



Welcome to Ethics Court!

Middle School Food and Agricultural Literacy Curriculum

Precepts

- D. Character
- D1. Live with integrity

National Standards

- AS.06.01.02.a. Explain the implications of animal welfare and animal rights for animal agriculture.
- NL-ENG.K-12.4 – Communication Skills
- NL-ENG.K-12.12 – Applying Language Skills
- NS.5-8.3 – Life Science

Student Learning Objectives

- As a result of this **unit** the students will...
- Describe responsible animal welfare and care practices.
- As a result of this **lesson** the students will ...
- Define five ethical practices in animal production.

Content Outline

- I. **Ethics** – rules or standards governing the conduct of a person or group
- II. **Animal welfare** – a belief that animals should receive proper care such as food, water, and medical attention
- III. **Animal rights** – a belief that animals have rights which are equal to humans
- IV. **Ethical practices in animal production**
 - A. Provide adequate food and water
 - B. Provide safe and humane facilities
 - C. Provide appropriate health and medical attention
 - D. Provide accurate animal records
 - E. Provide appropriate methods of **euthanasia** (practice of painlessly ending the life of an animal that has a terminal illness or incurable condition, as by giving a lethal drug)

Time

Instruction time for this lesson: 45 minutes.

Resources

Beef: From Pasture to Plate. (2009). Beef production facts. Retrieved August 18, 2009, from <http://www.beeffrompasturetoplate.org/animalwelfare.aspx> — ethics. (n.d.). The American Heritage® dictionary of the English language (4th ed.). Retrieved August 18, 2009, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/ethics> — euthanasia. (n.d.). The American Heritage® science dictionary. Retrieved August 18, 2009, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/euthanasia/> — National FFA Organization. (2009). LifeKnowledge Online. Retrieved August 18, 2009, from <http://agedlearning.org> — National FFA Organization. (2003). LifeKnowledge Precepts and Signs of Success.

Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

Overhead projector/transparencie
MS.AS.5.4.TM.A – one per student
MS.AS.5.4.AS.A – one per student
MS.AS.5.4.TM.B – one per teacher
MS.AS.5.4.TM.C – one per teacher
MS.AS.5.4.ASSESS.A – one per student

Key Terms

The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in **bold italics**:

Animal Rights
Animal Welfare
Ethics
Euthanasia

Interest Approach

Cut **MS.AS.5.4.TM.A** before class begins. Each student should end up with an “ethical card” and an “unethical card.” Read students the following three scenarios and have them vote whether they think the actions are ethical or unethical. At the conclusion of each vote have students explain why they voted the way they did.

Welcome to class – well, jury duty today. Let's put on our scholarly hats and prepare our ears to listen as it is time to make decisions like jury members do. Welcome to **Ethics** Court!

Each of us has a verdict card labeled ethical or unethical. After each scenario, the task is to place a verdict as to whether the actions described were ethical or unethical.



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I will read the scenario and you will place your verdict card face down in front of you. When I ask to see the verdict you will all raise your cards. I will tally the vote and we will see if the actions described are ethical or unethical. What questions do you have?

Answer any questions students might have.

Court is now in session...

Scenario #1 – Robert and Jeff enter the local fast food restaurant after a tough soccer practice. They are both hungry and thirsty. Robert orders two cheeseburgers and a large fountain drink. Jeff orders a hamburger without pickles and a large order of fries. Jeff does not order a drink because he knows that the drink Robert ordered comes with free refills and will just share with Robert to save money. Are the boys' actions in sharing the drink ethical or unethical?

Allow students to make their decisions.

Verdict please.

Tally the votes and provide the decision to the group. Then ask students to share why they thought the action was ethical or unethical. You are not trying to build agreement but rather that what is ethical or unethical can often be based upon personal beliefs and values.

Scenario #2 – The new book that Tom wants to read arrives in the local bookstore. He goes in and buys the book. He is so excited to read the book that he takes it home and reads the book in two days. Now that he has read the book he has no use for it anymore. He decides to return the book to the bookstore for a refund. The book is in perfect condition. Tom returns the book and gets his money back. Are Tom's actions of returning the book ethical or unethical?

Allow students to make their decisions.

Verdict please.

Tally the votes and provide the decision to the group. Then ask students to share why they thought the action was ethical or unethical. You are not trying to build agreement but rather that what is ethical or unethical can often be based upon personal beliefs and values.

Scenario #3 – Janet has a paper on animal cloning due and has found a really neat article online that discusses her topic.

She agrees with everything the article says and decides her three main points will be the same as the article. Rather than rewrite the introduction paragraph she cuts and pastes it into her paper. The paragraph sounds really good in her paper with the rest she has written. She finishes the paper and hands it in. Are Janet's actions of cutting and pasting the introduction paragraph **ethical** or unethical?

Allow students to make their decisions.

Verdict please.

Tally the votes and provide the decision to the group. Then ask students to share why they thought the action was ethical or unethical. You are not trying to build agreement but rather that what is ethical or unethical can often be based upon personal beliefs and values.

Conclude the scenarios by sharing some guiding questions from **MS.AS.5.4.AS.A** that can be asked when determining if an action is ethical or unethical.

Is it legal?

Would you want the same thing to happen to you?

Would a person you respect do the same thing?

What are the benefits and costs to all parties?

Would you want the action to be universally accepted?

Would you be proud to have your action appear on TV, the Internet, or in a newspaper?

As we have heard some actions can be determined as **ethical** or unethical pretty easily. But others may not be so clear because they are based on beliefs and values. Those beliefs and values may not always be the same for everyone.

Here are some guiding questions to keep in mind when deciding if an action is **ethical** or unethical.

Distribute **MS.AS.5.4.AS.A** and briefly discuss the guiding questions.

It is important to understand our own principles and beliefs because those things direct how we live our lives. If we are not aware of what we think is right or wrong then we could end up in a situation that leads us to make some bad choices.



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Summary of Content and Teaching Strategies

Objective 1. Describe **ethics** of animal production.

Have students record the definition of ethics from **MS.AS.5.4.TM.B**, either in their own notebooks or on the back side of **MS.AS.5.4.AS.A**. Then have students develop their own personal code of ethics on **MS.AS.5.4.AS.A** to further develop their understanding of what ethics might include.

As we can see, several thoughts go into determining what ethics look like. In our notes/back side of the activity sheet, title a page "Ethics in Animal Production." Record the following definition for the term ethics. The definition reads, "rules or standards governing the conduct of a person or group." Looking at the definition for ethics in our notes and the guiding questions on the activity sheet, let's think about a code of ethics for our lives. When you hear DEVELOP, write down on your activity sheet five statements that would be a code of ethics you will live by in the future. An example might be that you will be honest and show integrity in all you do. You will have three minutes to write down these statements. What questions do you have?

Answer questions the students may pose.

DEVELOP.

Circulate around the room to answer questions as they may arise. Announce the remaining time for the students at two minutes and one minute. At the completion of the time have students sign and date the code of ethics as if it were a contract to uphold the statements.

You have now developed a personal code of ethics. At the bottom of the page you will see a place to sign and date this document. Take a moment and sign and date the code of ethics

Allow students to sign and date.

This document may not hold up in a court of law but it is a signed promise you have made to yourself to uphold the high standards you have written down.

Use the personal code of ethics to transition into ethical practices in animal production. Have students record the information from **MS.AS.5.4.TM.B** and **MS.AS.5.4.TM.C** in their notes.

Use a Motion e-Moment® with the ethical practices portion in **MS.AS.5.4.TM.C** to have students associate a motion to the practices. Example motions that could be used might include the following:

- A. Provide adequate food and water (an eating or drinking motion)
- B. Provide safe and humane facilities (drawing of a roof over one's head)
- C. Provide appropriate health and medical attention (listening to a heartbeat)
- D. Provide accurate animal records (writing down on a clipboard)
- E. Provide appropriate methods of euthanasia (placing head on hands as if to go to sleep)

Just like we all have a code of ethics that our actions are based upon there are often ethical practices adhered to in business and industry. One such area would be a set of ethical practices related to animal production. Before we look at the common practices, it is essential we understand a couple of terms. In your notebook, under your definition of ethics, add the following two definitions.

Use **MS.AS.5.4.TM.B** to have students define animal welfare and animal rights.

Often people use these terms interchangeably but they are different. What questions do you have about the difference in these two terms and definitions?

Allow students to ask questions and clarify any uncertainties.

Have students record the ethical practices in animal production from **MS.AS.5.4.TM.C**. As students record the information, present a motion to go along with each practice.

When we begin to look at ethical practices they are based upon animal welfare. The animal industry has ethical practices which could be considered a code of ethics. As you record the following five practices in your notes, we will associate a motion with each one.



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Continue by having students record the information and engage in a motion that is associated with each statement.

Review/Summary

Use an Eye Witness News e-Moment to review the information covered during class. Have students work in pairs and assume the roles of a news reporter and a jury member. Students will report live about what they have learned. Allow 30 seconds for the interview and then have students switch roles so that each student has the chance to summarize and talk about what they learned.

We have just learned about **ethical** practices in animal production. When we think about the news on television, the Internet, and in the newspaper we trust the people sharing the information. We trust them that they will provide the facts and use **ethical** judgment in what they report – just like we should be **ethical** and show integrity in everything that we do. By showing integrity we too will become trusted individuals in our schools, homes, and communities.

Each of us will have a chance to demonstrate integrity through a 30-second news report that delivers the scoop about the information we just learned. The goal is to educate the audience about the terms we have learned and **ethical** practices in animal production. Everyone will work with a partner. One partner will be a news reporter asking questions and the other will be a jury member who has just finished a large case. We will have three minutes to work with our partners to determine what questions will be asked in the interview and who will go first.

At the end of the three minutes I will count down to the live report. When that report is done you will switch roles with your partner and repeat the process. What questions can I answer?

Allow students to ask questions.

The three minutes to determine the questions begins now.

Monitor this process and if students need more time to develop their questions and want to practice allow them additional time.

Prep time is over and it is time to go to the field for a breaking news report. Raise your hand if you are the reporter.

Allow students to raise their hands to make sure all groups are ready to proceed.

Reporters, get your microphone ready because we will be going live in three, two, and one. Allow 30 seconds for the interview.

Three, two, and one, we are off to a commercial. We will now switch roles. Reporters are now the jury members and jury members are now the reporters.

We will be going live when the commercial is over. The commercial is almost over, so get ready. Live to you in three, two, and one.

Allow 30 seconds for the second interview.

Three, two, and one, we are off to the sports report.

Close by thanking the students for their ethical news reports and challenge them to demonstrate sound ethical decisions in all they do.

Give yourselves a hand for your television news debut.

Lead applause.

Thank you for your quality news reports and demonstrating professional **ethics**. We are given the opportunity every day to display **ethical** behavior and it is our challenge, whether it is in animal production or in life, to live up to a high **ethical** standard. Our reputations depend on it!



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Application

Extended classroom activity:

Have students search on the Internet for governmental and private groups and organizations that focus on animal welfare. Provide students with two or three questions to investigate and bring back information.

FFA activity:

Have students read the FFA Code of Ethics and discuss how it relates to them as individuals and how it might relate to ethical practices in livestock production.

SAE activity:

Have students research businesses within animal production to see if they have a code of ethics within their business. It may relate to animals or all business practices within the business. Have students report what they found and discuss the importance of professional business ethics.

Evaluation

MS.AS.5.4.ASSESS.A.

Answers to Evaluation

1. Rules or standards governing the conduct of a person or group.
2. A belief that animals should receive proper care such as food, water, and medical attention.
3. A belief that animals have rights which are equal to humans.
4. Practice of painlessly ending the life of an animal that has a terminal illness or incurable condition, as by giving a lethal drug.
5. To receive credit students should list four of the following five practices:
 - a. Provide adequate food and water.
 - b. Provide safe and humane facilities.
 - c. Provide appropriate health and medical attention.
 - d. Provide accurate animal records.
 - e. Provide appropriate methods of **euthanasia**.



Ethical

-----Cut on Dotted Line

Unethical



Ethics in Animal Production

Ethics – rules or standards governing the conduct of a person or group

Animal Welfare – a belief that animals should receive proper care such as food, water, and medical attention

Animal Rights – a belief that animals have rights which are equal to humans



Ethical Practices in Animal Production

- **Provide adequate food and water**
- **Provide safe and humane facilities**
- **Provide appropriate health and medical attention**
- **Provide accurate animal records**
- **Provide appropriate methods of euthanasia (practice of painlessly ending the life of an animal that has a terminal illness or incurable condition, as by giving a lethal drug)**



Determining if an Action is Ethical or Unethical

- Is it legal?
- Would you want the same thing to happen to you?
- Would a person you respect do the same thing?
- What are the benefits and costs to all parties?
- Would you want the action to be universally accepted?
- Would you be proud to have your action appear on TV, the Internet, or in a newspaper?

My Personal Code of Ethics

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____



Name: _____

Directions: Define the following terms.

1. Ethics –

2. Animal welfare –

3. Animal rights –

4. Euthanasia –

Directions: Answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

5. List four of the five ethical practices discussed in class to with respect to animal production.
