New Study Shows Most U.S. Consumers Believe Chickens and Fish Need Room to Exercise and Explore

More chickens and fish are killed for consumption in the U.S. than any other animal. This study explored U.S. consumers' beliefs about chickens and fish and willingness to take action to improve their welfare.

Olympia, Wash. (Nov. 11, 2020) — Over 68 billion chickens and 97 million tonnes of fish are [slaughtered globally](#) each year, but research has shown that they receive little public attention or empathy. To understand this issue, animal advocacy research organization [Faunalytics](#) has released a landmark study showing what the U.S. thinks about chickens and fish, and whether people are willing to protect them.

Faunalytics' [study](#) not only uncovers what people believe about these animals, but also identifies which beliefs are associated with specific "animal-positive behaviors" — for example, willingness to reduce one's chicken and fish consumption or sign a petition for welfare reform.

The study offers several takeaways for those who want to promote chicken and fish welfare. For example, focusing on chicken and fish personalities, emotions, intelligence, and suffering is an important way to mobilize the public. Furthermore, it may be more effective to ask people to support animal welfare reforms before asking them to reduce their fish and chicken consumption.

Key findings of [the study](#) include:
- The majority of respondents agreed that **chickens and fish need room to explore and exercise** (88% and 87% respectively) and that they can feel pain and stress.
- Respondents also acknowledged the intelligence of these species, as the majority agreed that **chickens and fish are curious and can learn and communicate with each other.**
- **Respondents were more likely to sign a petition calling for welfare reforms than they were to sign a pledge to reduce their chicken or fish consumption:** 40% of people were willing to sign a chicken welfare petition, and 37% were willing to sign a fish welfare petition, compared to 31% who pledged to reduce their chicken consumption and 30% who pledged to reduce their fish consumption.
- Believing that **chickens and fish are beautiful and intelligent and that they experience poor living conditions on farms** were among the most important individual beliefs associated with diet pledges and petition signatures.

"Many people are unaware of the massive numbers of chickens and fish slaughtered around the world. We hope to bring more attention to these animals, who are often excluded from society's moral consideration," **said Tom Beggs, MA, Faunalytics' Research Scientist and the study's lead author**. "It was encouraging to see that many people in the general public were aware that chickens and fish are intelligent animals with personalities, that they can feel pain, and that air and water quality is important to them. Helping the public understand chickens and fish is an important first step toward protecting these animals in the United States."

This study is the latest addition to Faunalytics' [original research collection](#), which provides high-impact, unbiased research and data to inform the animal protection movement. It is the first in a series of research projects Faunalytics is conducting to support chicken and fish protection efforts. Future research will explore beliefs in other countries as well as experiments to suggest how beliefs about chickens and fish can be leveraged to help consumers make more ethical choices. To learn more about the issues facing chickens and fish in society, visit Faunalytics' [Farmed Animal Fundamentals](#).

To access the full report, visit www.faunalytics.org/chicken-and-fish-1/.

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Contact:
Casey Riordan
Communications & Development Manager, Faunalytics
casey@faunalytics.org
+1 732-810-3968

About Faunalytics
Faunalytics is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that empowers animal advocates with access to research, analysis, strategies, and messages that improve their effectiveness to reduce animal suffering. For more than 20 years, Faunalytics has conducted and disseminated original research that delves into essential animal advocacy issues. Faunalytics also houses the world's largest collection of opinion and behavior research on animals and offers pro-bono support to other animal advocacy organizations looking to increase their impact. Animal Charity Evaluators has rated Faunalytics a standout charity since 2015. For more information, visit www.faunalytics.org.