




animals,
climate and
civic education



Training for teachers
Module 1
The life of animals in agriculture

Imprint

Authors of original German text: Mensch Tier Bildung e.V. with input from the project partners

Editor of original German text: Ann-Marie Orf

Translated into English using machine translation tool DeepL.com, reworked by Rhiannon Westphal

Date of publication: 17.06.2024

Document version: 1.0

Publisher

ALICE (Animals, Climate and Civic Education), a project co-funded by the European Commission

Project number: KA 220-NI-21-30-32616

Project coordination: Institut für Didaktik der Demokratie / Leibniz Universität Hannover

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Disclaimer

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Partner organisations of the Project



Copyright



This document by ALICE is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

To view a copy of this license, visit:

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

Module 1: The life of animals in agriculture

Total duration: 3 hours, 10 min.

Learning objectives of the module:

1. Participants have basic knowledge of the needs and characteristics of bovines and their living conditions in animal agriculture
2. Participants know methods that they can use in the classroom to teach the basic knowledge they have acquired

All materials for this module are available at the following link:

<https://tinyurl.com/alice-modul-1-en>

Part 1: Introduction

Goals

- Participants have an emotional connection to and interest in the topic
- Participants discuss the fact that it is due to our perception and culture that we eat some animals and not others

Time

20 minutes

Materials

- Document "Linguistic aspects"
- Film "La Table Suisse"
- Background information on the film
- Projector, screen and loudspeakers

Description

The content of the module is briefly introduced. The focus is on gaining knowledge about the living conditions of animals in agriculture using bovines as an example. Ethical issues and social contexts on the topic are dealt with in module 2 (link: <https://tinyurl.com/alice-modul-2-en>). Further information on the situation of animals in agriculture and social contexts can be found in the ALICE podcast "Animals - Our relationship to animals" (link: <https://tinyurl.com/alice-podcast-1-en>).

The document "Linguistic aspects" is used to briefly discuss linguistic aspects.

The facilitator explains that all the activities and materials in this module have been selected to be suitable not only for teacher training but also for use in lessons with older students.

As an introduction to the topic, the short film "La Table Suisse" is shown, an English film with German subtitles. The participants' task is to identify what the film is about. After the film, they first clarify what they have seen:

Example questions:

- Who can explain what the film is about?
- Who is the narrator?
- What exactly happened in the film?

This is followed by a discussion about the film during which opinions are sought about the fact that cats and dogs are eaten in the film. The facilitator follows up and highlights different positions. The aim is for the participants to come to terms with the fact that our perceptions and culture determine which animals we eat and which we do not.

Examples of questions:

- How did you feel while watching the film?
- Would you like to eat at this restaurant?
- What is the difference between "pets" and "farm animals"?
- Does the difference have to do with the animals or with us, with our attitudes and perceptions?

In the course of the discussion, the concepts of carnism (according to Melanie Joy) and speciesism can also be introduced and explained. They are explained in the didactic guide to the ALICE project graphic novel (page 9).

At the end, the participants' contributions are summarised and a transition is made to the main part of the module.

At this point, it is worth mentioning briefly that people who have grown up in the European cultural area have a different view of so-called pets such as cats or dogs than we have of farmed animals such as pigs or bovines. While many people develop relationships with "pets" such as cats and see them as having personalities, pigs and bovines are seen differently by most people. We don't usually have a personal relationship with them and don't know much about their needs and living conditions.

Important: When discussing the film, leave room for differing opinions without judging or steering the participants in one direction. Explain factual errors objectively (example: "Pigs are actually very clean"). Take into account the different cultural backgrounds of the participants and consciously seek diverse opinions and experiences.

Part 2: Needs and characteristics of bovines

Goals

- Participants recognise that humans and animals (using the example of bovines) have similar but also different needs
- Participants learn more about selected needs of bovines
- Participants develop an emotional connection to bovines

Time

30 minutes

Materials

- In preparation, the document "Needs cards and background information"
- Needs cards (to be prepared by the facilitator) - one need per card and participant
- Magnets or adhesive tape to attach the cards to the board
- Short films to illustrate the needs and characteristics of bovines
- Projector, screen and loudspeakers

Description

Two ovals are drawn on the board, forming a large intersection. Above one oval is written "Humans", above the other "Bovines" and above the intersection "Both". There are cards called 'Needs Cards', i.e. cards on which a need is written. The individual needs for labelling the cards can be found in the document "Needs cards and background information".

It is explained that the question now is what needs we humans have and what needs bovines have. The term "needs" is explained. There are various definitions of the term, but here it is used as follows: "A need is something that a living being needs in order to be well. If it is lacking, it suffers".

All participants are given a card. They consider whether the need on their card belongs to humans, bovines or both, and place the card in one of the two ovals or in the intersection. Important: The aim of the activity is not to place as many needs as possible in the intersecting area, but to recognise that humans and bovines have many needs in common, but also have different needs that are important to have met.

When all the cards have been placed, ask the group if everyone agrees with the way the cards are hung and if there are any questions. Needs where there is disagreement are circled. Using the document "Needs cards and background information", the group is given background information on the needs.

In addition to discussing the needs, short films can be shown - either during the discussion of individual needs, if appropriate, or afterwards, combined with a question to the participants about which needs and characteristics they can recognise in the films. The short films provided are from

the Erdlingshof animal sanctuary in Germany, where bovines are able to live without being used by humans.

In a short round of questions, thoughts are collected on what happens when needs are not met (illness, abnormal behaviour, etc.).

If there is enough time, extracts from the ALICE educational videos "Forms and colours of intelligence" and "Emotions and personality in animals" can also be shown here. Alternatively, participants can be asked to watch the videos in preparation for the session.

Part 3: Learning about the life of animals in agriculture

Goals

- Participants learn more about the living conditions of animals in agriculture, especially bovines in the dairy industry
- Participants reflect with each other on how they feel about the living conditions.

Time

105 minutes

Materials

- **Exercise 1:** Input lecture with presentation
- **Exercise 2:** Film "How bovines live in our society"
- **Exercise 3:** Material for group work (four groups), instructions for each group, 1 flipchart paper and several pens per group
- **Exercise 4:** Quiz presentation and background information, one set of 1/2/3 cards per group
- Projector, loudspeakers and screen

Description

1. Life cycle of a female bovine in the dairy industry - 15 minutes

The life cycle of a female bovine in the dairy industry is illustrated using a presentation. In presentation mode, you can click on each step in the animated presentation to display it.

2. Film and reflection "How bovines live in our society" - 20 minutes

Then the film "How bovines live in our society" is shown, which is about bovines used in agriculture. The term "breeding" should be explained beforehand if necessary.

Important: When introducing the film, mention that it contains scenes that some people may find difficult to watch. Participants can decide whether they want to watch them or leave the room for a moment. During the film, pay attention to whether participants need emotional support.

The film is then discussed by the group, with the facilitator guiding the discussion with specific questions. The following questions have proved useful:

- Do you have any questions? Is there anything you did not understand?
- How did it make you feel?
- What do you remember? What struck you in particular? What was the most memorable scene?
- What do you think about the living conditions of bovines? What do you find particularly bad and what do you find not so bad?
- If applicable: Why is nothing being done about these conditions? What do you think?

2.1 Additional exercise: Moving the needs cards to "fulfilled" / "not fulfilled"

If there is enough time, the needs cards can be used to visualise which of the needs of cattle in agriculture identified in the first part are met and which are not. To do this, draw a table on the board with the two columns "fulfilled" and "not fulfilled". Make sure that both this area and the original division (ovals with intersection) are visible. The participants now categorise the needs into "fulfilled" and "not fulfilled". Then reflect on the result. When repositioning, it should be taken into account that there may be participants who disagree and that there may still be a need for discussion.

Note: "Health" can normally be placed in the middle. In the discussion, it can then be conveyed that although it is important in animal agriculture to ensure that bovines are in an acceptable state of health, at a certain point their health is no longer important. Namely, when it is no longer profitable to keep them healthy. Then they are killed.

3. Working groups - 40 minutes

Four working groups are formed, each of which is provided with a work station containing its own material. Using the material provided, each group will deal with one of the four specific aspects of the use of bovines in milk production:

1. Breeding and performance
2. Reproduction and handling of calves
3. Living conditions
4. Transport and slaughter

Each group should write on flipchart paper what they have learnt about the life of bovines in farming from the material provided and what they consider to be important in terms of the animals' needs. The groups have 15 to 20 minutes to do this.

The groups then present their results to the whole group.

Important: The "Transport and slaughter" station contains pictures from slaughterhouses. These should be covered so that the participants can decide for themselves if they want to look at them.

4. Chicken quiz - 30 minutes

A quiz is used to demonstrate the living conditions in animal farming of another animal species (chickens). First, groups are formed to compete against each other. A quiz question is read out, followed by clarification of the content and technical terms. Each group then agrees on an answer and holds up the corresponding number (1, 2 or 3). The next slide with the answer is then shown and the groups with the correct answer receive a point. Once a question has been solved, the facilitator can give the group some background information and answer any questions.

Part 4: Application in the classroom

Goal

- Participants consider how they can use the methods and content of the module to create lessons on this topic

Time

20 minutes

Materials

- Instructions - 1 per group

Description

1. Small group sharing - 15 minutes

In small groups, the participants reflect on the content of the module. They exchange ideas on how to use the methods presented in their teaching. They can discuss which content and methods of the module are appropriate for which age group and how they can be adapted to different levels of ability levels.

2. Whole group discussion - 5 minutes

Ideas are shared in the whole group.

Part 5: Conclusion

Goals

- Participants reflect on the information from the module and whether/how their own perceptions and attitudes have changed

- Participants give feedback on the module

Time

15 minutes

Materials

Work sheets - 1 per person

Description

1. Paired chat - 5 minutes

In pairs, the participants think about the following questions and note down key points on their worksheets:

- Which of the information was already known, which was new, which was particularly impressive?
- Has my perception of the situation of bovines and other farmed animals changed? If so, how?

The results of the reflection are not shared with the whole group.

2. Closing round with the whole group - 10 minutes

In a final round, participants are invited to share

- an idea, information or method they took away from the module
- an aspect they liked about the session
- an aspect they did not like

All links in files belonging to Module 1 were last checked on 15/03/2024.