

Looking after the animals

Farmers care about their animals and looking after the welfare of animals is also a legal requirement in Australia.

Looking after animals is easier when we understand their basic needs. In 1965, the British government released a report about animal welfare that included guidelines that are now followed by many organisations, including the RSPCA. These are known as the 'Five Freedoms' for animals under human control. These are the basic, minimum standards that our livestock farmers adhere to, and they are always looking for more ways to make sure their animals are content and healthy.

The five minimum freedoms for animals under human control are:

1. **Freedom from hunger and thirst:** by making sure that the animals have easy access to water and a nutritious diet.
2. **Freedom from discomfort:** by providing an appropriate environment, including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
3. **Freedom from pain, injury or disease:** by prevention through quick diagnosis and treatment.
4. **Freedom to express normal behaviour:** by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animals' own kind.
5. **Freedom from fear and distress:** by ensuring conditions and treatment that avoids mental suffering.

Animals deserve to live a content, stress-free life, but animal welfare does not just apply on the farm. Caring for animals is also important in feedlots, sale yards, processing facilities and when being transported around the country or overseas.

