



HUMANE TRENDS



Measuring the Status of Animal Protection in the United States

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Introduction

Humane Trends is a barometer of the status of animal protection in the United States. This study brings together a collection of 25 diverse indicators to assess the status and progress of animal well-being, providing a comprehensive view of animal use and abuse in the United States to help inform animal advocates as well as policymakers and the public. Although *Humane Trends* compiles the most accurate data currently available for each indicator, the overall study is limited by the lack of reliable data regarding animal protection issues. *Humane Trends* serves to underscore the need for further research and more accurate information about our treatment of animals.

Directly or indirectly, everyone living in the United States has an impact on the lives of animals. In order for the country to make changes to improve animal protection and mitigate animal cruelty and suffering, we must be aware of and understand the effects that we have on nonhuman animals. Measuring the state of animal protection in the United States through *Humane Trends* will help increase this understanding. The study also helps identify areas of animal protection where improvements have been made and where further changes are most needed.

The majority of *Humane Trends* indicators focus on issues that directly impact animals in four areas, including companion animals, animals used in science, wildlife and exotics, and farmed animals. The fifth and final category of indicators covers general measures that do not directly relate to specific types of animals, such as the amount of discussion of animal issues. Each indicator has an associated goal or target that represents what most animal advocates would consider the “ideal” state for that indicator.

This is the inaugural edition of the *Humane Trends* dataset, using the most up-to-date information available. The indicators will be updated at least bi-annually, as new data become available, with future updates published on HumaneTrends.com. Over time, the study will track gains and losses for each indicator. The Humane Research Council hopes that, by tracking changes in animal protection, the *Humane Trends* study will serve as a valuable resource for developing legislation, government policies, industry practices, and social attitudes that will improve the status of animals in the United States.

While it is unrealistic to expect long-lasting change for animals to occur over a single year or even over five years, it remains vitally important to measure those changes. This report and the included indicators are subject to some limitations, most importantly the lack of reliable data regarding animal use. Even with reliable data, the breadth of animal use and abuse in the United States cannot be fully represented by a set of 25 indicators. However, the *Humane Trends* study provides a useful and much needed snapshot of important and diverse issues facing nonhuman animals covering a range of ambitious and practical advocacy goals.

Study Background

The *Humane Trends* study provides a diverse and comprehensive look at the status of animal protection in the United States and will assess changes in that status over time. The study was inspired by a similar research effort carried out in the United Kingdom by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals¹. The U.S.-oriented *Humane Trends* is a collaborative study designed and managed by the Humane Research Council, with funding assistance provided by animal protection organizations and foundations as well as input from experts on various animal issues.

For more information about *Humane Trends*, [please contact the Humane Research Council](#).

Methodology

The *Humane Trends* study, from the Humane Research Council, includes 25 indicators organized into five categories that together provide a quantitative evaluation of the state of animal protection in the United States. The overall “score” for the United States is calculated from the equally weighted average of the scores for the five categories of indicators. The category scores, in turn, are calculated from the equally weighted average of the indicator scores within each category. Each individual indicator is scored on a 100-point scale using a unique approach that is appropriate for that indicator, as described in the following pages.

The scoring methods are determined in part based on several broad, but necessary parameters. First, many of the indicators are scored relative to an established “baseline” that represents the peak of animal usage for that indicator occurring within the past five years. The historical review is limited to the past five years to ensure that the data are both contemporary and consistent across indicators. This results in generally lower scores because, for many indicators, the U.S. is currently at or near our peak “baseline” levels.

Executive Summary

The indicator scores range from a low of 4 for Farmed Animals to a high of 47 for Companion Animals, on a 100-point scale. The fact that no category of indicators has a score higher than 47 supports the view that there is significant room to improve the status of animal protection in the United States. This is due in part to the fact that the United States is at or near its peak levels of animal consumption, which drives the scores lower. For the scores to improve over time, the U.S. will need to both reduce its use of animals and improve conditions for the reduced number of animals.

The overall score for the United States is 34. This is the equally weighted average of the scores for all of the individual indicators included in the *Humane Trends* study. The scores for all categories and individual indicators are provided in the table below. Detailed descriptions and methodologies for each indicator begin on the following page.

CATEGORY / INDICATOR	SCORE
COMPANION ANIMALS (average of below scores)	47
Number of animals killed in the shelter system	15
Number of animals entering shelters	19
Proportion of new companion animals that are purchased	64
Proportion of U.S. states with laws regulating companion animal breeders	44
Proportion of adults who say the welfare and protection of companion animals is important	91
ANIMALS USED IN SCIENCE (average of below scores)	33
Number of Animal Welfare Act covered animals used in animal experiments	5
Proportion of experiments that involve pain without providing anesthesia/analgesia	0
Proportion of U.S. states with student choice policies in place to avoid dissection	30
Proportion of medical schools that do not require terminal animal labs	89
Proportion of adults that think medical testing on animals is “morally acceptable”	41
WILDLIFE/EXOTICS (average of below scores)	44
Proportion of states with laws that limit owning or keeping exotic animals	58
Proportion of U.S. species listed as endangered or vulnerable	87
Acreage of protected land, oceans, lakes, and reservoirs	34
Number of hunting licenses issued	0
Proportion of adults who think that buying and wearing fur is “morally acceptable”	40
FARMED ANIMALS (average of below scores)	4
Per capita consumption of animal products	2
Proportion of U.S. adults that are vegetarian/vegan	3
Number of land-based animals slaughtered	5
Proportion of U.S. states with at least minimal anti-confinement laws	9
Number of animals certified under the major humane labeling programs	2
GENERAL INDICATORS (average of below scores)	41
Amount of discussion of animal issues among U.S. adults	52
Proportion of U.S. universities with human-animal studies courses or animal law programs	5
Average “Humane Scorecard” scores for the U.S. Congress	47
Proportion of U.S. states with felony-level animal cruelty laws	32
Proportion of adults who agree with overarching animal protection goals	69

Conclusions

This report examines the state of animal protection in the United States using 25 of the most relevant and reliable data sources currently available. In general, the trends show that the state of animal protection in the U.S. is far from ideal. Although some individual indicators come close to meeting the desired goals of the animal protection movement, no group of indicators in any one area reaches even the halfway point of the goal that advocates seek. The average of all indicators was 34 out of 100. One way to think about this number is to say that the animal protection movement is about one-third of the way to meeting its goals, as they are defined by this report.

The area of companion animals had the highest average score, receiving 47 out of a possible 100 points. This is closely followed by an average score of 44 in the area of Wildlife and Exotics. It makes sense that the U.S. treats companion animals better than other types of animals; companion animals are given a higher status than other animals and interact with us in very intimate ways. They live in our homes, sleep in our beds, and we take them to the doctor when they are ill. For this reason, it makes sense that we do the most to protect this group of animals.

However, considering the prevalence of companion animals in U.S. society—two-thirds of U.S. households have one or more companion animals—this score is lower than expected. Although attitudes toward companion animals are very positive (e.g., nearly all U.S. adults think that the protection of companion animals is important), outcomes and behaviors are not (e.g., about 3.5 million animals are killed in shelters each year due mostly to a lack of homes).

The category of indicators that received the lowest score is farmed animals, which scored 4 out of 100. This is an area that needs particular attention from the animal protection community given that it is where the most animals are killed each year for human purposes. Over 9 billion land animals are slaughtered in this industry each year. Only 2% of these animals were part of a humane labeling program that attempted to ease animals' suffering before slaughter, and fewer than 4% of U.S. adults choose not to eat animals (i.e., are vegetarian/vegan).

In as concise a manner as possible, this report consolidates the range of major animal protection goals in the United States and measures how well these goals are being met for the country as a whole. The current state of animal protection is far from ideal. In all areas that animals need protection, animal advocates must continue working to meet their goals, with arguably the most work needed in the area of farm animals. This report seeks to highlight those areas that are most in need of improvement, with the hope that animal advocates and policymakers can use this information to create positive change for animals.



COMPANION ANIMALS – Category Score: 47/100

Indicator: Number of animals killed in the shelter system

Score: 15/100

Method/Source: Using estimates compiled by ANIMAL PEOPLE, the established baseline for this indicator is approximately 4.2 million shelter deaths (2008)². The score calculates how much shelter deaths have been reduced since the baseline year by taking the difference between the baseline figure and the current number for shelter deaths, as a proportion of the baseline figure.

Discussion: The number one cause of unnatural deaths for dogs and cats in the U.S. is being killed in animal shelters. The ideal scenario for the companion animal population is not only to reduce the number of homeless animals who are killed in shelters, but also to see that no animals die in this way.

In 2010, an estimated 1,474,019 dogs and 2,062,072 cats were killed in shelters. In both cases this was an improvement from 2008, when shelter deaths were at their highest in the past five years. There were over a half-million fewer animals killed in shelters in 2010 compared with 2008, according to these estimates. This moves the indicator 15% closer to the goal of zero shelter deaths. For the sake of simplicity, the analysis assumes that euthanasia of “untreatable” animals is a very small proportion of the total.

The data is compiled by ANIMAL PEOPLE and is based on a sample of shelters. There are some methodological concerns with this measure, as the sample of shelters used is not necessarily random or representative. However, it is adequate for our purposes for two reasons. First, the study author has adjusted his survey findings based on demographic assumptions to correct for error and geographic bias. Further, this is currently the best and most comprehensive data available on shelter deaths that is collected on a regular basis.

Indicator: Number of animals entering shelters

Score: 19/100

Method/Source: Using estimates provided by the Humane Society of the United States³, approximately 6-8 million animals enter U.S. shelters each year. More accurate estimates and historical figures are unavailable and will remain so until the Shelter Population Index⁴ results are available. As a temporary placeholder, the score for this indicator is estimated using a baseline of over 8 million animals entering the shelter system in 2008. This baseline is determined by assuming a decline in shelter intake that is proportional with the decline in euthanasia in the previous indicator.

Discussion: There is currently a high level of companion animal overpopulation due to abandonment, free-roaming animals, the breeding of animals, and a lack of spaying and neutering. This leads to a large number of animals in shelters, with the peak in the last five years being over 8.1 million animals entering shelters, estimated based on a rate of decline that is proportional with the decline in euthanasia.

To help meet the previous indicator's goal to eradicate shelter deaths, the shelter population must be significantly reduced so that the population of animals is low enough as to not exceed the demand for new companion animals through adoptions. Although the actual "demand" for companion animals is not known, we estimate that if the shelter population is reduced to 2 million, animals will not be killed in shelters and most animals will be adopted.

The current numbers are based on a shelter intake estimate of 6-8 million provided by the Humane Society of the United States. The "baseline" figure is determined by estimating a rate of decline that is proportional to the decline in shelter deaths (see the previous indicator). More accurate estimates are being calculated as part of the Shelter Population Index study. The full report has not yet been released, but when it is available this measure will be updated with more accurate numbers.

Indicator: Proportion of new companion animals that are purchased

Score: 64/100

Method/Source: Compiled based on survey results provided by the American Pet Products Association (APPA)⁵, which identifies sources of dogs and cats including adoptions from animal shelters, humane societies, and rescue groups as well as purchases through pet stores and breeders. The score is calculated as 100% minus the proportion of animals that are purchased (as opposed to adopted or received from a non-commercial source).

Discussion: It is a major goal of those concerned with animal protection that companion animals are adopted rather than purchased in order to reduce the problems of animal overpopulation and shelter deaths. Breeding, buying and selling companion animals not only does nothing to help reduce these problems, but they are a driving force for overpopulation and shelter deaths. Companion animals live in two-thirds of U.S. households and so changing behaviors so that people adopt, rather than buy companion animals is an important focus of animal protection efforts. It is a goal for advocates that no animals will be purchased from pet stores, the internet, or breeders.

The American Pet Products Association surveys U.S. households about where companion animals are obtained. We focus on their measures of cats and dogs as they are the most common companion animals in U.S. households. APPA reports the percentage of households with companion animals from each source. Based on these percentages and their data on the average number of animals from each source per household, we calculated estimates of the total percentage of animals from each source in all U.S. households.

The most recent APPA survey data available is from 2008. Combining dogs and cats, an estimated 36% of animals in U.S. homes were purchased in 2008, creating a score of 64, as 64% of companion animals did not come from these sources. In 2008, 22% of dogs and 43% of cats were adopted from humane societies and rescue groups or were strays. However, 46% of dogs and 26% of cats came from the least desirable sources, including breeders and pet stores. The discrepancy between cats and dogs can largely be explained by two factors. First, many of the cats were strays. This reflects a higher feral and free-roaming cat population compared with the stray dog population. Second, many more dogs than cats were purchased directly from breeders (20% vs. 3%), reflecting a culture that values breed-specific traits in dogs, who are more "visible" than cats as they often travel in public with their human companions.

Indicator: Proportion of U.S. states with laws regulating companion animal breeders**Score: 44/100**

Method/Source: Compiled based on research by the Animal Legal and Historical Center⁶ for dog breeders and Born Free USA⁷ for bird breeders. Each state is given separate credit for regulating dog breeders and for regulating bird breeders. The goal is to have all 50 states with laws that regulate both dog and bird breeders. The score is calculated based on the proportion of states that have laws regulating both dog and/or bird breeding facilities, with partial credit for laws that cover only dogs or birds.

Discussion: Puppy mills and bird mills refer to dog and bird breeding facilities that breed animals for profit. The presence of puppy mills and bird mills reduces the number of animals adopted and promotes the notion that animals are commodities. Furthermore, due to the profit-driven nature of these businesses, investigations have found that animal suffering is the norm, not the exception, in many dog and bird breeding facilities. For these reasons, having regulation of such breeding facilities in all 50 states is an important animal protection goal.

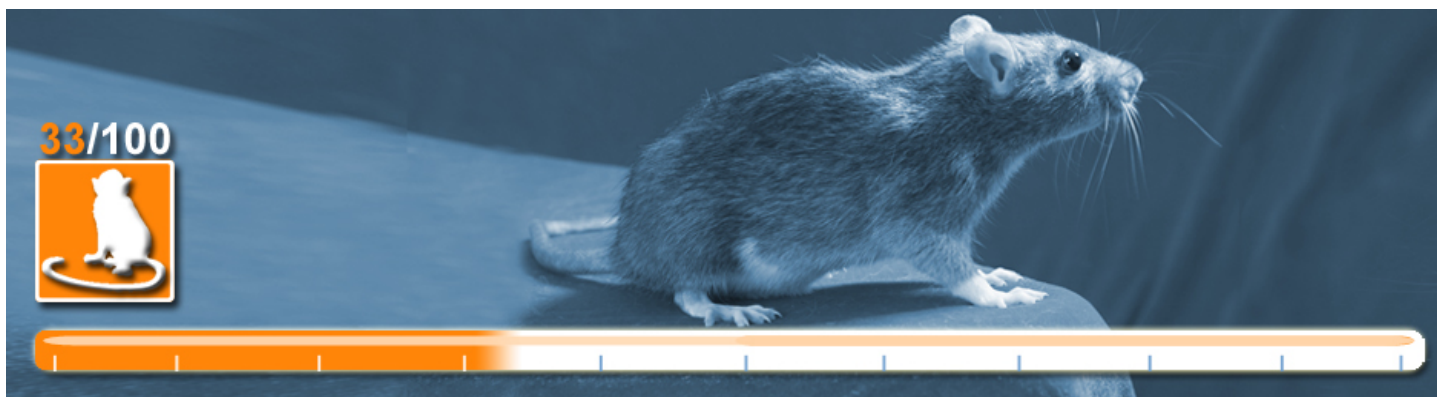
Because laws vary widely from state to state, we are measuring the presence of *any* regulation of dog or bird breeding facilities. In total, 33 states have laws regulating dog-breeding facilities and 11 states have laws regulating bird-breeding facilities. There are nine states with regulations for both dog and bird breeding facilities. The remaining 24 states have laws regarding dog breeding only, suggesting a greater awareness of or concern for the welfare of dogs, a more commonly chosen animal for companionship than birds.

Indicator: Proportion of adults who say the welfare and protection of companion animals is important**Score: 91/100**

Method/Source: Using research provided by the Humane Research Council's *Animal Tracker* survey of U.S. adults, in which the question asks, "How important to you is the welfare and protection of animals in each of the following situations... animals kept as companions or pets."⁸ The score is the current proportion of U.S. adults that say "very important" or "somewhat important" in response to this question. The target is to have 100% of U.S. adults recognizing the importance of the welfare and protection of companion animals.

Discussion: Companion animals have very close relationships with people and are typically dependent on their human companions for their safety and welfare. It is therefore important that the general population acknowledges the importance of protecting the animals with whom people interact most closely. In 2009, the most recent year for which data are available, HRC conducted a national survey of U.S. adults that asked about attitudes toward animal protection for a variety of animals, including for companion animals.

There is a high level of support for the protection of companion animals. About two-thirds (65%) of respondents in 2009 indicated that the welfare and protection of companion animals was "very" important, representing a 3% increase from 2008. Another 26% indicated that it was "somewhat" important. Overall, this indicator is promising with respect to the eventual goal of 100% of people recognizing that the protection and welfare of companion animals is at least somewhat important.



[ANIMALS USED IN SCIENCE – Category Score: 33/100](#)

Indicator: Number of Animal Welfare Act covered animals used in animal experiments

Score: 5/100

Method/Source: Using estimates compiled by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the established baseline is 1,027,450 animals used in research (2007)⁹. The score calculates the reduction in animals used by taking the difference since the baseline year, as a proportion of the baseline number of animals used in research.

Discussion: This indicator only measures the use of animals for which the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA) requires reporting on the part of universities and research facilities that use animals for science. Under the AWA, the USDA tracks only a minority of animals used in research (estimated at less than 10%). This excludes many types of animals including birds, amphibians, rats, mice, and other rodents. It is reasonable to expect that overall animal research numbers are orders of magnitude higher than those reported under the AWA. Unfortunately, no other data measuring the use of animals in research is currently available.

In light of research that points to the inadequacy of animal-based models in science and the lack of need for the use of animals in product testing, the goal is to see the use of animals in research eliminated. In 2009, the most recent year for which data are available, there were 979,772 AWA-covered animals used in research in the United States. This is a slight reduction of about 5% from the previous year.

There are severe limitations to focusing on AWA-covered animals. Since the animals most frequently used in biomedical and product testing are not covered by the AWA, including mice and rats, it is not clear whether shifts in the number of AWA covered species reflect changes in the overall numbers of animals used or just shifts in the use of certain species of animals. Some animal advocates have expressed concern that research is shifting from AWA-covered animals to those species that are outside of the AWA's scope, to avoid the constraints put in place for animal protection reasons. There is no available data to measure this, but it suggests that this metric should be looked at with caution and it should be assumed that the use of animals in research is much greater than what is indicated here.

Indicator: Proportion of experiments that involve pain without providing anesthesia/analgesia**Score: 0/100**

Method/Source: Using estimates compiled by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the established baseline is 7.8% of experiments involving pain, but conducted with no anesthesia/analgesia (2009)¹⁰. The score calculates the reduction based on the difference between the baseline figure and the current figure for the percentage of experiments involving pain conducted without anesthesia/analgesia, calculated, as a proportion of the baseline figure.

Discussion: Experiments and product testing that involve subjecting animals to pain without anesthesia/analgesia for relief represents one of the worst situations for animals used in research. It is an overarching animal protection goal to bring an end to all animal experimentation; until that occurs, however, it is important that animals subjected to painful experiments be provided some measure of relief. The goal for this indicator is that no animals that are used in experiments that cause pain are denied relief for that pain.

This is measured using the numbers of animals used in research, pain levels, and administration of analgesic as recorded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. As noted previously, the USDA only tracks a minority of animals used in research. Moreover, the use of pain relief in the form of anesthesia or analgesia is self-reported by animal researchers, which can lead to unintentional or intentional misreporting. Again, it is reasonable to expect that these numbers are actually much higher given that there are fewer regulations for the treatment of animals not covered under the AWA.

In 2009, 7.8% of animals (76,001 individuals) who were covered by the AWA were subjected to painful experiments with no pain relief. This represents the highest level in the past five years, increasing a fraction of a percentage point over previous years.

Indicator: Proportion of states with student choice policies in place to avoid dissection**Score: 30/100**

Method/Source: Compiled based on research by the National Anti-Vivisection Society¹¹ and the American Anti-Vivisection Society¹², both of which identify states that have passed laws allowing students to object to dissection and use an alternative, or that have passed related resolutions and educational policies. The score is based on the current number of states with relevant laws or policies, as a proportion of all 50 states.

Discussion: Recent research has shown that individuals with higher levels of education are more likely to support the use of animals in research. This does not point to an increased awareness of the need to use animals, but suggests that through compulsory and secondary education, students become socialized to accept animal testing as normal, often through mandatory dissection exercises.

Because research also shows that students retain information and enjoy the experience better when a non-animal model is used to teach the lessons for which dissection has traditionally been used, animal protection advocates would like to, at the very least, ensure that students who do not want to participate in dissection have a choice to opt out.

Student choice policies, either through legislative mandates or board of education resolutions, provide a guarantee that students who do not want to participate in dissection or animals labs at the grade school, junior high school, and/or high school level will not be penalized in any way. The goal is for all U.S. states to have such formal policies in place. We measured if a state had *any* form of a student choice policy in place. Currently only 15 of 50 states have such policies in place, resulting in a score of 30/100.

Indicator: Proportion of medical schools that do not require terminal animal labs

Score: 89/100

Method/Source: Compiled based on research by the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine¹³, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education¹⁴, and the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine¹⁵. The score for this indicator is calculated by taking the total number of medical schools that do not require terminal animal laboratories, as a proportion of all medical schools in the U.S.

Discussion: For the reasons noted above, it is important to measure the use of animals in education. Of the 161 medical schools in the U.S., 89% do not *require* any form of terminal animal lab. That the accredited medical degree granting institutions in the U.S. typically do not require terminal animal labs acknowledges that such labs are an unnecessary tool for teaching biology, anatomy, and normal medical procedures. As such, the goal is for the total eradication of terminal animal labs in medical schools. This also supports the more general goal of removing animal labs from secondary education models.

The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine provides a list of all medical schools (both M.D. and osteopathic) that do not require live animal labs. This list was compared against the Liaison Committee on Medical Education database of U.S. medical schools and the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine of U.S. osteopathic schools. Schools that were not accredited were excluded. Schools located in Puerto Rico were also excluded, as all other metrics in this study are based data pertaining to the 50 U.S. states.

Indicator: Proportion of adults that think medical testing on animals is “morally acceptable”**Score: 41/100**

Method/Source: Using research provided by the Gallup Poll focusing on moral issues¹⁶, in which the question asks, “Regardless of whether or not you think it should be legal, please tell me whether you personally believe that in general it is morally acceptable or morally wrong. How about... medical testing on animals?” The score is 100% less the current proportion of U.S. adults that agree that it is morally acceptable to experiment on animals. The goal for this indicator is 100% of adults *disagreeing* that medical testing on animals is morally acceptable.

Discussion: One of the major hurdles in the treatment of animals in research is a strong cultural notion that it is morally acceptable to use animals for human goals. Currently, about half of U.S. adults think that it is morally acceptable to use animals in research. The goal is for that number to decline to zero. In recent years there has been little change in public opinion on this issue, with the number fluctuating from 61% finding the use of animals in research morally acceptable in 2006, down to 56% in 2008, and increasing again to 59% in 2010.



WILDLIFE AND EXOTICS – Category Score: 44/100

Indicator: Proportion of states with laws that limit owning or keeping exotic animals

Score: 58/100

Method/Source: Compiled based on research by Born Free USA¹⁷, this indicator determines the number of states that have a complete or partial ban on the ownership of exotic animals, not including simply requiring a license. The score is the proportion of states with any law in place establishing a complete or partial ban.

Discussion: Animals classified as “exotic” refer to animals not typically kept in homes as companion animals. Many of these animals are bred for the sake of selling them or are taken from their natural environments and brought into confined lifestyles that is unsuitable for nearly all exotic species. It is important to have strong laws to control and eventually ban the import, sale, and ownership of these animals. Ideally, all 50 states should have at least some limitations on the ownership of exotic animals.

There are currently 20 states with complete bans on owning one or more types of exotic animals and an additional nine states with partial bans. Therefore, 58% of U.S. states have some form of ban or partial ban. Of the states without, all but two have some sort of regulation, either requiring licenses or establishing minimal standards. While these are positive steps, licensing does not reduce exotic animal ownership and the standards of care are often minimal, so only complete or partial bans on owning exotic animals are included in this indicator.

Indicator: Proportion of U.S. species listed as endangered or vulnerable

Score: 87/100

Method/Source: Using data provided by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources on the number of threatened animal species (excluding insects) in the U.S.¹⁸ For purposes of this study, the species covered include those deemed Critically Endangered, Endangered, or Vulnerable (see definitions¹⁹). The score is 100% less the proportion of all native animal species in the U.S. that are currently deemed endangered or vulnerable.

Discussion: Recent history has witnessed the obliteration of thousands of species due to environmental issues stemming from human development and activities. It is a major animal protection goal to preserve the species currently living on this planet and to prevent the eradication of any more species. The overarching goal is for all of the country’s native animal species to persist without threat from humans. There are 2,972 native animal species living in the U.S. (including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and mollusks) and 376 of these species were threatened, endangered, or critically endangered as of 2010. This is a slight increase from 2008. In 2010 almost half of the threatened species were fishes, 20% were birds, 15% were amphibians, 10% were mammals, and 9% were reptiles.

Indicator: Acreage of protected land, oceans, lakes, and reservoirs**Score: 34/100**

Method/Source: Using data from the National Parks Service regarding acres of protected lands²⁰, the goal established for this indicator is at least 10% of total U.S. acreage devoted to national parks. This would equal 242.8 million acres out of the total of approximately 2.4 billion acres²¹ in the country. The score is the current total national park acreage (excluding historic sites, battlefields, and memorials), as a proportion of the target acreage.

Discussion: In order for wildlife to be protected, there must be land for animals to live safely, without the negative consequences of human development. One way to help ensure that this occurs is with protection from the federal government through the designation of national parks, land reserves, and protected waterways. The goal is for 10% of all land in the U.S., 242.8 million acres, to be protected as national parks. The figure of 10% was arrived at intuitively and is intentionally modest. There are no calculations available that estimate how much land must be preserved to ensure the protection of native flora and fauna.

The National Parks Service keeps track of how much land is federally protected. Historical sites, monuments, and battlefields were not included, as they are often developed and/or used for tourism and do not fulfill the function of protecting wildlife. In 2010 there were 82,056,135 acres of protected land, an increase of about 2,500 acres over the previous year. This represents only about 3.4% of the total land in the U.S., which is 34% of the way to the goal of having 242.8 million acres of protected land in the U.S.

Indicator: Number of hunting licenses issued in the U.S.**Score: 0/100**

Method/Source: Using data provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the number of hunting licenses issued throughout the country, the established baseline is 14,974,534 licenses (2011)²². The eventual goal for number of hunting licenses issued is zero. The score calculates how much this number has declined since the baseline year by taking the difference between the baseline figure and the current number, as a proportion of the baseline figure. However, because the baseline is also the current year, there is no reduction and the score is zero.

Discussion: There are a wide variety of food sources and recreational activities available to the U.S. population; hunting animals is unnecessary and is predominantly for “sport,” not sustenance. Tracking, injuring, and killing animals for sport is something that animal protection advocates oppose and would like to see eliminated. 2011 marks the highest level of hunting licenses issued in the past five years. In 2011, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued almost 15 million licenses. This is an increase of more than a half-million licenses from the previous year.

Indicator: Proportion of adults who think that buying and wearing fur is “morally acceptable”**Score: 40/100**

Method/Source: Using research provided by the Gallup Poll focusing on moral issues²³, in which the question asks, “Regardless of whether or not you think it should be legal, please tell me whether you personally believe that in general it is morally acceptable or morally wrong. How about... buying and wearing clothing made of animal fur?” The score is 100% less the current proportion of U.S. adults that agree that it is morally acceptable to buy/wear animal fur. The goal for this indicator is 100% of adults *disagreeing* that buying and wearing fur is morally acceptable.

Discussion: Buying and wearing animal fur is unnecessary and superfluous outside of the interests of fashion and conspicuous consumption. Due to the cruelty and gratuitous deaths involved in producing fur and its sole function as a luxury item, the goal is for no U.S. adults to find the buying and wearing of fur to be morally acceptable. However, according to the Gallup Poll, most U.S. adults do not feel this way.

In 2010, 60% of U.S. adults surveyed said that buying and wearing fur was morally acceptable. Of the remaining 40%, almost all classified it as morally unacceptable; a 5% minority said it was unsure, citing various reasons. This shows that while most believe fur is morally acceptable, it is a polarizing issue. Although campaigns opposed to fur have been a focus of animal protection efforts since the 1980s, the last five years have witnessed little change in attitudes toward fur, with only a 2% reduction in those who believe wearing fur is morally acceptable since 2006.



[FARMED ANIMALS – Category Score: 4/100](#)

Indicator: Per capita consumption of animal products

Score: 2/100

Method/Source: Using estimates from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Economic Research Service²⁴, the established baseline is about 936 pounds of animals and animal byproducts consumed as food per person every year. This is the sum of the “peak” consumption years within the last 5 years for each type of meat, including beef, veal, pork, lamb, chicken, turkey, fish, and shellfish, as well as dairy and eggs. The score calculates how much this number has reduced compared with the baseline by taking the difference between the baseline figure and the current number, as a proportion of the baseline figure.

Discussion: Demand for meat, dairy, and egg products has created a massive animal farming industry in which the largest numbers of animals are killed in the U.S. each year. Given the health benefits of a diet free of animal products, the environmental costs of producing meat, dairy, and eggs, the vast numbers of animals who die for food, and the amount of suffering endured by farm animals, a goal of many animal advocates is to reduce and eventually eliminate the consumption of animals and their byproducts.

To establish a baseline of peak consumption in the past five years, we totaled the peak consumption of each animal species, dairy, and eggs. The most recent year for which complete data is available from the USDA is 2008, when an estimated total of 920 pounds of meat, dairy and eggs was “available” per person (using the USDA’s language). This is a slight reduction from the peak of 936 pounds and is about 2% closer to the goal of no meat, eggs, or dairy.

Indicator: Proportion of adults that are vegetarian/vegan

Score: 3/100

Method/Source: Using survey data from the Vegetarian Resource Group regarding the number of adult vegetarians and vegans in the U.S.²⁵ The established goal is 100% of the population maintaining a vegetarian/vegan diet. The score calculates the current number of vegetarians and vegans, as a proportion of the 100% target.

Discussion: A small minority of U.S. adults currently adheres to a vegetarian or vegan diet. However, as discussed previously, embracing a meat-free diet would eliminate vast amounts of suffering for farm animals while also benefiting human health and the environment. The goal for many animal advocates is to see the proportion of vegetarians and vegans increase dramatically, until the entire population is adhering to a diet free of animal products. Recently, the number of vegetarians and vegans in the U.S. has ranged between 2% of the U.S. adult population in 2006 to 3% in 2009.

Indicator: Number of land-based animals slaughtered**Score: 5/100**

Method/Source: Using estimates from the U.S. Department of Agriculture^{26,27}, the established baseline is 9.5 billion animals slaughtered in the U.S. This is the sum of the “peak” slaughter years within the last 5 years for each type of animal, including cattle, calves, hogs, sheep, lambs, chickens, turkey, and ducks. The figure does NOT include fish or shellfish because these animals are measured by weight, not individual lives. The score for this indicator calculates how much animal slaughter has reduced compared with the baseline by taking the difference between the baseline figure and the current number, as a proportion of the baseline figure.

Discussion: In 2009, just over nine billion cows, pigs, sheep, chickens, turkeys, and ducks were killed for food, representing the largest use of animals in the United States. This is a reduction of about 3.4%, or 300,000, land animals from 2006. The goal for many farm animal advocates is for no animals to be slaughtered for food. The number of animals killed is recorded by the USDA and should be reasonably accurate, although it does not include many animals who die as a result of farm animal industries but do not go to slaughter. For example, in the egg industry, male chicks are all killed upon hatching as they cannot lay eggs, but they are not included in the USDA’s totals.

Indicator: Proportion of U.S. states with minimal anti-confinement laws**Score: 9/100**

Method/Source: Compiled based on research by the Humane Society of the United States, which identifies all states with laws prohibiting extreme confinement for egg-laying hens, pregnant pigs, and calves raised for veal²⁸. For scoring purposes, we count any law limiting or prohibiting the confinement of hens, pigs, and calves, regardless of its strength or when it will take effect. Each state is given a score from 0 to 3, receiving one “point” for any law addressing the confinement of each of these animal species. The goal is to have all 50 states with laws that limit or prohibit the confinement of each type of animal. The score is calculated based on the current number of state laws, as a proportion of laws in all 50 states.

Discussion: Given that a majority of the U.S. population consumes animals and animal byproducts, it is a key animal protection goal to establish laws ensuring that animals reared for food are able to express basic natural behaviors. There are few of these anti-confinement laws, and the laws are often weak. This indicator measures the existence of any anti-confinement law that gives animals the ability to move their bodies freely to some degree during part of the day. The types of anti-confinement laws that currently exist address either chickens, pigs, or veal calves. All passed laws are counted even if they have yet to take effect.

The goal is for each state to have laws limiting the confinement of hens, pigs, and calves. Currently, there are only 14 such laws in place. California and Michigan have anti-confinement laws regarding gestation crates, veal crates, and battery cages. Arizona, Colorado and Maine regulate all but battery cages, while Florida and Oregon regulate just gestation crates. This means that 9% of the total desired laws are currently in place.

Indicator: Number of animals certified under the major humane labeling programs

Score: 2/100

Method/Source: Compiled based on figures provided by the American Humane Association, the Animal Welfare Institute, and Humane Farm Animal Care, all of which operate humane labeling programs. The established target for this indicator is equal to the current number of animals slaughtered in the U.S., or approximately nine billion animals. The score is calculated by estimating the current number of animals covered under the three labeling programs, as a proportion of the target number of animals.

Discussion: In the United States, most animals raised for food are subjected to intense confinement, cruel conditions, and inhumane slaughter. Although the goal for many animal advocates is to reduce and eventually eliminate the consumption of animals and animal byproducts for food, other advocates focus instead on improving conditions for farm animals. Given the entrenched nature of animal consumption, it is an important goal to reduce the suffering of farm animals in addition to reducing the number of animals slaughtered.

Humane labeling programs seek to meet this goal by establishing minimum standards of care and slaughter for farm animals. These programs are currently voluntary for animal farmers, but interest in humane labeling is growing rapidly and more farms are becoming certified. The three programs included in this indicator represent the three most prolific labeling programs, currently covering approximately 161 million farm animals in the U.S. While all three programs establish standards of care that are above industry norms, they differ significantly and do not always establish standards that meet the broader goals of farm animal advocates.



GENERAL INDICATORS – Category Score: 41/100

Indicator: Amount of discussion of animal issues

Score: 52/100

Method/Source: Using research provided by the Humane Research Council’s *Animal Tracker* survey of U.S. adults, in which the question asks, “In the past three months, how often have you talked about or heard someone talking about animal protection, including animal rights and/or animal welfare?”²⁹ The score is the current proportion of U.S. adults that “frequently” or “occasionally” talked or heard about animal protection, as a proportion of the target of 100%.

Discussion: The amount of public discourse and visibility an issue receives is indicative of its importance relative to other issues. Animal protection is arguably one of the most important social justice issues in history as it affects the lives of billions of individuals who are often facing extreme cruelty at the hands of humans. However, animal protection currently does not receive a commensurate level of discussion among the public or among U.S. policymakers and a goal of many animal advocates is to increase discussion of animal issues.

Using the level of discussion of animal issues as an indicator does not presume that all animal-related discourse is positive from the perspective of animal advocates. However, increasing concern for animals and public support for their protection requires more discussion of the ways in which animals are used and abused. Even when the discourse is anti-animal, the fact that the issue warrants discussion may be positive for animals. The proportion of U.S. adults who frequently or occasionally discussed or heard about animal issues was 43% in 2008 and increased to 52% in 2009, the most recent year for which data are available.

Indicator: Proportion of universities with human-animal studies courses and animal law programs

Score: 5/100

Method/Source: Based on information compiled by the Animals and Society Institute³⁰ regarding the number of animal-related programs at U.S. universities. The goal is for all universities to have at least one animal law program (if applicable) and at least one human-animal studies course. The score is calculated by taking a weighted average of the proportion of total law schools³¹ and degree-granting universities³² that currently have relevant programs and courses.

Discussion: Attorneys and scholars that work on animal issues are important groups in the animal protection community. Increasing the availability of animal law programs in the U.S. will provide more opportunities for prospective

attorneys to become involved in working for legal protections for animals. There are currently 199 law schools in the U.S., with 77 offering animal law courses or seminars.

Similarly, increasing the number of human-animal studies programs will provide more opportunities for students to learn about animal issues and identify ways to reduce animal suffering through scholarly research and education. There are currently 137 colleges and universities in the U.S. that offer human-animal studies courses. The Animals and Society Institute, along with other groups such as the Animal Legal Defense Fund, track and encourage the growth of such programs.

Indicator: Average “Humane Scorecard” scores for the U.S. Congress

Score: 47/100

Method/Source: Using research and individual ratings provided by the Humane Society Legislative Fund’s (HSLF) “Humane Scorecard” for both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate³³, the target for this indicator is a combined rating of 100. The score is calculated using the combined average ratings for the most recent legislative session for both the House and Senate, as a proportion of the target rating.

Discussion: Support within the U.S. Congress is critical for the advancement of animal protection. According to the HSLF: “Many animal protection issues never receive a recorded vote in Congress. Some are enacted by voice vote, and some languish. To accurately measure legislators’ support, HSLF counts not just recorded votes, but also other meaningful ways that legislators can help issues advance, such as cosponsoring key bills and cosigning letters seeking increased enforcement of animal welfare laws.”

The current U.S. House score is based on votes for or against issues including animal “crush” videos, factory farming, marine turtles, puppy mills, exotic pets, horse slaughter, and the use of chimpanzees in research. The House score increased from 56 in the 110th Congress to 58 in the most recent 111th Congress. The current U.S. Senate score is based on votes for or against issues including puppy mills, horse slaughter, fur labeling, and the use of chimpanzees in research. The Senate score decreased from 49 in the 110th Congress to 35 in the 111th Congress.

Indicator: Proportion of U.S. states with felony-level animal cruelty laws

Score: 32/100

Method/Source: Using research provided by the Animal Legal Defense Fund³⁴, this indicator evaluates the existence of state felony-level laws relating to animal cruelty in four areas: abandonment, cruelty, neglect, and sexual abuse. Each state is given separate credit for establishing felonies in each of these areas, with a total of four “points” possible for each state. The goal is to have all 50 states with felony-level laws in each of the four areas. The score is calculated based on the number of state laws that are currently in place, as a proportion of the target of all states having felony-level laws in each of the four areas.

Discussion: It is critically important to have strict penalties in place for those who commit acts of animal cruelty. Having misdemeanor-level laws in place is better than having no laws at all, but the severity of animal cruelty warrants felony-level penalties. Research has also shown that animal cruelty is closely linked with violence towards humans, in particular domestic violence, which underscores the need to identify, punish, and rehabilitate those who commit cruel acts toward animals. For these reasons, the goal for this indicator is to have all 50 states with felony-level animal cruelty laws.

Because animal cruelty involves a wide variety of neglectful and intentionally harmful acts, the indicator focuses on four common areas of animal abuse. We are measuring the existence of any felony-level law that covers one of the four areas of animal cruelty, regardless of the penalty. In total, 47 states have a felony-level law in at least one of the four areas included in the indicator. The states with no felony-level animal cruelty laws include Idaho, New Jersey, and North Dakota.

Indicator: Proportion of adults who agree with overarching animal protection goals

Score: 69/100

Method/Source: Using research provided by the Humane Research Council's *Animal Tracker* survey of U.S. adults, in which the question asks, "Do you personally support or oppose the animal protection movement's goal to minimize and eventually eliminate all forms of animal cruelty and suffering?"³⁵ The score is the current proportion of U.S. adults that "strongly" or "somewhat" support this goal, as a proportion of the target of 100%.

Discussion: Many of the goals of the animal protection movement rely on individuals to change their behaviors and attitudes regarding animals. For advocates to achieve the specific goals discussed in this study, the U.S. population must have attitudes that reflect a desire to protect animals from cruelty and suffering. To measure this, we turned to a survey question that the Humane Research Council asked in 2008 and 2010 regarding support for the goal of ending cruelty toward and suffering of animals. The amount of support for this goal showed only a 1% decrease between 2008 and 2010, with 69% of people either "strongly" or "somewhat" supporting this goal in 2010.

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