

# Educación in Animal Welfare: why, for who, how, when and by whom?

*David B. Morton*

University of Birmingham

FAWC/EFSA

# DO ANIMALS MATTER?

## Sentience

“Suffering” e.g. Pain, Distress, Boredom,  
Frustration, Fear

**NB Includes pleasurable states**

## Welfare Science

(an evolving multidisciplinary subject)

Ethics

Legislation

Animal welfare is important to the public  
e.g. Eurobarometer

Public pays for:

Education of Vets

Food (expensive?)

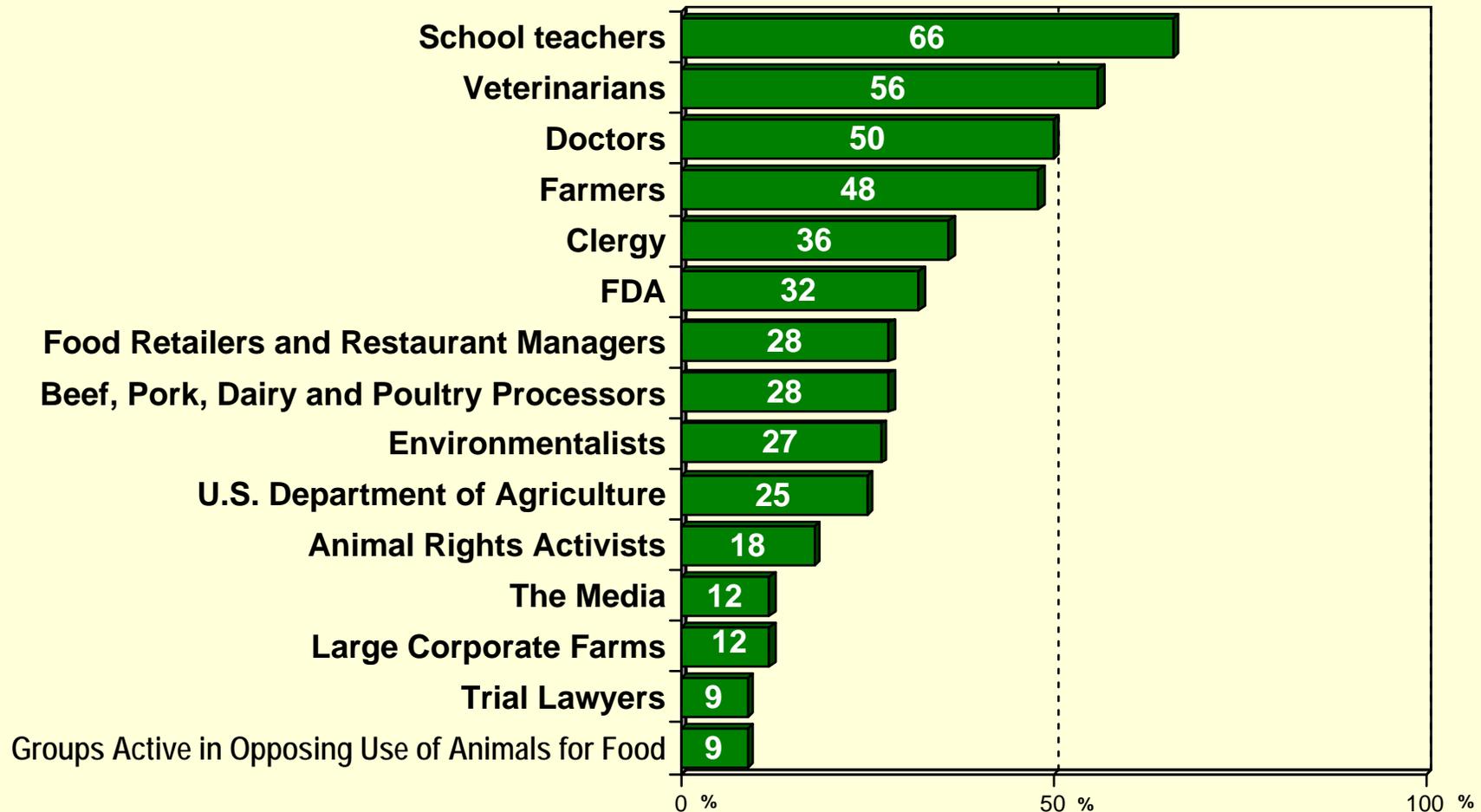
Keeping country free from infectious diseases

Vets have privileged legal position in society

# Public's View of Groups

- Teachers and veterinarians are the most favorably viewed groups.

*% Ranking Extremely or Very Favorable*

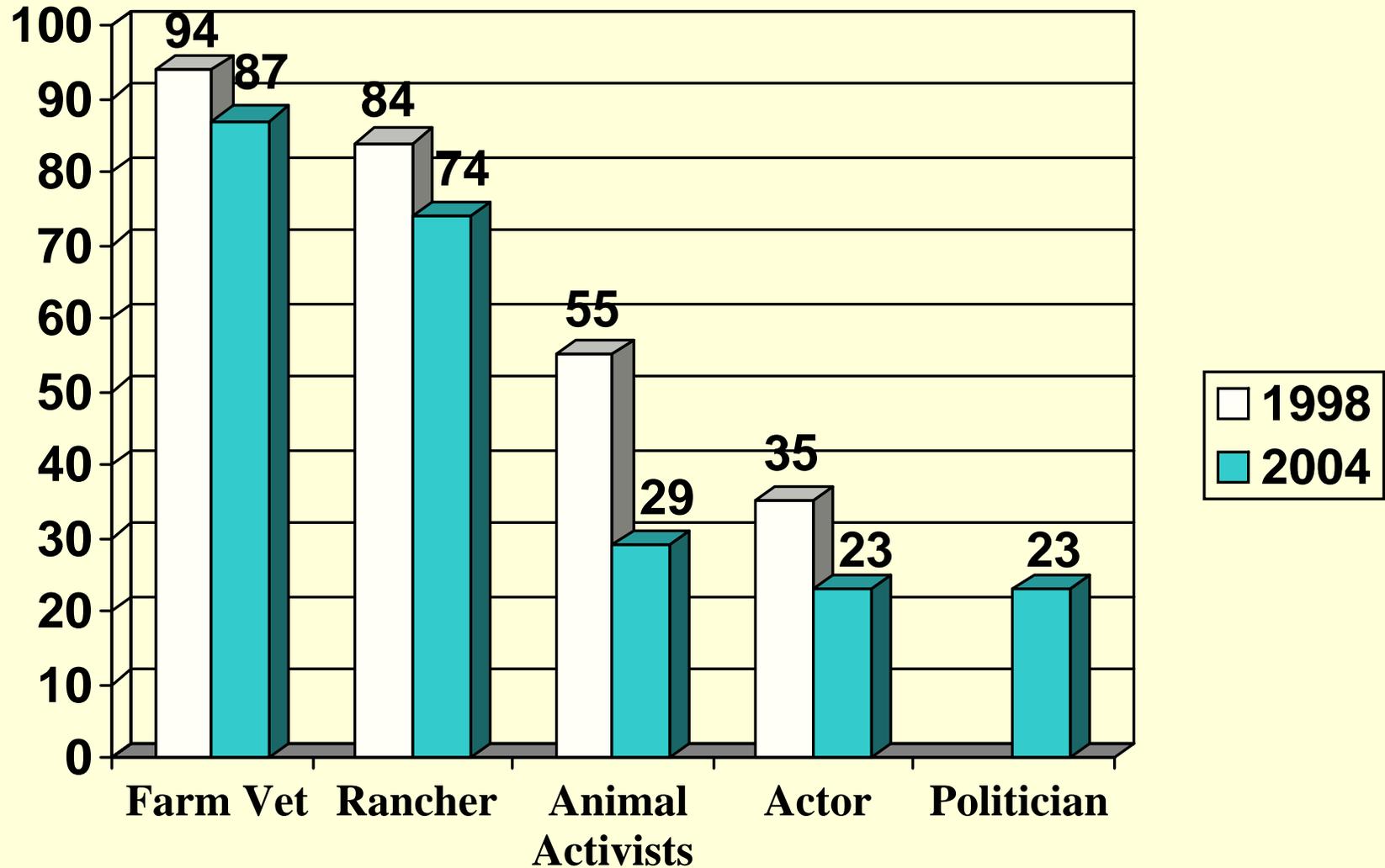


*Q: Thinking about various groups and industries in the U.S., how favorably do you view each of the following groups? Please rate the groups and industries using a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means not favorable at all and 7 means extremely favorable. How favorably do you view...?*

*Base: Total Sample (n=1002)*

# Advocate Believability

## *Treatment of Farm Animals*



# Animal welfare is important to the public

Includes physical and **mental** health

Disease can often lead to poor welfare  
(prevention/treatment by vet)

**BUT Mental health** can be poor in disease-free animals  
e.g. laying hens, veal calves (usually 'inadequate'  
environment)

Public's vision of good welfare is often linked with  
naturalness and extensive systems

Vet's vision of good welfare **was/is** linked only to health  
and productivity

The veterinary profession has a responsibility to ensure a good education in animal welfare science, ethics and law for:

Undergraduate vets

Postgraduate vets as part of CPD

And including other stakeholders:

Public i.e. Consumers & Citizens

Producers/Farmers/Processors

Retailers and caterers

Media

## 'ACTION' REQUIRED?

PUBLIC CONFIDENCE in the profession  
(given their privileged position in society)

Vets need to convince public that we take AW seriously e.g. core syllabus, examination, post-graduate specialisation in AWS

Veterinary profession has a responsibility to provide and ensure a **good education** in animal welfare science, ethics and law

**Knowledge** (time in the curriculum; ethology)  
On-line courses and other forms of CPD, and exams?

**Skills** (examination, on-line?) what makes a good vet?

**Attitude** (philosophy, macro- and micro-ethics, moral agency)  
02.00 vs 14.00h

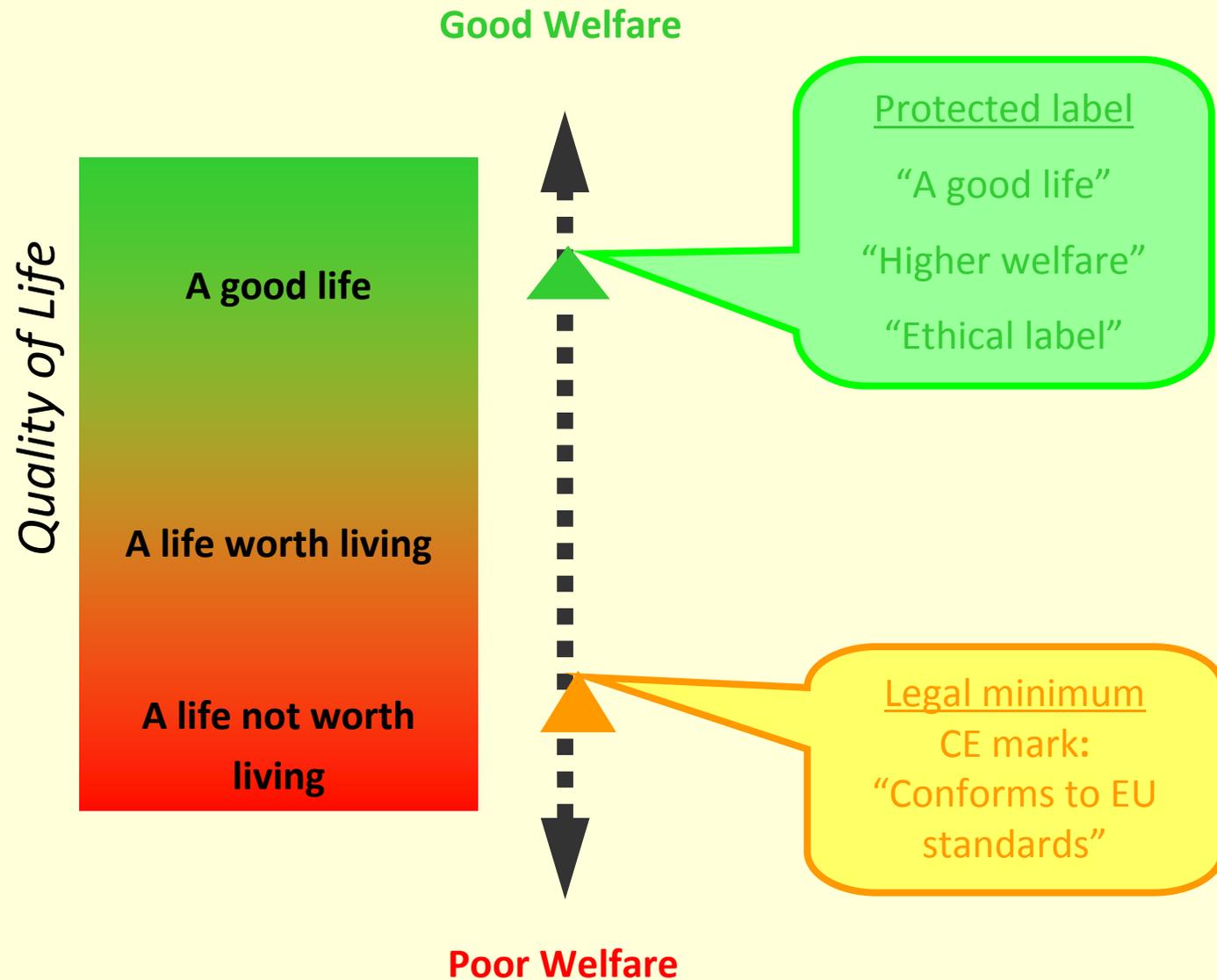
Please note the difference between ethics and professional ethics (so called etiquette)

Animal welfare science can raise

Ethical concerns lead to legislation (vet input)

Direction over past 100 years is in one direction  
only

# ANIMAL WELFARE in GB: Past, present and future (FAWC 2009) Recommendation



# Quality of a Life – a retrospective judgement

## Have we got it right?

- **A life not worth living** - Negative experiences outweigh the positive; literally, the animal would be better off dead than alive.
- **A life worth living** - Although some pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm may occur, on balance, the animal's positive experiences outweigh the negative.
- **A good life** - **Positive** experiences heavily outweigh the negative beyond any reasonable doubt; certain husbandry practices are proscribed and others prescribed.

# Are vets at the forefront or even involved?

EU legislation

EU AW Action Plan and future Strategy

European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

Scientific Panel on Animal Health and  
Animal Welfare

EuroFAWC

EBVS and ECAWBSM

# Is current veterinary education fit for purpose?

Does it meet public expectations?

Can it be improved?

Who leads?

## Suggested modification of the AVMA's Veterinarian's oath”?

- *Being admitted to the profession of veterinary medicine, I solemnly swear to use my scientific knowledge, skills and **values** for the benefit of society through the protection of animal health, **the avoidance and alleviation** of animal suffering, **the advancement of positive animal wellbeing**, the conservation of animal resources, the promotion of public health, and the advancement of medical knowledge.*
- *I will practice my profession conscientiously, with dignity, and in keeping with the principles of veterinary medical ethics.*
- *I accept as a lifelong obligation the continual improvement of my professional knowledge and competence.*