

WELFARE & IMPACTS

Improving Animal and Worker Health and Welfare

Finding Common Ground Forum Series

Consensus Ideas Developed through the January 17, 2013 Finding Common Ground Forum

The following themes and consensus ideas were developed from small group discussions at the Finding Common Ground Forum. The Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center is encouraging proposals to its pilot project program to follow-up on these ideas. To be eligible for funding the connection to worker health, safety, and well-being must be clear. UMASH Pilot Projects available at: http://umash.umn.edu/projects/pilot_projects_rfp.html

Theme	Consensus Idea
Exchanging viewpoints	Create a space for conversation and action planning through the creation of a council that includes expertise in animal health and welfare plus occupational health practitioners working with worker health and safety
Knowledge and information gap between farmers and animal welfare activists	Rebuild trust in order to find common ground on issues of best practices and regulation through the creation of a farmer-activist alliance that has the potential to snowball into something larger and externally influential.
Incomplete information or misinformation that informs values	Inform values/decisions through the provision of accurate information. Transparent, accurate and accessible sources of information are needed to inform values and decisions.
Incorporating worker safety programs with quality assurance	Link worker safety programs to animal welfare audits and quality assurance programs to ensure that healthy animals arrive at the harvest facility from facilities demonstrating health and welfare programs for both animals and agricultural workers.
Relationship between small farms and big farms	Provide educational support and resources regarding animal and worker health and safety to growing farms through small farm networking and best practice sharing. Engage University extension programs to create resources and build networks between smaller farms and larger farms.
Science versus Emotion	Increase understanding by building connections between consumers and food systems to increase confidence and trust between producers, consumers, the public, and policy makers.
Bridging the gap in understanding between consumers and industry on food production	Create a forum for <i>Real Conversations with Consumers and Industry</i> to increase common knowledge on animal agriculture.
Appearance of differing values between animal rights and producer groups	Hold a series of friendly meetings or conversations, slowly working towards finding the common ground between varying viewpoints on animal rights and values and how that influences worker well being.
Exchanging viewpoints/Information sharing	Provide farmers with an opportunity to be heard through the creation of community engagement strategies that showcase their views and values on farming. Organizations creating these community engagement strategies should represent producer and commodity groups, rather than individuals, and demonstrate alignment with government regulatory agencies.
Cost associated with providing improved animal/human health and welfare	Produce affordable food at a sustainable production cost while attaining balanced animal/human health and welfare through the organization and empowerment of employees to be “advocates for” and “contributors to” transparent communication between employers and consumers