



Ethical Analysis in One Health and Emergency Zoonotic Disease Preparedness: A US Perspective

Raymond Anthony, PhD

Author affiliation: University of Alaska, Anchorage – Address: 3211 Providence Drive, Anchorage, AK 99508, +1 907.786.4459

Project website: <https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/research/well-animal-project/index.cshhtml>

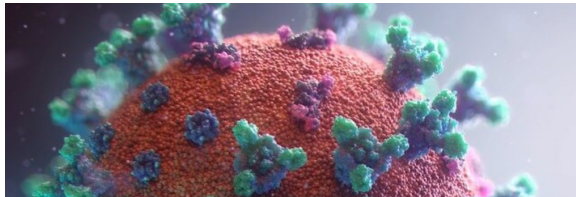
E-mail address: rxanthony@alaska.edu

Introduction

An ethics guided One Health approach can help evaluate the interests of humans, animals and the ecosystem as a whole transparently and fairly.

The WellAnimal project seeks to advance animal welfare and US food security and sustainability by discovering:

- What lessons the US public learned from the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, especially about animals and how the burdens and benefits are shared across species boundaries.
- What challenges still persist that must be addressed to improve public health crisis standards of care, and animal disaster preparedness.



Investigate attitudes towards animals and disease risk assessment



Explore communication barriers and sources of disinformation and distrust



Develop collaborative research agenda within One Health

Methods

An online survey was administered on a representative sample of 1868 subjects of the US population in December 2023. Eight statements with agreement/disagreement options were posed to identify respondents' attitudes towards human-animal conflicts during the COVID-19 disease pandemic.

- Descriptive analysis was performed to visualize the difference of agreement for each statement.
- Logistic regression was conducted to verify if it was possible to find differences in the proportions of agreement for each characteristic.

Results

- Gender, race/ethnicity, geography and political affiliation do not seem to divide attitudes towards animal welfare during a novel disease pandemic.
- The older you are the greater the odds you will support disease control strategies that favor protecting human life (i.e., using vaccines or other ways to control a disease).
- The way that people interact with animals are related to their level of concern regarding human-animal conflicts:

Those who avoid the consumption of animal products are more likely to care about animal welfare than those who consume animal products.

Those who own animals are more likely to care more about animal welfare than those who don't.

Conclusions

US citizens are concerned about animal welfare and pandemic preparedness policies and education materials should highlight:

- How and when animals will be killed to control zoonotic diseases, since respondents were less likely to agree that killing livestock or poultry is an acceptable disease control tool if a vaccine exists.
- How vaccines are made, since animal owners were almost twice as likely to disagree with the acceptability of using animals to develop vaccines against a novel disease pandemic.
- How to minimize negative impacts on animals, including providing opportunities for them to perform natural behaviors and socialize.

Tools and the manner of communication should be sensitive to age differences, and circumstances of human-animal relationship.

Acknowledgements

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