

## REVIEWERS COMMENTS AND RESPONSES OF THE AUTHORS

(Responses of author are written in red)

### COMMENTS TO THE AUTHORS

#### Editor/Chief Editor Landbauforschung

We will accept your manuscript incorporating minor revisions based on the comments of the reviewers. Please take into account the reviewers' recommendations, in particular the request of reviewer # 1 to sharpen your position and to work out where the animal ethics turn can be seen exactly and how actual new developments in animal ethics can be included (see reviewer # 2). Please write a short response to each of the reviewers comments. Please follow strictly the instructions for authors. The revised version of your manuscript will be evaluated again by the Chief editor and, if necessary, by the reviewers. Please note, in Position Papers we allow up to 20 references.

Attached you will find the PDF of the manuscript as it was sent to the revisors. **Please note: It also contains corrections from reviewer # 2.**

#### Author:

**I'd like to thank both reviewers for their very helpful remarks and comments that helped me to improve the paper and to explain better my approach.**

**At the same time due to the limited length and nature of a position paper I am not able to take into account properly every single comment.**

#### Reviewer # 1:

##### Short summary

The author puts forward an animal welfare account for farmed animals and formulates the imperative that farmed animals should not be treated as mere means but that they always respect at the same time its species-specific needs as well as its sensitive, emotional, and cognitive capabilities. This position is then explained and contextualized with the five freedoms and examples how to implement this in practical terms.

##### Strength and weaknesses and possible improvements

The paper's strength (a moderate welfare account) is also a potential weakness. Most of the points do not break new grounds but explicate a well-known position. E.g. the five freedoms date back to the 70ies and the response to the Brambell report from 1965. Therefore, the question arises where the „animal ethics turn“ can be seen exactly and whether this paper offers a new perspective.

**This objection may be justified, but: Even though this position is well known, the concrete reality of livestock farming in most cases is far away to realize these basic conditions of animal welfare.**

**Therefore the author wants to present a philosophical foundation of this animal welfare account that may be more convincing as radical animal rights positions. The aim is to allow animals a life without pain and stressed, but with the protection and promotion of their welfare. As I argue, the main question is not if we use them as a source or means, but if always and at the same time we protect their welfare.**

Further, the formulated imperative and its explanation suggests that farmed animals are not used as mere instruments. It would be helpful to see what kind of practices would be ruled out by this imperative: e.g.: castration of pigs? (Why would one castrate a pig, if it were not to make it a proper means of production?); culling of day-old chickens (These animals are not even means to an end but waste.); Killing of lame cows and cows with mastitis? (As soon as they do not produce milk efficiently,

they are slaughtered.); fattening cattle? (In which respects are they not used as means?); the farrowing crate? (why would one keep sows in such a housing system, if they were not pure means to production ends?); etc. The author seems to suggest that integrating the five freedoms can be identified with using animals „not as mere means.“ But what if these five freedoms are only granted if the animals serve the production purposes better if they are considered? In other terms: Healthy animals with positive welfare are the most efficient means for production. This needs clarification. I have responded to this concern, at least partially, in the new paragraph in Chapt. 3: Paragraph on Kant in the following paragraph.

44ff.: Presently, the information that small/family farms try to live up to good animal welfare standards is anecdotal. Since one can doubt that „small is (always) beautiful,“ the claim should be substantiated with literature. (Although small is sometimes beautiful, big is not always ugly. It depends on the criteria fulfilled and the five freedoms are a good example that also big farms can live up to such criteria => it's not about size but fulfilling criteria).

This objection is right. I do not know literature or empiric studies on this, therefore I write “I think ...”. The background is my won biographical context from which I know many families working as farmers. In the revision of my paper I have considered this objection and deleted the reference to the family businesses.

81ff.: Consumers certainly play a role here. However, since agriculture is neither consumer nor producer but retailer driven, the roles and importance/limitations of the players should be clarified. I doubt that is “neither consumer nor producer but retailer driven”, but driven by all these players together. Therefore in 86-87 I mention “both the producers – i. e. the farmers, butchers and retailers – and the consumers”. To clarify importance and limitations of the single players would go beyond the length of the paper, but need a longer basic economical reflection. So I can only mention this problem.

The author integrates the climate change debate. It is not entirely clear why. Further, it is questionable whether climate friendly housing systems are also animal welfare friendly. If the section on climate change stays, it is important to clarify the relation of climate and animal welfare friendly. To my knowledge, the ecological footprint of animal welfare friendly housing systems (on straw, free range,...) is sometimes less efficient and emitting more climate damaging substances. This should be clarified.

The reason, why I integrate the climate change, is to make clear the urgency of a change in livestock farming.

1. An animal welfare friendly farming would have as consequence the reduction of mass husbandry in farming, with a reduction of negative consequences on climate change.
2. The question is not whether climate friendly housing systems are also animal welfare friendly, but that the solution has to gather both: ecological and animal ethical aspects! Even though it should be true (what, however, has to be proved) that animal welfare friendly housing systems (on straw, free range,...) is sometimes less efficient and emitting more climate damaging substances, the reduction of livestock farming as whole would still be have a less negative effect on climate change. To clarify this question would go beyond the scope and length of this paper.

How does the author see the fact that the actual animal protection acts address animal welfare but are in some cases systematically violated? E.g. tail-docking in pigs is something that is forbidden in EU-member states but systematically done. Are legal requirements really a way out of the actual problems? In fact, although it is regularly claimed that animal welfare is mirrored in legal texts, the legal practices are often (close to) animal cruelty (castration without pain management; debudding calves/goat kids without anaesthesia/analgesia; breeding goals in high yielding dairy cattle; the Belgian Blue;...).

I have added a brief paragraph respond to this concern.

### Need of tables figures and adequacy of references

The literature is not extensive, but ok.

### Abstract matching with given scope

An abstract is currently missing. It might not be necessary for this position paper. However, a short introduction and outline at the beginning would be helpful.

### Originality, scientific quality and significance and quality of presentation

The paper is not ground breaking but makes a fair, modest point.

### Language

I am not a native speaker, however, I think the paper would benefit from a language check.

### Recommendation

Minor revisions

### **Reviewer # 2:**

#### Short summary of the aim of the paper, its main findings and conclusions

The paper aims at arguing for the reasons why the current human treatment of nonhuman animals is inappropriate and what should change for “doing justice” to nonhuman animals.

#### General comments on strength and weaknesses of the paper and on possible improvements

I think starting with the two examples is quite good and the ex. well chosen. The author makes his own position explicit and explains it well. A weakness is in my opinion that the other animal ethics position, the author is not representing, should be explained a bit more in detail as well, as long as the aim of a position paper is that it should give an overview over controversial positions and enables the reader to find an own position. Further, when talking about sentient being and their capabilities, it would be good to mention the differentiation between sentient and non-sentient animals. When talking about sentient animals, one is not talking about all animals. Also I think it is necessary to cite some scientific literature which elaborates on animals capabilities (cf. comment below). For a long time these capabilities have been neglected so it is no naturalness to acknowledge them.

**I think that responding to the different aspects of this paragraph would go beyond the length and nature of a position paper. Anyhow, I have added literature on the capabilities approach.**

Compared to the animal welfare position ((Editor: first part of the sentence introduced by editor)) ... the animal rights and animal liberation ethics position .... is more originally, since representatives of these perspective argue for a kind of system change within agriculture and a complete different human-animal-relationship. Going more into detail about animal rights and animal liberation ethics is 1. Necessary when the aim of a position paper is that it should give an overview over controversial positions and enables the reader to find an own position. 2. It is more originally and less “stating the obvious”.

**My position may not be as original as animal rights and animal liberation positions, but it tries to give a solid philosophical foundation to an animal ethical approach of a moderate animal welfare position. I am convinced that animal rights and animal liberation positions, even though they may appear more original, from a philosophical standpoint are weak and lack of a stringent foundation (see the critics in my book).**

**So, I argue that it may be better to give a solid philosophical foundation to a moderate position. This does not only state the obvious, but concretely represents a proper way to change the reality for the better – more than radical approaches. This is at least my hope ...**

#### Short check if all conclusions are justified

Well, I doubt that the authors cited thesis and the other claims that are made within the paper are compatible with still using animals as products and I don't see how this should work. But explaining how it could work would probably exceed the papers length. Except of my doubt (which the paper cannot dismantle), the theses and conclusions are appropriate within the logics of animal welfare ethics.

In the short paragraph with the reference to the Kantian categorical imperative I tried to respond to this objection: In my view the reviewer is wrong in concluding that my position would not be compatible with still using animals as products. But to enter more into detail of this question, I have to refer to my book.

Tierschutzorganisation: As far as I can see, the term "animal protection association" exists in English.

#### Adequacy of the references

The included references are appropriate, but I think there is the need to include one or two more (as I commented within the paper)

#### Recommendation

Minor revisions needed, cf. general comment

***[Added by Editor as the following further suggestions of Reviewer #2 were made directly in the original manuscript PDF]***

Line 4, keywords: Welfare --> it is about animal welfare ethics and I think it is important to name it like this, because most of the prominent animal ethic representatives argue for an animal rights/liberation ethics

Line 26: I think the English translation for "Tierschutzorganisation" is rather animal welfare association?!

Line 90: with the term "activities" it sounds like this are not scientific positions, but activists. Since most representatives of animal ethics rather argue for animal rights or abolitionistic ethical perspectives, this does not "do justice" for the discipline animal ethics. So first the term should be "animal rights and animal liberation positions/perspectives/ concepts" and second I think it is important for a position paper to say a little bit more about these perspectives and their ethical background/ their arguments (cf. my later comment as well)

This is especially important when dealing with the question "what does do justice to animals mean", since many ( I would rather say most) animal ethicists would argue that justice for animals means stop using them as products.

Line 97-98: yes, but for a long time it was doubted and there are many biologists and philosophers you still argue that this is only true for sentient animals (mainly vertebrates), not all animals. I think this differentiation should be named. and some literature for this "thesis" would be good anyways.

Line 111-114: Well, I personally doubt that really respecting the animal specific needs and capabilities and still using them as products and exploit their female reproduction cycle for producing products for us to consume can be combined. But independent from my personal perspective: the requirements for a position paper states that controversial positions should be explained, so that the reader can find an own position. with only mentioning that there are animal rights views and then only addressing the own perspective, one does not explain controversial positions. So I think it is really necessary to include a paragraph about the ethical argumentation of animal rights-ethics and about the ethical argumentation line for NOT using animals anymore to do them justice.

Line 117: Source?

Line 131: and humanities

**FINAL ACCEPT**

**Editor/Chief-Editor Landbauforschung**

Landbauforschung: Accepted

We are pleased to inform you that **we've accepted your revised manuscript “Position Paper: The need for an ‘animal ethics turn’ regarding agricultural animal husbandry”**, which you submitted to Landbauforschung – *Journal of Sustainable and Organic Agricultural Systems*. Both reviewers agreed with us that the manuscript has significantly improved and that the revisions had been fulfilled. Please find below one comment by Reviewer # 2.

**Reviewer # 2:**

I only have one small comment, which is not to the content, but to wording (line 192).

Line 192-195, regarding the sentence “The “animal turn” that originated in **natural sciences**, humanities and in society regarding the relationship between humans and animals and also regarding the role and significance of animals for humans must have an effective impact on animal ethics in livestock farming.”

The English term sciences means "natural sciences", that's why one has to add the humanities. I think speaking of natural sciences is a kind of tautology (like "death corpse") :-)