



July 22, 2020

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**SUBJECT: Measuring Progress Toward a Humane Canada**

Dear Toolika:

Thank you for your May 29, 2020 email and attachment *Measuring Progress Toward a Humane Canada*. Given the report was identified as “embargoed” the document was shared with a limited group within our organization and was recently discussed at Alberta SPCA’s board of directors meeting in early July, 2020.

The Alberta SPCA applauds the efforts of Humane Canada to identify the need for metrics in support of building a more humane Canada, as well as acknowledges the significant effort put forward in developing the indicators and related report. The Alberta SPCA agrees in principle to the concept of the report; however, it is our position this report requires some additional work to better reflect the diversity of beliefs within Humane Canada, a federation of Canadian humane societies. As well, the report must reflect and ensure indicators are meaningful, measureable and fully capture the enabling conditions.

Highlighted below are just a few examples of indicators that we believe may require some additional consideration.

**Legal Keystone:**

Indicators that demonstrate the ability to ensure those that harm an animal are held accountable to the law. The indicators identified speak to holding the human accountable but in our view an indicator related to legislation must directly consider the animal and whether there is the ability in provincial legislation to seize or take custody of animals to prevent further distress.

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[everylivingthing.ca](http://everylivingthing.ca)

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**Rs3: Per capita meat consumption as an indicator under the Responsibility Keystone.**

While some members of Humane Canada may be in favour of reducing consumption of animal protein, this is not a measure related to the welfare of an animal but a measure regarding an identified value or philosophical position. The Alberta SPCA is an animal welfare organization and as such accepts the keeping and consumption of animals as long as the animal is cared for humanely at every stage of their life. Further, we would suggest this indicator may place Humane Canada at odds with the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) of which some of Humane Canada's membership have worked on committees reviewing and/or developing Codes of Practice.

**Indicator C3: Number of provinces that require animal dissection as a curriculum learning objective under the Consideration Keystone.**

Animal dissection is not a mandated learning objective in many provinces, yet dissection remains a common practice in Canadian schools. As such we believe this is, in its current form, not a meaningful indicator.

**Social Keystone:**

Preserving the human-animal bond is critical work and many organizations across Canada are offering support by providing care for pets while victims of domestic violence flee abuse. This important indicator of supporting the human-animal bond by keeping families together and helping victims leave violent situations is not reflected, yet could be a valuable indicator of this progress.

Moreover, we encourage you to consider including the overarching objective to ensure all animals are provided *a life worth living and humane death* as this should be definitively stated in the document.

As mentioned previously, the Alberta SPCA sees enormous value in Humane Canada's document *Measuring Progress Toward a Humane Canada* and yet we see an opportunity to fine tune some of the indicators to ensure they are representative, meaningful and measurable. For this reason, it would be our recommendation to allow some additional time for the entire membership of Humane Canada to review and provide recommended amendments prior to its official release.

Sincerely,

Terra Johnston  
Executive Director

c.c. Alberta SPCA Board of Directors