

Old MacDonald had a farm

Ethical issues with factory farming

Stefano Corsi (2220251)
University of Wales TSD
Environmental Philosophy
31 March 2023

Summary

- *Definition*
- *Ethical issues*
- *Favourable arguments*
- *Possible alternatives*
- *Some questions*
- *Essential bibliography*

Definition

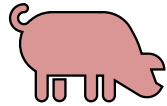


Factory farming is «a system of farming in which a lot of animals are kept in a small closed area and fed special types of food in order to produce a large amount of animal products (meat, eggs, or milk) as quickly and cheaply as possible.»*

* Definition taken and slightly adapted from the online Cambridge Dictionary.

Ethical issues (1/2)

Animal Welfare (AW)



- Cruelty
- Unnecessary pain
- Unnatural treatment
- Abnormal behaviour
- Slaughter



Factory Farming (FF)

Public Health (PH)



- Zoonotic diseases
- Antibiotic resistance
- Food inequality
- Character corruption
- Human exploitation

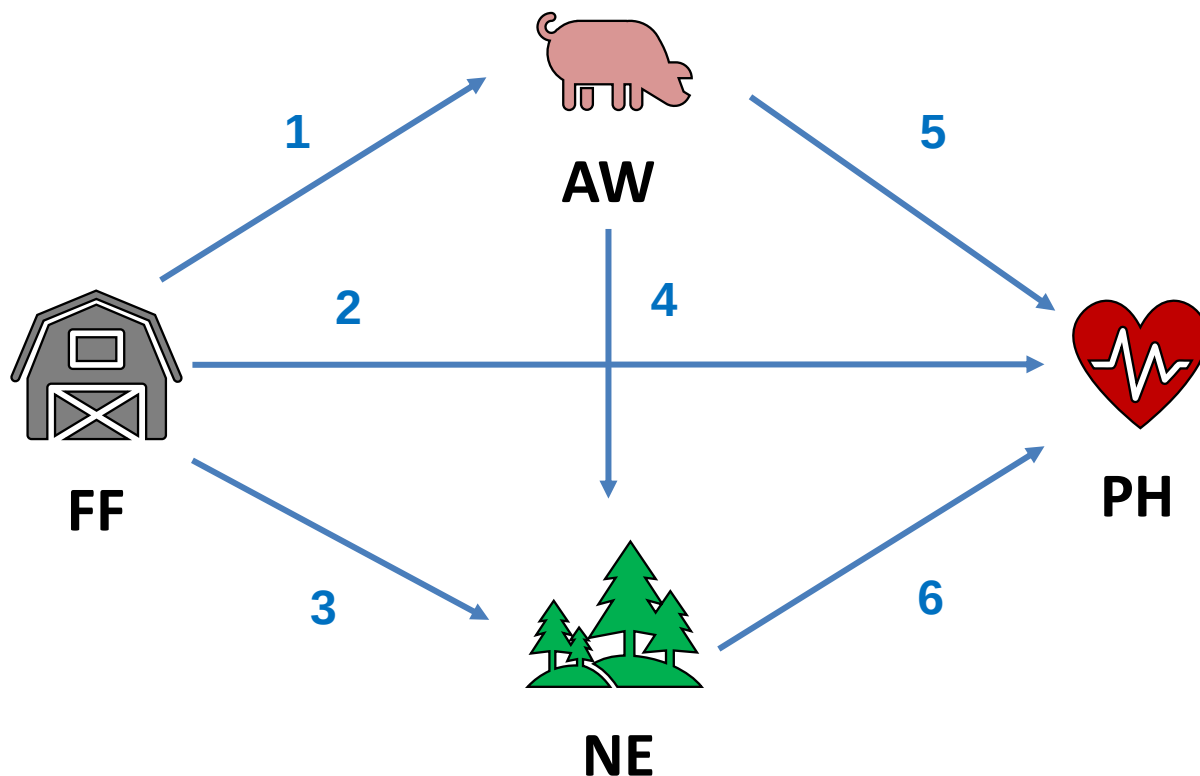
Natural Environment (NE)



- Pollution of air, water, soil
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Land exploitation
- Resources wastefulness
- Deforestation

Ethical issues (2/2)

The square of ethical concerns



Examples

1. Cruelty, slaughter, etc.
2. Corruption, inequality, etc.
3. Pollution, resource exploitation, etc.
4. Animal waste, gas emissions, etc.
5. Diseases, etc.
6. Environmental decay, etc.

Each blue arrow (→) means:
[XX] causes direct ethical issues to [YY] because of [no.]

Favourable arguments

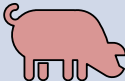
Possible premises for different arguments

- Animals do not suffer or feel pain.
- Animal suffering does not matter.
- Animal suffering is less important than human satisfaction.

- Factory farming is not inherently cruel.
- Factory farming protects some species from extinction.
- Factory farming provides employment.
- Factory farming produces affordable food.
- Factory-farmed food is cheaper than its alternatives.

Possible alternatives

What should a responsible moral agent do?

Practice	Are they good for... ?		
			
Humane animal farming	?	✓	✓
Lab-grown meat	✓	?	✓
Vegetarianism or veganism	✓	?	✓

Some questions

- Are there **good arguments** to justify the adoption of factory farming?
- Which is arguably the **optimal solution** to the ethical issues raised by factory farming?
- How can those solutions be evaluated from **different ethical theories**?
 - anthropocentrism, sentientism, biocentrism, ecocentrism...
- How can those solutions be evaluated from **different normative stances**?
 - consequentialism (e.g. utilitarianism...)
 - non-consequentialism (e.g. deontology, rights theory, virtue ethics, care ethics...)

Essential bibliography

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Thank you for your attention!