

Mental health in animals: a shift towards positive welfare indicators

Randi Oppermann Moe

**Department of Production Animal Clinical Studies,
Norwegian School of Veterinary Science**

It is increasingly accepted that animal welfare is not only about the absence of negative emotional states such as fear, anxiety, frustration and pain, but also about the ability to experience positive emotions such as anticipation, satisfaction and joy. It is the balance between negative and positive emotions that determine an animal's welfare level. This lecture provides a brief overview of the scientific knowledge of why one can assume that animals experience positive emotions, some examples of methods of indirect "measurement" of positive emotions, and examples of possible future practical application of this knowledge. Some strategies to enhance the ability to experience positive emotions (such as physical, social and cognitive enrichment), thereby promoting quality of life in animals, are outlined. Recent developments in research on positive emotions have been published (Boissy et al., 2007).

Boissy A, Manteuffel G, Bak Jensen M, Moe RO, Spruijt B, Keeling L, Winckler C, Forkman B, Dimitrov I, Langbein J, Bakken M, Veissier I, Aubert A. (2007): Assessment of positive emotions in animals to improve their welfare. *Physiology & Behavior* 92: 375-397.