SPRINGBOARDS FOR DISCUSSING SPECIESISM

This page contains springboards for you to dive into a discussion of prejudice toward nonhuman animals (sometimes known as "speciesism"). Feel free to discuss the questions in any order or create springboards of your own. The key thing is not to answer all the questions but to have a good discussion in which everyone participates.

1. How is speciesism similar to or different from racism, sexism, antigay prejudice, and other forms of bias?

2. What are some ways that speciesism harms human beings?

3. Do you think animal cruelty is partly due to prejudice, or are they two unrelated things?

4. Should nonhuman animals have legal rights? If not, why not? If so, which animals should receive them, and what sort of rights should they have?

5. Should children be taught about speciesism in school, just as they're taught about racism and sexism? If not, why? If so, why isn't this generally done?

6. If you've recently eaten meat from a store or restaurant, did you think about the animal(s) it came from while eating it? If not, why? If so, how did you feel at the time?

7. If you've recently eaten dairy products such as cheese, milk, butter, or ice cream, did you think about it coming from a lactating mother cow or goat? If not, why? If so, how did you feel at the time?

8. What stops most people from reading, learning, thinking, and talking about the suffering that most farm animals endure?

9. In your opinion, is it moral to kill a pig for pizza toppings such as pepperoni if there's no health or medical necessity to do that?

10. In your opinion, is it moral to use a mother cow's milk for ice cream if there's no health or medical necessity to do that?

11. If you're not a vegetarian or vegan, what is the main reason that you eat meat and/or seafood?

12. If you used to eat meat, dairy, or eggs and then stopped, why did you change?

13. Is it possible to fully eliminate prejudice against humans without eliminating prejudice toward animals?

14. In your opinion, should speciesism be included in courses, textbooks, and lectures on the topic of prejudice? Why or why not?

[From UnderstandingPrejudice.org]