The Five Freedoms and Five Domains

The Five Freedoms are the most widely accepted global standard for responsible animal care and form the fundamental basis for our approach to animal welfare at Maple Leaf Foods. This approach identifies five core elements of animal welfare considered to be critical minimum standards necessary for the adequate care of livestock and poultry.

THE FIVE FREEDOMS

1. Freedom from hunger or thirst by providing ready access to fresh water and a diet that maintains good health and vigour
2. Freedom from discomfort by providing an appropriate environment, including shelter and a comfortable resting area
3. Freedom from pain, injury or disease through prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment
4. Freedom to express normal behaviours by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal’s own kind
5. Freedom from fear and distress by providing conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering


As we continue to advance in animal care, we are moving beyond the Five Freedoms to an approach that encompasses the mental state of animals, known as the Five Domains. This approach defines both positive and negative experiences for animals and serves as a guide for us to increasingly prioritize positive experiences as a fundamental aspect of caring for our animals. In 2020, the Five Domains model was updated to include “Behavioural Interactions” to reflect that animals consciously seek specific goals when interacting with the environment, other non-human animals and humans. Humans are now featured as influential to animals, with human-animal interactions having the potential to enhance or compromise animal welfare.

THE FIVE DOMAINS

The Five Domains model references: