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Defining and measuring farmers' attitudes to farm animal welfare

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Abstract

Identifying farmers' attitudes to farm animal welfare (FAW) is an important step in determining farmers' efforts to improve FAW, knowledge of which is of particular importance for understanding how the living conditions of production animals are determined. This study developed a hypothetical model of farmers' attitudes to FAW, including the antecedents of these attitudes and possible influences on FAW-related behaviour. Two models for empirical measurement of attitudes, namely formative and reflective models, were also evaluated and compared. The results suggested that choice of measurement model considerably influences conceptualisation of attitudes and that there may be considerable model misspecifications in previous literature relating to farmers' FAW attitudes. Existing literature on farmers' FAW attitudes was reviewed with the aim of providing a preliminary indication of the coverage of farmers' FAW attitudes. A need for future research related to farmers' attitudes to FAW was identified.

Keywords: *animal welfare, attitudes, factor analysis, farmers, measurement models, psychometrics*