FARM ANIMALS

WHAT types of animals are raised on farms?

In Canada, the most common animals that farmers raise for meat are beef cattle, pigs and chickens.

Chickens raised to produce meat (commonly referred to as **poultry**) are called **broilers**. Chickens kept to produce eggs are called **laying hens** or **layers**. Chickens raised for breeding purposes are called **breeders**.

Other meat-producing animals include turkeys, sheep (lamb or mutton), bison, goats, deer (venison) and elk. Dairy cattle, goats and sheep produce milk.
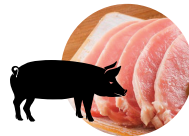
WHY do farmers raise animals?

Farmers raise animals in order to produce food and other products for people in Canada and the world.

Beef cattle = beef products

Dairy Cows = dairy products

Pigs = pork products

Chickens = meat & eggs

Sheep = wool, milk & cheese

Goats = milk & cheese

Horses are most kept as pleasure animals, but are also used as work animals on ranches or farms to help move cattle. Sometimes, though, they are raised for meat products.

! Farmers and ranchers refer to their farm animals as **livestock**.

Barn for housing chickens raised for meat

FARMERS OR RANCHERS?

Farmers often specialize in growing certain crops or raising certain animals. For example, there are grain farmers, dairy farmers, poultry farmers and pig farmers. Some farmers who focus on raising animals also grow crops, mostly for animal feed. Many farmers raise cattle on land that is not suitable for growing grain crops.

In Canada, ranchers generally raise cattle in pastures. In addition to grazing cattle, a rancher will grow crops for cattle feed: grasses and legumes such as alfalfa for hay, and grains such as oats and barley.

FARM ANIMALS

ANIMALS SERVE OTHER PURPOSES IN ADDITION TO PROVIDING FOOD

Gelatin, a protein from the connective tissue of cattle and pigs, is an ingredient used in the production of Jell-O, glue and many beauty products. Gelatin serves primarily as a thickening agent and a texturizer that makes products smooth.

Wax from bees is used in the production of lip balms and candles. Wool from sheep is used to make clothing, carpet and upholstery fabric.

These are referred to as **animal by-products**.

WHAT IS ANIMAL WELFARE?

Animal welfare is the well-being of animals based on their living conditions. Providing good quality animal welfare is very important to farmers and ranchers.

Farmers and ranchers are responsible for all aspects of their animals' well-being. This includes proper housing, nutrition, disease prevention and treatment, and humane handling. They are also required to foster natural behaviours and animals' needs for social interaction with other animals.

THE FIVE FREEDOMS[1]

The welfare needs of animals cared for by humans are recognized worldwide as follows:

1 FROM HUNGER, MALNUTRITION AND THIRST

2 FROM FEAR & DISTRESS

FREEDOM

3 FROM PHYSICAL & THERMAL DISCOMFORT

4 FROM PAIN, INJURY & DISEASE

5 TO EXPRESS NORMAL PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOUR

WHAT ARE CODES OF PRACTICE?

Farmers, veterinarians, scientists and consumers contribute to creating **codes of practice**[2] for care and handling of farm animals based on science and practical farm management.

Each animal species (e.g., beef cattle, chickens, pigs) has a specific code of practice that addresses nutrition, housing, health care, etc. Farmers are expected to follow codes of practice for the animals they raise.

FISH AND BEES ARE FARMED, TOO!

The farming of fish is called **aquaculture.** There are both salt water and fresh water fish farms in Canada.

A bee farm is called an **apiary**. Bees produce honey and are important plant pollinators.

Sheep are raised for wool, meat products and milk.