve 4-H companion animal projects. These may be live events, such as showing or agility trials for dogs, or still projects, such as photography.

Q. Can I feed fair food to a companion animal that's at the fair?

A. No. Do not feed companion animals fair food. It could make them sick. Some foods are toxic for animals. This means these foods act like a poison for the animals. The food could hurt them. You should never feed a dog, cat or any animal anything without asking the owner's permission.

Q. Can I touch or pet a companion animal that is at the fair?

A. You should always ask the animal's owner before you try to pet it. Some animals may be friendly and enjoy the attention, while other animals may feel uncomfortable. It's possible they could hurt someone as a result. Animals face many new sights, sounds and smells they are not used to at the fair. This may cause them to be nervous. Because of this, an animal might scare easily if surprised by a person's touch. Even the most well-trained, friendly animals can be startled sometimes.

Q. Can I get sick from a companion animal?

A. Yes, there are some illnesses, called *zoonotic diseases*, or parasites, such as fleas or ticks, that a cat or dog can spread to people. Wash your hands after petting or being around animals before you eat, or before you touch your mouth, nose, eyes, ears or any open cuts. Keeping your hands clean will help keep both animals and humans healthy.



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Q. Why does that rabbit have floppy ears? Are they broken?

A. No, that is a *lop-eared* rabbit. Several breeds of lop-eared rabbits naturally have ears that do not stand up. Some breeds, such as the French Lop, Holland Lop, Mini Lop and American Fuzzy Lop, have a ridge of cartilage called a *crown* that pushes their ears down. English Lop rabbits, the original lop-eared breed, do not have this crown. The English Lop rabbit has ears so big and heavy that they fall on the sides of its head!

Q. Why does that rabbit have red eyes? Are their eyes bleeding or hurt?

A. Rabbits with red eyes and white fur are *albino* rabbits – they are not bleeding or hurt. Albino animals lack *melanin*, a substance that gives living things different colors. All animals have melanin, including humans. It determines skin, eye, hair and fur color. Lacking melanin is normal but rarely happens in most wild animals.

Q. What are these rabbits used for?

A. Rabbits can be used for many things. Rabbits are great pets! Rabbits are also shown at county fairs or other national clubs and shows. Some rabbits are raised for fur or for meat.

Q. How can you tell if your rabbit is sick?

A. It can be hard to tell if rabbits are sick because they are *prey* animals, which means other animals called *predators* hunt them for food. If they were in the wild and showed signs of being sick or injured, predators would quickly find them. By watching carefully and knowing how a rabbit normally behaves, you will learn to tell if it is sick. A sick rabbit might stop eating, have fewer or no *fecal* (poop) droppings, be less active or interactive, or display a change in posture. If something seems off or different about a rabbit, take it to a veterinarian right away.

Q. How do you properly pick up a rabbit?

A. You can pick up a rabbit by placing one hand under the rabbit's stomach and the other hand behind the rabbit's back. Then pull the rabbit into your body to help it feel secure and safe. Remember to always first ask the owner before petting, picking up or touching any animal at the fair.



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Q. Why do cavies make so many sounds? What do they mean?

A. Guinea pigs use sounds to communicate to other guinea pigs, animals and humans. They make many different sounds including a “wheek” when they ask for food, a purring sound when content and a growl when scared. Cavies also chatter when angry or upset. Listening to a guinea pig and watching its behavior as it makes these sounds will help you to understand the animal and its needs better.

Q. How can you tell if your guinea pig is sick?

A. It can be hard to tell if cavies are sick because they are *prey* animals, which means other animals called *predators* hunt them for food. If they were in the wild and showed signs of being sick or injured, *predators* would quickly locate them. By watching carefully and knowing how a guinea pig normally behaves, you will learn to tell if it is sick. A sick guinea pig might stop eating, have fewer or no *fecal* (poop) droppings, be less active or interactive, or display a change in posture. If something seems off or different about a guinea pig, take it to a veterinarian right away.

Q. Why do some guinea pigs have red eyes? Are they hurt?

A. Cavies with red eyes and white fur are *albino* guinea pigs – they are not bleeding or hurt. Albino animals lack *melanin*, a substance that gives living things different colors. All animals have melanin, including humans. It determines skin, eye, hair and fur color. Lacking melanin is normal but rarely happens in most wild animals.

Q. What do you do with cavies?

A. Here in the U.S., cavies are primarily pets. A guinea pig is a *pocket pet* (any small animal kept as a pet that is easy to care for and does not take up a lot of space). In other parts of the world, guinea pigs are raised for meat.

Q. Why do guinea pigs need hay?

A. Hay is a high-fiber food and cavies need a lot of fiber in their diet to stay healthy. Also, chewing on the hay helps to wear down teeth in a natural way.

Q. Why don't cavies have places to climb?

A. Guinea pigs do like to climb, but great care must be taken in giving them a climbing surface. If they fell, their delicate leg bones could easily become hurt. The cages used at fair may not offer enough space or the appropriate space for them to climb, so they stay safe by being on a flat surface.



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ANIMAL CARE AND WELL-BEING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

GOAT



Q. Why doesn't that goat have ears?

A. Actually it does have ears, but they are extremely small. Just as breeds of dogs look different from each other, goat breeds also differ in appearance. This characteristic is unique to *Lamancha* goats. This breed was developed in North America and was selected to have ears that are 2 inches long or less.

Q. What are goats used for?

A. Goats, like sheep, have many uses. They are used for meat and milk products as well as fiber. Goat products are not as popular in the U.S. compared to cow products, but they are important food sources in many parts of the world. In fact, worldwide more people consume goat products than cow products. A number of goat products found in the U.S. are viewed as specialty high-end foods. *Cashmere* is the most common fiber that comes from goats and is actually hair, different from the wool sheep produce.

Q. Is it safe to drink goat's milk?

A. Yes! As with cow's milk, goat's milk is safe to drink once it has been *pasteurized* (a process of heating the milk for a short time to kill pathogens that could cause illness). Goat's milk has a similar protein and fat profile to cow's milk. Other goat's milk food products, such as cheese or yogurt, are now available in most grocery stores. Goat's milk can also be used to make many other products such as soaps and lotions.

Q. Why do some goats have horns and others don't?

A. As with some sheep and cattle, some goats will never develop horns. These animals are called *polled*. Most goats, both male and female, naturally have horns. Some goats are dehorned or disbudded so that the horns cannot grow. This is done to prevent injury to the goat itself, other goats or the owner.



ANIMAL CARE AND WELL-BEING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

LLAMA & ALPACA



Q. Do llamas and alpacas spit?

A. Llamas and alpacas might spit at each other to establish their social order, but they rarely spit at humans. This might happen if the animals were scared, threatened or uncomfortable. Like other animals, llamas and alpacas would use other behaviors to let a human know they were uncomfortable. If the person did not pay attention or understand, the animal might spit.

Q. Do llamas and alpacas bite?

A. No, llamas and alpacas do not generally bite. They have teeth only on their bottom jaw and a dental pad on the top jaw, much like cattle.

Q. What are llamas and alpacas used for?

A. Like sheep and goats, llamas and alpacas have multiple purposes. Both llamas and alpacas have fiber that can be sheared, spun and used for making clothing and other things. Alpacas are raised mostly for their fiber, but llamas have many other jobs. Llamas act as pack animals, carrying things for humans. They are also milked or raised for meat. Llamas also make excellent guard animals for flocks of sheep, goats or even alpacas.

Q. What is that noise they make? Why do they do it?

A. As with many animals, llamas and alpacas have several different sounds they make. The sound you hear most often is probably a hum, which they make when bored, tired or curious. They also make an alarm call when they feel threatened or scream when scared. A mother llama or alpaca will make clucking sounds to her infant, or *cria*. Only males make an *orgling* sound, a mating call.



ANIMAL CARE AND WELL-BEING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

POULTRY



Q. Why are the beaks trimmed on those chickens?

A. Some chickens' beaks are trimmed to prevent them from pecking themselves or other birds. The very tip, which can be sharp, is removed to keep the birds healthy and safe.

Q. Why are some chickens missing feathers?

A. Chickens can lose their feathers for many reasons. If a chicken is more than 1 year old, it may be molting, a natural process in which chickens lose all their feathers and grow new ones. In addition, the feathers may be damaged or fall out if chickens rub up against their cages. Sometimes they pull out their own or other chickens' feathers. This *feather pecking* can be a behavioral problem.

Q. What is that thing hanging from the turkey's neck?

A. Turkeys have some interesting features that other poultry species don't have. The flap of skin on the turkey's neck is called a *throat wattle*. Turkeys also have round bumps on the featherless part of their necks called *caruncles*. The throat wattle and caruncles of male turkeys can turn bright red when they become aggressive or excited.

Q. Do all chickens lay eggs?

A. *Hens*, or female chickens, lay eggs. Male chickens, or *roosters*, do not lay eggs. Also, just as there are different breeds of other animals, there are different breeds of chickens. Some chicken breeds are raised mostly for their eggs, while other chicken breeds are raised for their meat.

Q. What are the bands on the birds' legs?

A. These *leg bands* identify the birds. Many of the chickens at the fair look similar, so it is important to be able to tell them apart. The leg bands mark each bird to help keep track of them.



Q. Why are the eggs and chickens different colors?

A. Different breeds of chickens will look different and lay different colored eggs. The eggs will all taste the same even though they can look different. All eggs start out white, but as the egg travels out of the hen, different colors, or *pigments*, may be deposited on the shell before it is laid. One easy way to guess what color egg a hen will lay is to look at her ear lobe – if it's white, she will probably lay white eggs.

Q. What is the stick in the chicken cage?

A. Some cages have a stick or other object called a *perch* or a *roost*. Chickens use the perch to sit on and perform a behavior called *perching*. Most chickens will perch at night while sleeping. Perching is an important behavior for chickens because it helps to keep their bones strong and healthy. They also learn how to jump between different heights, a normal behavior for these birds.

Q. How can you tell if your bird is sick?

A. Sick birds look different from healthy birds. They are *listless*, which means they have little energy. You will also notice changes in their behavior. They'll spend more time resting and sleeping, and spend less time cleaning their feathers, or *preening*. Because sick birds spend less time preening, their feathers are more ruffled and do not look as smooth and clean as those of healthy birds. Some sick birds try to find a place where they can be far away from other birds.

Q. Why are some chickens in cages alone and others together?

A. If a chicken was raised with another chicken that came to fair, they might be housed together. If the bird was brought to the fair alone, it might be housed alone for safety. As with people, not all chickens get along, especially if they are newly introduced. Housing them alone but in a place where they can still see, hear and smell other chickens helps to keep all the birds healthy and less stressed.

Q. Why are the chickens digging in the dirt (or dust)?

A. Chickens use dust and dirt for bathing and keeping their feathers clean. Dust bathing is a type of grooming or cleaning behavior that chickens and other animals perform. This process helps to make sure the feathers provide a good layer of insulation to keep the chicken warm or cool depending on the season. It also removes parasites, such as mites, that might be living on the chicken.



Q. How can you tell if they are sick?

A. Just as with humans, when llamas or alpacas are sick, they will eat and drink less, rest a lot more, and sometimes have a fever or other symptoms. By watching the llamas and alpacas, and knowing how they usually behave, we can tell when they are not feeling good and take appropriate action to help them get better.

Q. What is the difference between a llama and an alpaca?

A. Llamas are larger, taller and heavier than alpacas. Llamas are used mainly as pack animals, carrying things for humans, while alpacas are mainly bred to produce fiber. Llamas have banana-shaped ears, while alpacas have smaller diamond-shaped ears. The llamas' fiber is coarser than that of alpacas.

Q. Why do they all go to the bathroom in the same spot?

A. Llamas and alpacas display an interesting and unique behavior, using the same space to go to the bathroom called a *communal dung pile*. The pile is usually out of the way and far away from food. This helps to keep the rest of the area clean for resting, eating and other activities.

Q. Why are they chewing gum?

A. They're not really chewing gum, they're *chewing their cud* – or in scientific terms, *ruminating*. This is similar to what cattle, sheep and goats do. However, llamas and alpacas have only a three-chambered stomach, rather than the four-chambered stomach of *ruminant* animals such as cattle, sheep and goats. Not true ruminants, llamas and alpacas are instead *pseudoruminants*.

Q. Why do they lie down so funny?

A. That is just the way llamas and alpacas lie down. They curl their legs up underneath them when they rest or sleep. The position is called *kush*, and camels, a distant relative, do it too.

Q. Does it hurt to have their hair cut?

A. No. Just as with *shearing* sheep, cutting the fiber from llamas and alpacas does not hurt them if done properly. Llamas and alpacas are generally shorn in the spring, which helps keep them cool in the heat. Their coats grow back to keep them warm in the colder months.



Q. Does the collar hurt the goat's neck?

A. No, the collar does not hurt the goat. If used with proper training, the collar is a useful tool to help lead the goat. To make sure the goat is comfortable, the collar must be placed correctly on its neck and must fit properly.

Q. Why are some goats penned alone and others together?

A. Goats are a herd species. They like to be around other goats. They do not necessarily have to be in the same pen, but they should be able to see, hear and smell other goats. As with people, not all goats get along, especially if they are newly introduced. It might be better for each to have its own pen so they are not stressed.

Q. Does it hurt the goat when she is milked?

A. No, milking is not painful. Just as with dairy cows or sheep, as long as the goat is milked properly, it does not hurt her. Care must be taken to make sure the person doing the milking knows the correct way to do so. People who milk the goat must also know how to prepare the goat before milking and how to clean the *udder* after milking to make sure the goat stays healthy.

Q. How can you tell if your goat is sick?

A. Just as with humans, when goats are sick, they will eat and drink less, rest a lot more, and sometimes have a fever or other symptoms. By watching the goat and knowing how it usually behaves, we can tell when it's not feeling good and take appropriate action to help it get better.

Q. What are the tags in the goat ears?

A. This is an *ear tag*, and every goat has an identification number printed on the tag. Farmers use the number to find a goat quickly. If you see a goat without an ear tag, that's okay because its identification is tattooed inside its ear. If there is a disease outbreak, veterinarians can use these tags to track sick animals.

Q. Why is the goat chewing gum?

A. They're not really chewing gum, they're *chewing their cud* – or in scientific terms, *ruminating*. Cattle, sheep and goats are *ruminant animals*. That means the animal has a four-chambered stomach and can digest feed that a single-chambered human stomach can't handle. A goat's *cud* is food that is belched up from the first stomach chamber. Chewing the food again grinds it into very small pieces that are more easily digested in the next stomach chamber, the rumen.