



Clare Animal Welfare (CAW) General Policies

1. CAW Policy Definitions

- * The term "animals" means all sentient non-human creatures.
- * The term "suffering" includes stress, fear, pain, discomfort, injury, disease and behavioural and mental distress
- * The term "mutilation" includes any procedure carried out with or without instrument, which involves unnecessary interference with the sensitive tissue or bone structure of an animal.
- * The term "cruelty" means having, or showing indifference to, or pleasures in, animal suffering; unnecessarily causing mental or physical pain or suffering.

2. CAW Policy on Working Animals

Working animals should be provided with food, water, shelter and rest appropriate to their needs and in line with legislation.

In the case of equines, particular attention should be given to foot care and properly fitted and maintained harness.

During rest periods, working equines should have access to shelter and water.

3. CAW Policy on Companion Animals

CAW approves of the keeping of companion animals only when there is full personal commitment to the welfare of the animals. The animals must be provided with shelter, exercise, care, food and water appropriate to their physiological and behavioural needs.

The regulations governing companion animals must include the licensing and control of breeders to ensure humane breeding and rearing conditions.

CAW is opposed to all mutilations on companion animals carried out for non-therapeutic reasons. It also condemns selective breeding in the search for certain external features, which adversely affect the health and welfare of the animals.

CAW considers the neutering of companion animals an essential part of responsible pet ownership unless there are veterinary or other valid reasons to the contrary.

CAW reluctantly accepts that the humane destruction of healthy animals is sometimes unavoidable. It is imperative that these animals are euthanized by a properly trained and responsible professional using a method that is both painless and effective.

Feral Cats are the offspring of domestic cats who through no fault of their own have become unsociable and fearful of human contact. They forage for a living and live in colonies. If members of the public deign to feed and care for these felines, they are obliged to adhere to a T.N.R. programme to control population growth and prevent the development/spread of disease.

CAW is opposed to the use of prong or shock collars.

4. CAW Policy on Farm Animals

Farm Animals should be afforded the five basic freedoms of shelter, exercise, feed, water mental stimulation. The CAW is opposed to any methods at any stage of the animal's life that compromise quality of life.

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5. CAW Policy on Pet Sales

CAW advocates a system of licensing and inspection of pet shops. CAW opposes the offering for sale in pet shops, of native wild animals, or of exotic animals, which are not adaptable to Irish climate or conditions or which has been caught in the wild. Puppies and kittens should not be kept in pet shops separated from their mothers and should not be homed without a home check. CAW opposes the practice of "puppy farming", where animals are bred on an ongoing basis for monetary gain. CAW is fully supportive of microchipping and believes that no animal should be homed from any source without the animal being registered to an address that has been authenticated and home checked. CAW is opposed to the use of newspaper advertisements, free advertising papers and other media outlets being used for the sale of pet animals. Any animal being "offered free to good home" should be treated with suspicion and may be followed up by the Society.

6. CAW Policy on Animals in Education/Laboratories.

CAW is generally opposed to the practice of dissection of animals in schools, believing that it can lead to desensitisation and a lessening of respect for life. This opposition includes dissection of invertebrate as well as vertebrate animals.

CAW is opposed to any pupils being compelled to either perform or watch dissection of animals. CAW is opposed to any form of animal experimentation, apart from simple observation and behavioural studies in schools, and believes that this ban should apply to both vertebrate and invertebrate animals.

7. CAW Policies on Wild Animals

CAW is, in principle, opposed to the trapping or the use of traps and snares, capturing confining, taking or killing of wild animals, or the infliction of any suffering on them. This includes hunting labelled as sport, or for the taking of skins or other animal derived substance. In circumstances where it is deemed necessary to control wild or stray populations, or animals considered to be pests, then this should be done without inflicting avoidable suffering. Effective methods (e.g. fertility control or other non-lethal methods) should be used to avoid the need continually to remove or kill animals. CAW is opposed to badger culling.

8. CAW on Genetic Engineering

CAW is opposed to all forms of genetic manipulation, whether by breeding or genetic engineering that result in abnormalities, excessive developments of certain bodily features, a reduction in animal health or welfare, or are for trivial or cosmetic purposes.

Animals resulting from such manipulative practices should not be released into the environment until several generations have been evaluated to ensure that no harmful side effects arise.

9. CAW Policy on Animals in Sport and Entertainment

CAW is opposed to the use of animals in sport or for entertainment when such use is contrary to the animals' nature, or may involve suffering or may adversely affect the animals' welfare.

CAW opposes any "activity" that involves pitting animals or humans against animals in hunts or fights.

CAW is totally opposed to exhibitions or presentations of wild animals in circuses and travelling menageries.

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CAW believes that wherever they are used in the making of films or television programmes or in the theatre, animals must not be caused any suffering.

CAW is in general opposed to the giving of live animals as prizes.

Accepting the findings of the Medway Report that fish can feel pain, fish are now known to be sentient and should be treated accordingly.

CAW opposes foxhunting, live hare coursing, stag hunting and otter hunting. CAW particularly opposes "sports" which involve the blocking of earths or the digging out of animals that have gone to ground as part of their natural defence mechanism.

10. CAW Policy on Marine Mammals

Acknowledging that there is no humane method of killing whales, the CAW is opposed to the killing of whales for any purpose except to eliminate pain and suffering.

CAW opposes, on both ethical and humane grounds, the harassment, capture or killing of marine mammals for commercial and sport purposes.

11. CAW Policy on The Transport of Animals

No animals should be transported in a manner, or for a length of time, which is likely to cause suffering.

12. CAW Policy on Open Farms

CAW is concerned at the development of "zoo type" open farms and advocates the introduction of a licensing system for such farms.

Note: CAW offers the following guidelines for farms open to the public

Animals should be on view in their natural surroundings, not in zoo type enclosures.

No exotic or native wild animals should be on display.

Where young animals are available to be handled by children, this should be done only under supervision and for strictly limited periods.

No animals should be on offer for sale to visitors.

13. CAW policy on Laboratory Procedures

CAW is opposed to all experiments and scientific Procedures which cause pain, distress or suffering to living animals.

CAW advocates that all institutions using animals for research have an Ethics Committee to scrutinise and either approve or reject project applications and to monitor and control the conduct of subsequent experiments. The members of this committee must include animal welfare representatives.

CAW is opposed to all experiments on animals which involve unnecessary repetition, which involve techniques for which satisfactory and humane alternatives have already been developed, which are for scientifically trivial ends or which are for testing substances not essential to the health or welfare of humans.

CAW is opposed to the taking of animals from the wild for use in research.

CAW particularly opposes the use of animals for testing cosmetics.

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