

ANIMAL WELFARE MUST BE AT THE HEART OF ONE HEALTH

Improving animal welfare strengthens animal health and disease resilience, reduces reliance on antimicrobials, and supports food security and nutrition.

Poor animal welfare husbandry practices and intensive systems are characterised by:



elevated
stress levels



high
animal density



low genetic
diversity



limited expression of
natural behaviour

POOR ANIMAL WELFARE SYSTEMS CONTRIBUTE TO DISEASE RISKS.

1

INCREASED SUSCEPTIBILITY

Highly selected & fast-growing breeds can increase susceptibility to disease. Genetic uniformity facilitates pathogen adaptation and spread.

2

REDUCED DISEASE RESISTANCE

Chronic stress leads to a weaker immune system and higher susceptibility to disease and risk of injury.

3

SPREAD OF AMR

Routine or prophylactic antibiotic use in intensive farming systems contributes to the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

4

INCREASED RISKS TO FOOD SAFETY

Poor welfare conditions can increase the spread of harmful bacteria, foodborne diseases, and reduced meat quality.

5

INCREASED EPIDEMIC & PANDEMIC RISK

Poor welfare conditions facilitate disease entry, transmission and amplification.

Higher-welfare, integrated and extensive systems can deliver better outcomes for animals, people and ecosystems, making them essential to advancing One Health in agrifood systems.

These systems offer a resilient, sustainable pathway to transform agrifood systems through the One Health approach while protecting food security. These include agroecological approaches, pastures, agroforestry, agrosilvopastoral systems, and integrated crop–livestock systems. **One Health benefits include:**

ANIMAL & HUMAN HEALTH

Lower stocking densities, environmental enrichment and access to outdoors support stronger immune resilience, lower disease incidence, greater genetic diversity, the use of locally adapted breeds, lower risks of epidemics, pandemics and antimicrobial resistance, reduced foodborne diseases, and higher-quality products.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Improve land, soil and water, support climate adaptation and livelihoods, and deliver environmental benefits, including reduced pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, while reducing zoonotic disease risks.

WFA RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Reduce the need for antimicrobials and enhance food security, nutrition, livelihoods, and the sustainability of agrifood systems by **ensuring that animal welfare is anchored in the One Health approach.**
- 2 Optimise the health of people, animals and ecosystems by **promoting the transition toward more sustainable approaches to animal farming, fisheries and aquaculture** as part of One Health.
- 3 **Guarantee high animal welfare standards** as a necessary part of sustainable food systems transformation under the One Health approach.
- 4 **Ensure that public and private financial flows are directed to the implementation of high animal welfare standards** in alignment with the goals and targets of the One Health approach.



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