ANIM7620 Animal Behaviour/Welfare:

Read Modules 1 to 3 of the study book and the supplementary material on the 5 Domains Model. This material is available on the ANIM7620 Blackboard site.

Assignment: Analysis of an animal welfare issue (2000 word limit):

1. Choose a particular animal species and discuss an aspect of animal welfare relevant to that species/type. Examples are the live export trade in cattle or sheep, battery cages versus alternatives for laying hens, tethering of sows, tail docking or debarking of dogs, control of dangerous dogs, fox hunting, zoo animal housing, the use of animals for experimentation (or for teaching), do animals feel pain (and how do we assess it?). There are others, of course – the choice is yours. However, **there has to be a significant behavioural component to the issue**.
2. You should review the current literature from **reliable peer reviewed** publications and cover the following aspects. (20 marks)
   * Why is the topic a welfare issue (what is the significance or impact of this welfare issue)? (5 marks)
   * What is the incidence of the issue? How common is it? (5 marks)
   * What physiological, production, health and behavioural measures have been used to measure the extent or impact of the problem? (5 marks)
   * Identify and describe 1 or 2 alternatives or changes that can be made to improve or eliminate this welfare issue? (5 marks)
3. Once you have reviewed the issue, you should then discuss how you would research the issue and evaluate the potential of 1 alternative (or change) you have identified from a behavioural point of view. This part should include: (30 marks)
   * How you would set up an experiment to evaluate behavioural changes and impact on animal welfare of your proposed alternative option – Describe how many animals, the physical environment/enclosure/facilities, and the husbandry practices of the original and alternative to be tested. (10 marks)
   * What behaviours would you evaluate and how would behavioural observations be taken and recorded (eg. type of observations, frequency, duration). (10 marks)
   * How you would be able to measure the significance of the problem and whether the alternatives that you are testing were actually better for the animal?. (5 marks)
   * What other factors might need to be considered before this new system or practice can be implemented (for instance cost is something which might be important, or practicality or impact on farm income or facility management or husbandry practices)? (5 marks)
4. Referencing: All information included from reliable peer-reviewed sources (journal articles, books, scientific websites) requires proper in-text referencing and must be reworded from the original source to avoid plagiarism. A full reference list must be included at the end of the document. Please use the APA 7th Ed style of Referencing (5 marks).
5. Structure and Function: Grammar, style, ease of understanding. No more than 10% over word limit of 2000 words (5 marks)

**Throughout this assignment, you must remember to be objective**. Your aim is to review the issue scientifically, back up your comments and arguments with sound literature and reasoning, and to make your conclusions accordingly. You may comment on the social aspects of the issue, but the report should not simply reflect your own “feeling” for or against it.

Submit the assignment to the link on Blackboard by the due date.