



Animal Welfare Institute

900 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20003

Survey of Consumer Attitudes about Pain Relief for Physical Alterations of Farm Animals

In June 2022, the Animal Welfare Institute commissioned a national web-based survey of adult American attitudes towards the use of pain relief before or after the performance of painful physical alterations on Cows, Pigs, Chickens, and Turkeys. The findings follow:

1. 49% of consumers **do not know that significantly painful physical procedures are routinely performed on farm animals**. 14% incorrectly believe this is not true, and 35% are not sure.
2. 37% of consumers **incorrectly believed pain relief is usually given to farm animals before or after significantly painful procedures**, while 22% believe pain relief is not usually given, and 42% are not sure.
3. An overwhelming majority of consumers agree that if scientific research demonstrates that certain physical procedures cause significant pain to farm animals, then the procedure should only be performed with appropriate pain relief.

Strongly agree	56%
Somewhat agree	32%
Total	87%

Somewhat disagree	8%
Strongly disagree	5%
Total	13%

4. Large majorities of consumers felt it was important that pain relief be provided to farm animals for specific physical procedures if research shows they cause significant pain in animals.
 - **77%** find it very or somewhat important that **pain relief be provided for partial removal of the beaks of turkeys and egg-laying hens**
 - **76%** find it very or somewhat important that **pain relief be provided when cutting off the tails of piglets**

- **80%** find it very or somewhat important that **pain relief be provided when castrating piglets**
- **81%** find it very or somewhat important that **pain relief be provided when removing the horns or horn buds of cattle**
- **83%** find it very or somewhat important that **pain relief be provided when castrating cattle**

5. A majority of consumers* said they were less likely to purchase a food product if they learned it came from animals who had significantly painful procedures performed without any pain relief.

Much less likely	31%
Somewhat less likely	43%
No less likely	26%

6. The survey also found that American consumers held the following beliefs:

a. Industry trade associations (such as the National Chicken Council or National Pork Producers Council) should strongly recommend pain relief for significantly painful physical procedures in their voluntary animal welfare guidelines.

Strongly agree	50%
Somewhat agree	34%
Total	84%
Somewhat disagree	11%
Strongly disagree	5%
Total	16%

b. Food retailers (such as grocery stores and restaurants) should require that their meat, dairy, and egg suppliers do not perform significantly painful physical procedures on animals without pain relief.

Strongly agree	42%
Somewhat agree	35%
Total	77%
Somewhat disagree	15%
Strongly disagree	8%
Total	23%

* Question limited to respondents who indicated they purchase food products made from farm animals.

- c. Producers advertising a meat, dairy, or egg product as “humanely raised” or another welfare-related claim should be required to provide pain relief for significantly painful procedures.

Strongly agree	50%
Somewhat agree	33%
Total	83%

Somewhat disagree	12%
Strongly disagree	5%
Total	17%

- d. Legislation should be passed to require pain relief for significantly painful physical procedures in farm animals.

Strongly agree	46%
Somewhat agree	34%
Total	79%

Somewhat disagree	13%
Strongly disagree	8%
Total	21%

This survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of **Animal Welfare Institute** from June 9-13, 2022, among 2,021 adults ages 18+. The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the sample data is accurate to within ± 2.8 percentage points using a 95% confidence level. For complete survey methodology, including weighting variables and subgroup sample sizes, please contact dena@awionline.org.