What is Animal Welfare?

World Organisation for Animal Health defines animal welfare as "how an animal is coping with the conditions in which it lives."
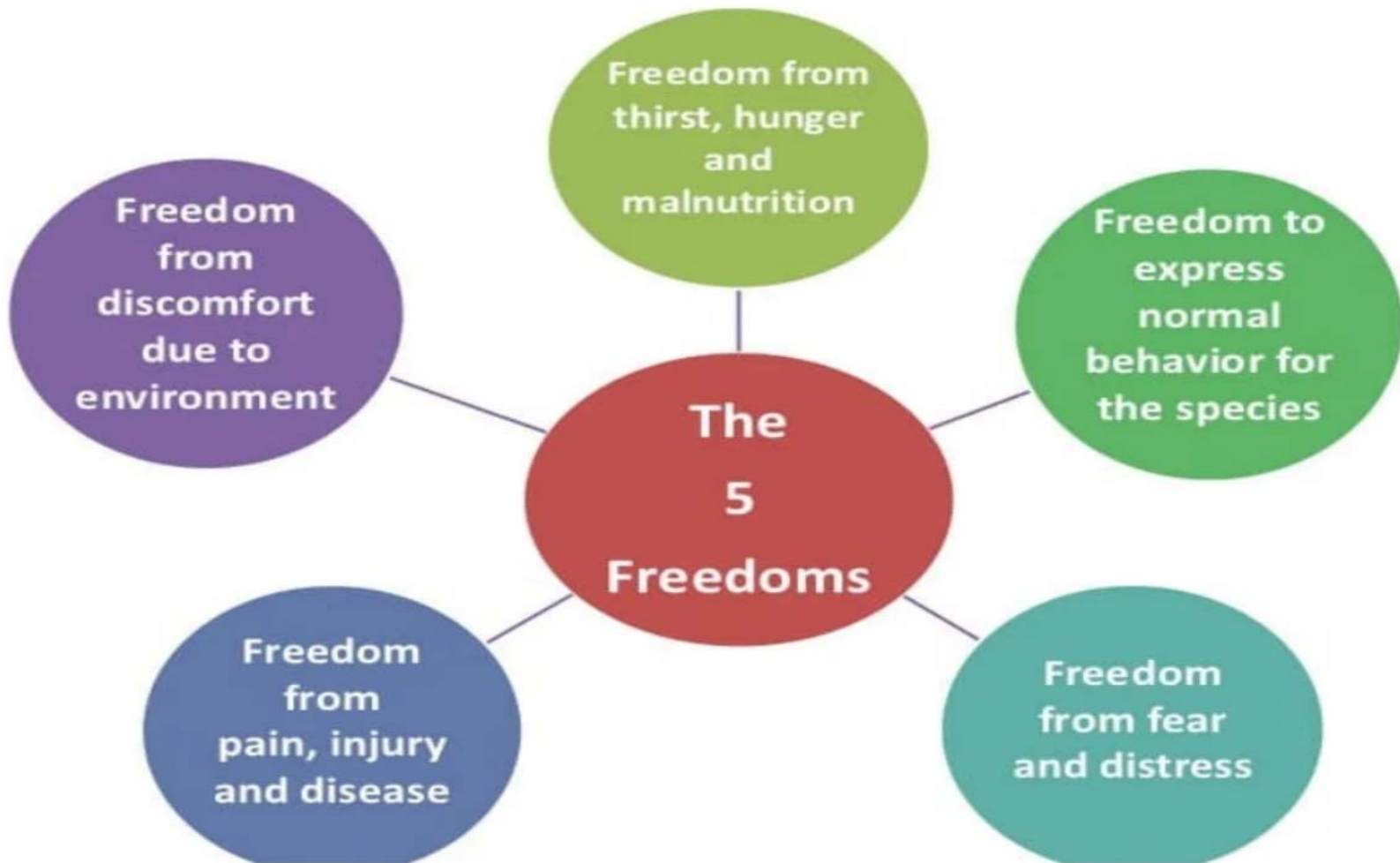
An animal is in a good state of welfare

if it is healthy, comfortable, well nourished, safe, able to express innate behaviour, and if it is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear, and distress.

Factors affecting Animal welfare are:

1. Health and normal biological functioning.
2. The subjective "feelings" of the animals.
3. The animals' ability to live a natural life.
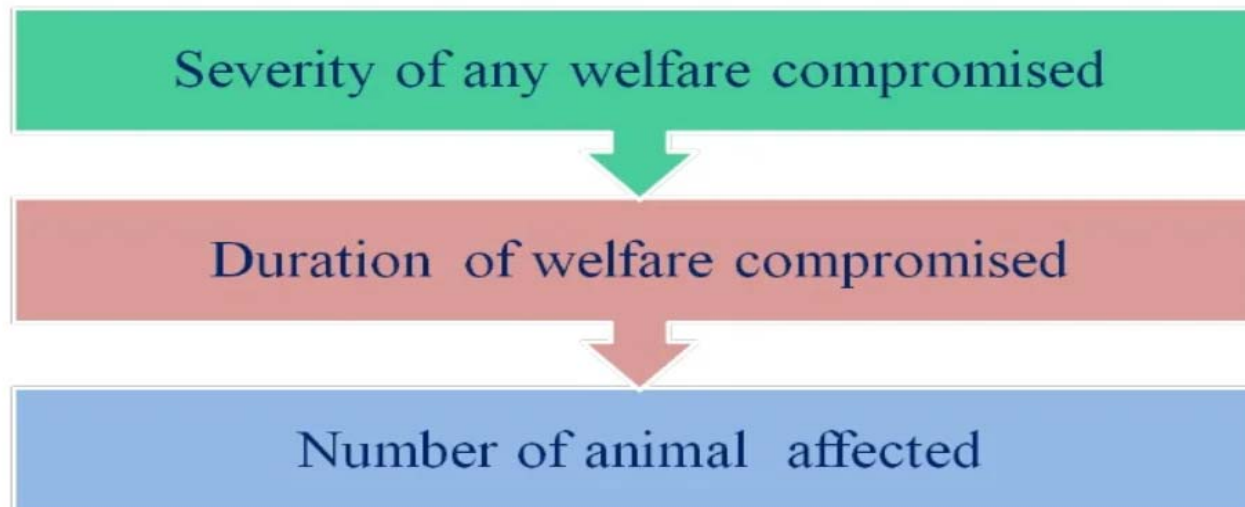
Why studying animal welfare is so important?

Because it creates a sense of compassion, justice, and a respect for the value of all living things.

Freedom from thirst, hunger and malnutrition

Freedom from discomfort due to environment

Freedom to express normal behavior for the species

The 5 Freedoms

Freedom from pain, injury and disease

Freedom from fear and distress

(Brambell Report, 1965, revised by FAWC(1993)

HOW TO ASSES LIVESTOCK WELFARE AT FARM

Once we have identified which aspects of the Five Freedoms have potentially been compromised we also need to consider the followings

Severity of any welfare compromised

↓

Duration of welfare compromised

↓

Number of animal affected

Welfare principles and criteria as defined by Welfare Quality

Welfare principles	Welfare criteria
Good feeding	1. Absence of prolonged hunger 2. Absence of prolonged thirst
Good housing	3. Comfort around resting 4. Thermal comfort 5. Ease of movement
Good health	6. Absence of injuries 7. Absence of disease 8. Absence of pain induced by management procedures
Appropriate behavior	9. Expression of social behaviors 10. Expression of other behaviors 11. Good human-animal relationship 12. Positive emotional state

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATOR TO ASSESS WELFARE

Behaviour is useful in a study of animal welfare because it gives us

- Indication of how animals feel
- Choices that the animal makes
- Reaction to a variety of stimuli

Behavioural indicators in welfare in comparison with physiological measures

ADVANTAGES

- NON INVASIVE
- NON INTRUSIVE
- LESS EQUIPMENT
- CAN BE DONE AWAY FROM LAB

DISADVANTAGE ➡ INTERPRETATION IS DIFFICULT

Behaviour Indicators of Livestock

Good welfare	Poor welfare
Alertness	Limited range of activity
Curiosity	Panting and/or sweating
Range of activities	Huddling or shivering
Interaction with other members of the herd/flock	Depression
Interaction with humans	Abnormal fear or aggression towards humans
Play	Stereotypies