



MVMA Position Statement

Proposed Ballot Initiative An Act to Prevent Cruelty to Farm Animals

The MVMA believes all animals should be housed in such a manner that minimally allows each individual adequate space to turn around, lie down, stand and fully extend its limbs. In acknowledgement of species specific behavior, the MVMA recommends incorporation of evidence-based behavioral science in the design of animal housing.

The consideration of farm animal welfare is complicated by the number and diversity of stakeholders in the decision-making process, the evolving science of farm animal management systems and their combined effects on animal health and well-being. In considering new animal confinement regulations the effect of factors unrelated to housing systems - such as genetics and handling techniques, that not only have welfare implications, but often can and do overlap - as well as the potential for unintended harmful consequences that may result from new regulations, must be considered.

To accomplish this goal, the MVMA supports the establishment of a Livestock Care and Standards Board (LCSB) which would establish requirements on animal confinement. This model, already in place in Ohio, is best able to meet the *ongoing* needs regarding the treatment of food animals. Because the ballot initiative proposed by the Humane Society of the United States advocates only for specific, rigid animal housing space requirements but does not have any mechanism to adapt to changing needs on an ongoing basis the MVMA cannot support its passage as the sole answer to the animal confinement issue.