



## Statement of Beliefs and Principles

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The Animal Welfare Federation of New Jersey's statement of beliefs and principles is based upon our conviction that all life possesses an inherent value, thus our motivating concern is the prevention of cruelty to all living creatures. Human beings, through their unique sense of moral values, have the responsibility to ensure the welfare of all animals, both domestic and wild.

The purpose of the AWFNJ is to bring together all New Jersey humane societies, animal protection organizations, and wildlife organizations, to exchange ideas and information in order to elevate the care and knowledge related to animal welfare in the state of New Jersey.

To guide the AWFNJ in these beliefs, the following principles are set forth:

**ANIMAL CARE** The AWFNJ recognizes that the stewards of animals (both individual and organizational) are responsible for providing adequate, palatable food, potable water, suitable shelter, and veterinary care for all animals in their charge. Animals that are confined for display, impoundment, or as pets, must be housed in conditions that are comfortable and appropriate as their needs dictate.

**WILD ANIMALS** The AWFNJ opposes indiscriminate, cruel, or "sport" hunting and trapping. The AWFNJ also opposes the raising of animals solely for their feathers, furs, hides, antlers, or horns.

**COMPANION ANIMALS** Because indiscriminate dog and cat breeding results in widespread euthanasia of unwanted and abandoned animals each year, effective and permanent dog and cat birth control is necessary. The AWFNJ strongly recommends that any sexually mature dog or cat be surgically altered, if medically possible, prior to release from any humane society, pound or foster home.

**FOOD ANIMALS** Animals that are raised as a food source must be maintained in a manner that allows them to develop and live in conditions that are reasonably natural for them. The AWFNJ opposes any manner of death for these animals that does not cause instantaneous unconsciousness and minimal apprehension.

**RESEARCH ANIMALS** The AWFNJ believes the use of animals for experimentation should be permitted only when there are no known feasible alternatives and will produce new and substantive information. These experiments should also ensure that the animals are feeling no pain or torment.

**ENTERTAINMENT OR WORK ANIMALS** The AWFNJ believes that practices that produce pain, injury, or stress to animals used for entertainment or work purposes must not be permitted. Human-induced animal fights are condemned as inherently cruel.

**EUTHANASIA** The AWFNJ is opposed to any method of euthanasia that produces undue fear, apprehension, or pain, and does not utilize acceptable methods of euthanasia as set forth by the American Veterinary Medical Association and the Humane Society of the United States.

These statements of principles and beliefs will be used to guide the AWFNJ and determine present and future decisions. These principles may be revised, altered, or amended as new conditions and developments arise. In all cases, the basis of these statements is the fulfillment of the AWFNJ's chartered purpose of ending cruelty to animals and disseminating the humane ethic.