Criteria useful to distinguish main and relevant behaviours
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To cite this version:
P.R. Wiepkema. Criteria useful to distinguish main and relevant behaviours. Annales de Recherches Vétérinaires, 1986, 17 (1), pp.98-98. hal-00901617

HAL Id: hal-00901617
https://hal.science/hal-00901617
Submitted on 1 Jan 1986

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environment for the animal itself rather than for the experimenter. In addition, it would enable a proper
design of substitutive objects (or toys).

(3) The respective role of genetic factors and ontogeny in adaptation to intensive husbandry has not
received sufficient attention. Behavioural plasticity allows the development of new sets of competences
and performances in most animal species, but its relative contribution to the process of domestication is
largely unknown.

(4) Epidemiological studies aiming at determining the set of pathogenic factors involved in the appea-
rance of abnormal behavioural patterns and at evaluating the risk for a given population in a given set of
environmental conditions should be carried out more systematically since they allow field applications
for decreasing the incidence of disorders and provide the data basis for the experimental investigation of
possible causal factors.

(5) Applied animal behavioural science should rely on a sufficient body of information concerning the
behavioural requirements of farm animal species and an agreed set of theoretical principles. Basic
research about the organization and causation of behaviour in these species should, therefore, be given
high priority.

ABSTRACTS

Criteria useful to distinguish main and relevant behaviours

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The following points are essential for distinguishing main and relevant behaviours:
(1) being thoroughly familiar with the behaviour of the species under consideration and having a reliable
description of the complete behavioural repertoire
(2) having a clear-cut hypothesis that predicts behavioural changes
(3) those behaviours are relevant that, when not performed during a substantial amount of time, lead to
the development of abnormal behaviours
(4) those behaviours are essential that after varying periods of deprivation are compensated in a quanti-
tative way
(5) abnormal behaviours as listed in the CEC report. We urgently need data on their occurrence (percen-
tage of animals showing them in order to evaluate given systems)

Reference:
Abnormal behaviours in farm animals. CEC report, Autumn 1983.