

Key Message 1

Healthy animals mean healthy food for you and your family.

- For animals to produce meat, milk and eggs, America's farmers and ranchers must take all possible steps to ensure that animals are well cared for seven days a week, 52 weeks a year.
- As farmers and ranchers, we recognize that superior animal welfare practices lead to the production of high-quality, safe and wholesome meat, milk and eggs, and we're constantly seeking ways to improve the well-being and comfort of our animals.
- Simply put, without healthy and content animals, farmers and ranchers would not be in business.

Key Message 2

Farmers and ranchers care about the health, well-being and safety of our animals, and we ensure this through proper management and shelter.

- Farmers and ranchers provide adequate food, water and medical care to protect our animals' health.
- We also provide appropriate shelter to ensure livestock can exhibit normal behaviors at rest and remain protected from disease, competition, injury and predators.
- Quality Assurance programs at the national and state levels provide guidelines for the production of safe, wholesome animals, including recommendations on necessary animal handling and facilities.

Key Message 3

Standards for animal care should be based on the expertise of veterinarians, farmers, ranchers and animal scientists -- the people who work with farm animals daily.

- American farmers and ranchers have been working with veterinarians, animal scientists, agricultural engineers and animal well-being experts to continually develop and support reasonable science-based guidelines and audits.
- As the people who work with livestock 24/7, farmers and ranchers, as well as veterinarians and animal care scientists, provide the voices of experience and reason in addressing animal welfare issues.

Key Message 4

Changes to animal well-being guidelines should be based on data, expert analysis and economic feasibility.

- Adding unnecessary costs to U.S. production will increase the amount of food imported from places that have an inferior record on food safety and animal well-being.
- Overzealous standards will increase the price of food, negatively affecting all families trying to make ends meet.



General Bridging Phrases: *Use these phrases to transition from a question or topic to the messages that support your agenda.*

- What I'm really hearing you ask is....(*rephrased question*)
- What's really important is...
- It's important to remember that...
- Let's get this in perspective...
- We shouldn't lose sight of...
- The key point is...
- We shouldn't forget that...
- But, you know...
- Did you know...
- That's an interesting question, but the heart of the matter is...
- Let me start by clarifying...
- That's a very good question, but the real issue is...



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What to do when the media calls...

1. Buy some time to prepare:
Schedule a time when you can focus yet accommodate reporter
2. Gather information
 - What's the reporter's objective/ angle for the story?
 - Who is the primary audience?
 - Who are the other sources?
 - Do they usually cover this type of story?
 - What led them to the story?
3. Follow through at agreed upon time.



AFBF

Conversations on Animal Care

**Spokesperson Pocket
Guide**