

Written by Laurie Johns  
Friday, 11 January 2013 14:00

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## Statewide Resource for Consumers, Farmers

WEST DES MOINES, IOWA – January 10, 2013 – A first-of-its kind effort to provide a centralized resource where Iowans can receive information about appropriate farm animal care was announced today in Des Moines by a unique coalition of farmers, animal well-being experts, veterinarians and industry leaders. The Iowa Farm Animal Care (IFAC) Coalition is designed to answer Iowans' questions about farm animal care and assist farmers in farm animal care resources to help ensure all Iowa farm animals benefit from the latest science-based animal care standards.

IFAC was launched by farmers for farmers and consumers and is modeled after the 20-year-old Alberta Farm Animal Care program. "Farmers understand that consumers want to know more about where their food comes from and how it was raised. IFAC is available to help increase public understanding," said IFAC Executive Director Denny Harding. "Until now, there has not been a centralized place where Iowans could go for farm animal care information. Now, they can visit [www.iowafarmanimalcare.org](http://www.iowafarmanimalcare.org) and learn more about how responsible Iowa livestock farmers care for their animals or call our help line at [1-800-252-0577](tel:1-800-252-0577) to report a concern if they see something they don't understand."

In addition to providing information on farm animal care to consumers and referrals to farmers, IFAC also provides access to animal care experts who specialize in many aspects of animal care, including animal science experts and veterinarians from Iowa State University's colleges of Veterinary Medicine and Agriculture and Life Sciences, and the Iowa state veterinarian office at the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS). This independent team of experts makes up the On-Farm Evaluation Team and specializes in performing voluntary on-site evaluations to ensure appropriate farm animal care is being given.

"I think the overwhelming majority of farmers today are doing a great job handling farm animals and have their best interests in mind when it comes to their health and environment," said Dr. Suzanne Millman, associate professor of animal welfare at Iowa State University. "Different species have different behaviors thus requiring different care. IFAC can help provide farmers with the latest in animal care research, while ensuring that appropriate care is being given and answering consumer questions."

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IFAC has a four-person Advisory Committee including Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey; Animal Rescue League of Iowa Executive Director Tom Colvin; State of Iowa Veterinarian, Dr. David Schmitt; and Iowa State Sheriffs and Deputies Association President, Jerry Dunbar.

Colvin applauded the effort. “This is a positive step forward, to reach out to consumers and farmers alike, to provide information about farm animal care or just be there with support if a concern should arise. We’re proud to be a part of a proactive solution that helps the animals and the farmers.”

IFAC is a collaborative effort that includes farmers from the Iowa Farm Bureau and the Iowa Pork Producers Association, Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine and College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. For more information about IFAC or farm animal care in Iowa, visit [www.iowafarmanimalcare.org](http://www.iowafarmanimalcare.org)

or call

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