

How much do people really care about animal welfare?

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**MEAT IS
MURDER**

peta2





Plan

1. Our approach
2. Animal ethics orientations
3. Saying versus doing
4. Case: Consumption of welfare friendly animal products
5. Case: The bulldog paradox
6. The way forward: Overlapping consensus and behaviour change



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Normative animal ethics meets descriptive sociology

Three approaches:

- 1. A philosophical approach**
- 2. A sociological approach**
- 3. A combined approach**

We will take the sociological approach as our starting point here

However, our ultimate aim is not just to describe which views on animal ethics are out there

We also want to suggest ways to combine sociological findings with ethical reflection



Caveat: We only cover a small corner of the world and rely on a specific Western tradition

Our sociological findings are from the northern part of Western Europe

Our understanding of animal ethics relates to the Judaeo-Christian tradition and its uptake in Western philosophy and animal welfare research

However, it should be acknowledged that there are other and important lines of thinking to be found in other cultures



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Animal ethics orientations (AEO)

Different ethical theories exist in moral philosophy

These are theoretical, philosophical constructs

We wanted to test whether forms of these theories also existed as social realities

- underpinning different views of animal ethics held by people
- and affecting behavior in relation to different forms of animal use.

RESEARCH ARTICLE

A multidimensional measure of animal ethics orientation – Developed and applied to a representative sample of the Danish public

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Abstract

We present a questionnaire-based measure of four animal ethics orientations. The orientations, which were developed in light of existing empirical studies of attitudes to animal use and ethical theory, are: animal rights, anthropocentrism, lay utilitarianism, and animal protection. The two latter orientations can be viewed as variants of animal welfarism. Three studies were conducted in Denmark in order to identify the hypothesised orientations, evaluate their concurrent validity, and report their prevalence and relevance in animal-related opinion formation and behaviour. Explorative factor analysis (Study 1) and confirmative factor analysis (Study 2) successfully identified the four orientations. Study 2 revealed good measurement invariance, as there was none or very modest differential item functioning across age, gender, living area, and contrasting population segments. Evaluation of concurrent validity in Study 2 found that the orientations are associated with different kinds of behaviour and opinion when the human use of animals is involved in the hypothesised directions. In Study 3, a representative population study, the animal protection orientation proved to be most prevalent in the Danish population, and as in study 2 the four orientations were associated with different behaviours and opinions. Remarkably, the animal protection orientation does not lead to increased animal welfare-friendly meat consumption, the main reason for this being non-concern about the current welfare status of farm animals. We argue that the developed measure covers a wide range of diversity in animal ethics orientations that is likely to exist in a modern society such as Denmark and can be used in future studies to track changes in the orientations and to understand and test hypotheses about the sources and justifications of people's animal-related opinions and behaviours.

OPEN ACCESS

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Data Availability Statement: All relevant data are within the manuscript and its Supporting

anthropocentric orientation:

"We have the right to use animals because humans are intellectually superior to animals."

animal rights orientation:

"The use of animals by humans should be prohibited by law."

animal welfarism:

"Using animals for important human purposes is acceptable if it is done so that the animals in a way that as far as possible looks after animal welfare"

Our study of animal ethics orientations and their relation to pork consumption

Focus on the correlation between AEO and consumption of high welfare pork

Key features:

Populations in three countries (DK, S and D) studied

AEO is combined with assessment of attitude strength

Segmentation is carried out



Article

Moral Convictions and Meat Consumption—A Comparative Study of the Animal Ethics Orientations of Consumers of Pork in Denmark, Germany, and Sweden

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Simple Summary: In western Europe, national animal welfare legislation since the 1980s in combination with EU legislation has served to ensure minimal requirements for the welfare of farm animals. For many consumers, however, these requirements do not go far enough. Market-driven initiatives where farmers, processors of animal products, and retailers raise the standards via labelling schemes and price premiums may further improve the welfare of farm animals, but such initiatives are only viable solutions if there is sufficient consumer support. To find out to what extent such support exists, we studied the relationship between animal ethics orientations and consumer demand for welfare-enhanced pork in Denmark, Germany, and Sweden. In all three countries, we identified a consumer segment that endorses the ideal behind schemes to enhance farm animal welfare, i.e., that it is ethically justified to eat meat provided the animals enjoy a good level of welfare. Consumers in this segment are highly concerned about animal welfare, and also purchase welfare pork more often than other consumers. More than one fourth of consumers in all three countries belong to this segment; therefore, we believe that market actors can be reassured that there will be persistent consumer demand for welfare-enhanced meat.

Abstract: Background: The relationship between animal ethics orientations and consumer demand for meat with high standards of animal welfare, and the way this relationship plays out in different countries, is not well understood. Using pork as a case study, this comparative study aims to identify the animal ethics orientations that drive purchases of welfare meat in Denmark, Germany, and Sweden. Methods: Cross-sectional questionnaire data from representative samples of approximately 1600 consumers in each country were collected. A segmentation of pork consumers (using latent profile analysis) was carried out. Results: In all three countries, two subgroups were concerned about farm animal welfare: the first subgroup was driven by animal rights values; the second subgroup by animal protection values, where the main principle was that “it is all right to use animals as long as they are treated well”. Other consumer groups are less concerned about farm animal welfare and display little or no preference for welfare pork. Conclusions: In all three countries, dual demand for welfare pork exists. The findings of this study can be used, among others, to understand the marketability of enhanced welfare animal products and the potential for market-driven animal welfare improvements.



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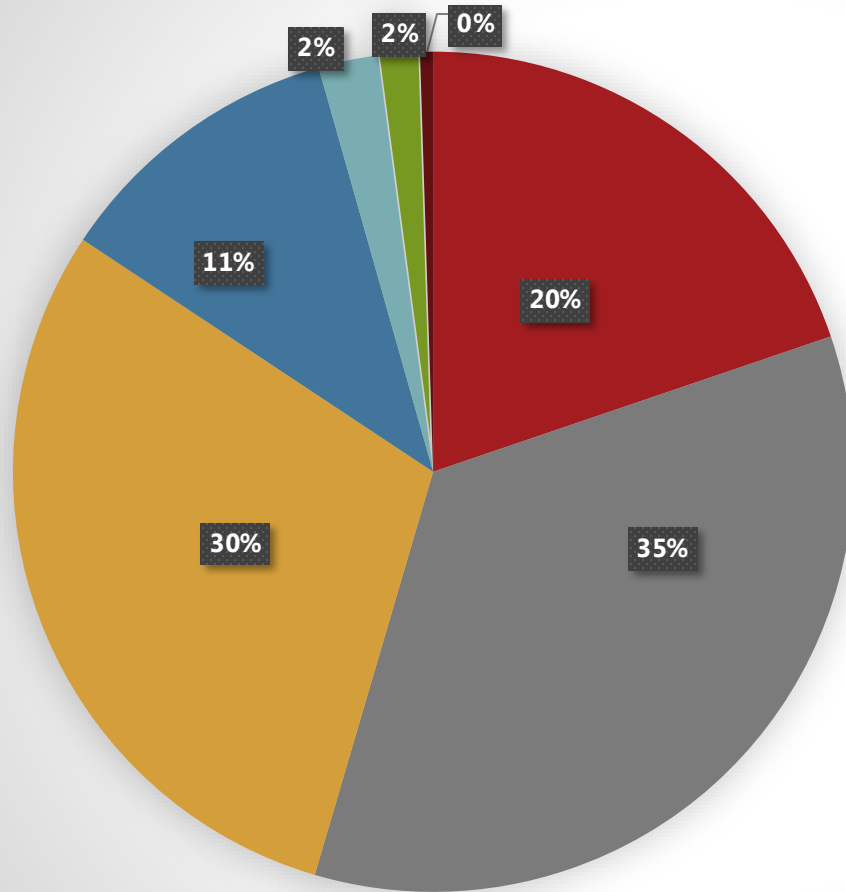
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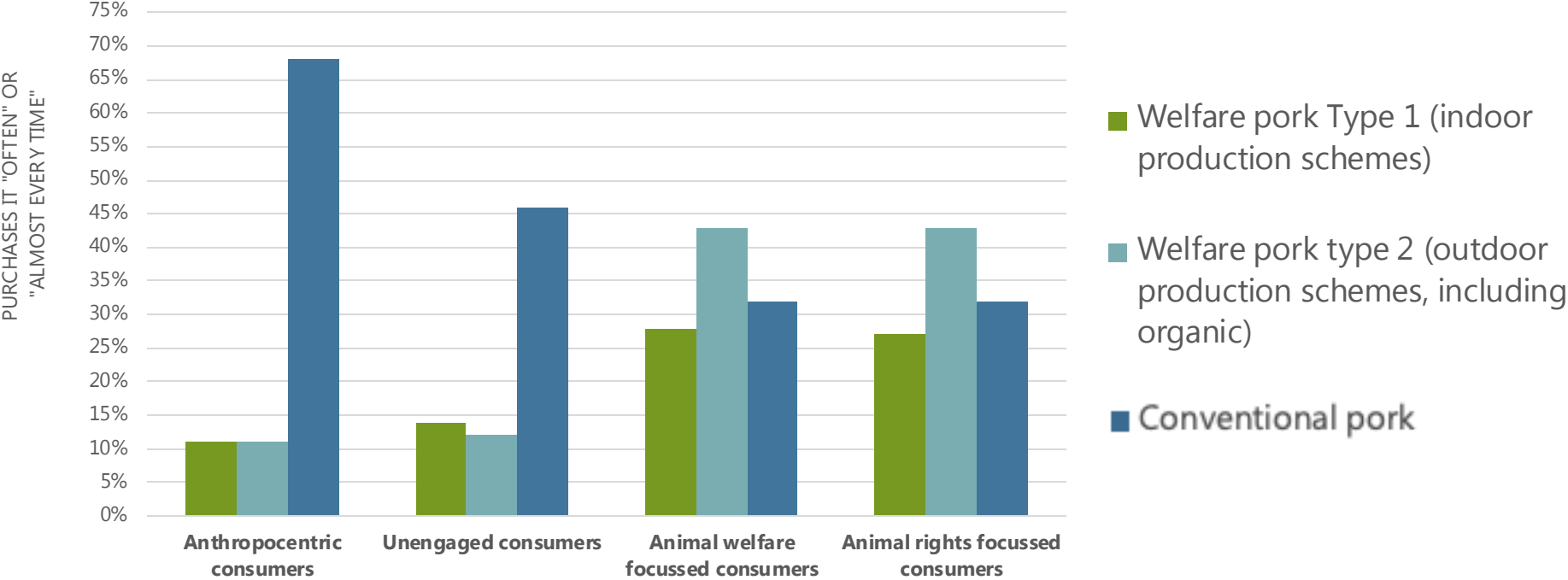
Denmark

(n=1612)



- Anthropocentric consumers
- Unengaged consumers
- Animal welfare focussed consumers
- Animal rights focussed consumers
- Neither eats nor buys pork
- Vegetarian
- Vegan

Stated frequency of pork purchases in four consumer segments in Denmark (n=1536)



People differ in their moral views, but ...

People in the countries studied differ in their views on animal ethics

A large group does not care

Among those who care, the largest group accepts animal use as long as animals do not suffer unnecessarily

Some don't think animals matter morally

And some think they have rights

Room for "overlapping consensus"

Ethical views affect consumption

However, a big gap between moral stance and actual practice



ethical
consumer

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Gap between saying and doing is part of the human condition

In philosophy there is a discussion with ancient roots about “weakness of the will”

Sometimes, of course, the gap reflects insincere moral views

However, a gap between sincerely held moral views and actual practice is also a widespread phenomenon

There are both practical obstacles and psychological mechanisms at play which we will illustrate through two cases



“Our standards are very high. We even have high double standards.”

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Different ways to promote welfare friendly animal products

In Europe and the rest of the Western world a pluralist system has developed:

- Animal welfare legislation
- State supported labels
- Private labels
- Industry standards
- ...

Through this combination, conditions for farm animals may improve

However, difficult to measure and compare across initiatives and countries





AnimalEthics

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- › Centre for Companion Animal Welfare
- › Columns for Canadian Veterinary Journal
- › General themes
- › Companion animals
- › Farm animals
- › Laboratory animals
- › Wild animals
- › New publications
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Benchmark for animal welfare



 [Dab // Colourbox.com](#)

Formalities

ViD



Videncenter for Dyrevelfærd

The results presented here originate from a number of projects financed by the [Danish Knowledge Center for Animal Welfare](#) (webpage in Danish), the latest of which is: '[Establishing a Benchmark tool for ongoing monitoring of the welfare of pigs, broiler chicken and dairy cattle in Denmark and four comparable European countries](#)' (description in Danish).





The Benchmark approach

Overview over initiatives and market shares in five countries

Resource based parameters organised within a number of dimensions of welfare that influence the welfare of pigs

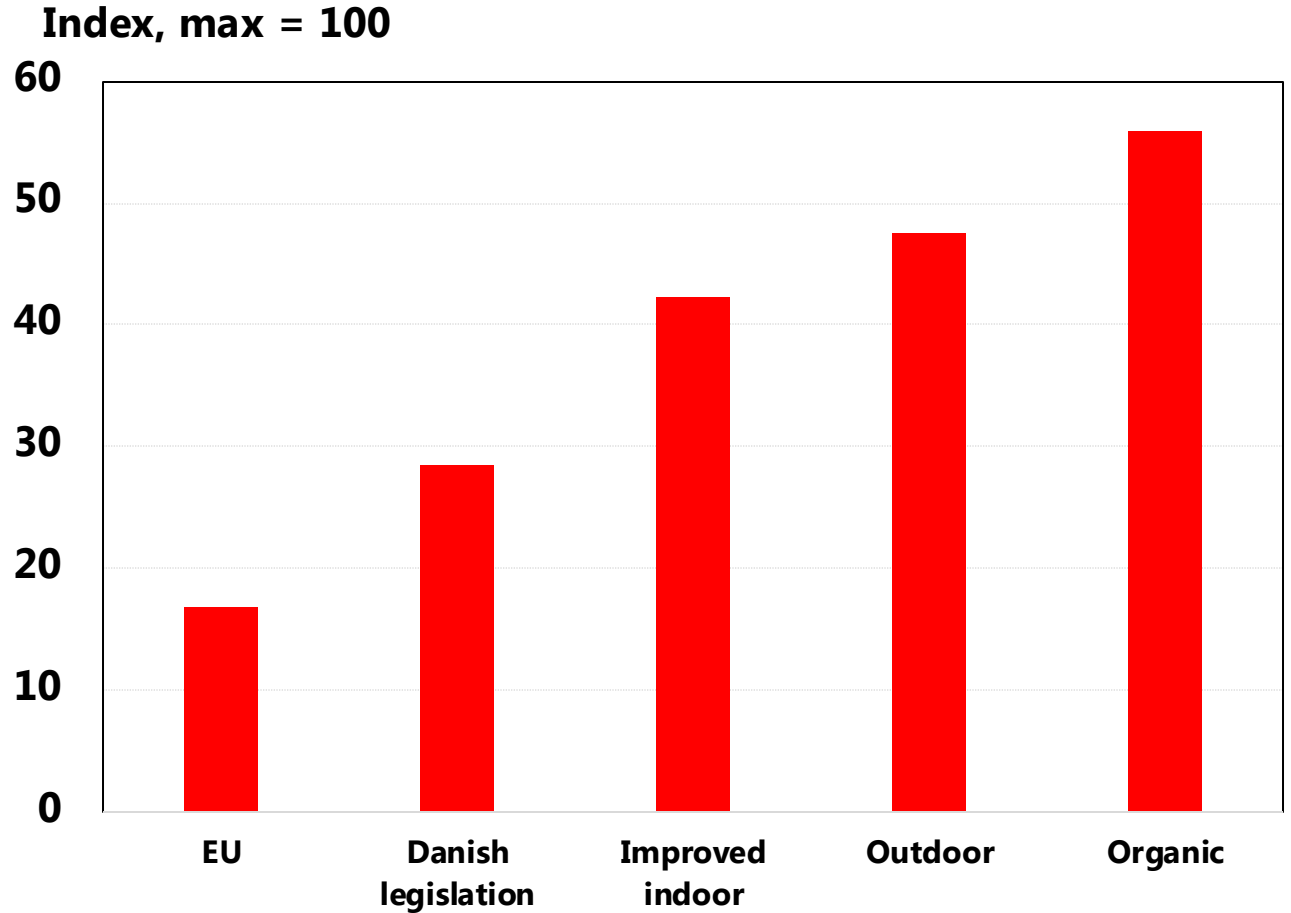
Expert opinion to value and weigh the welfare effect of each of these parameters

For each welfare initiative Benchmark values are calculated on a scale from 0 to 100

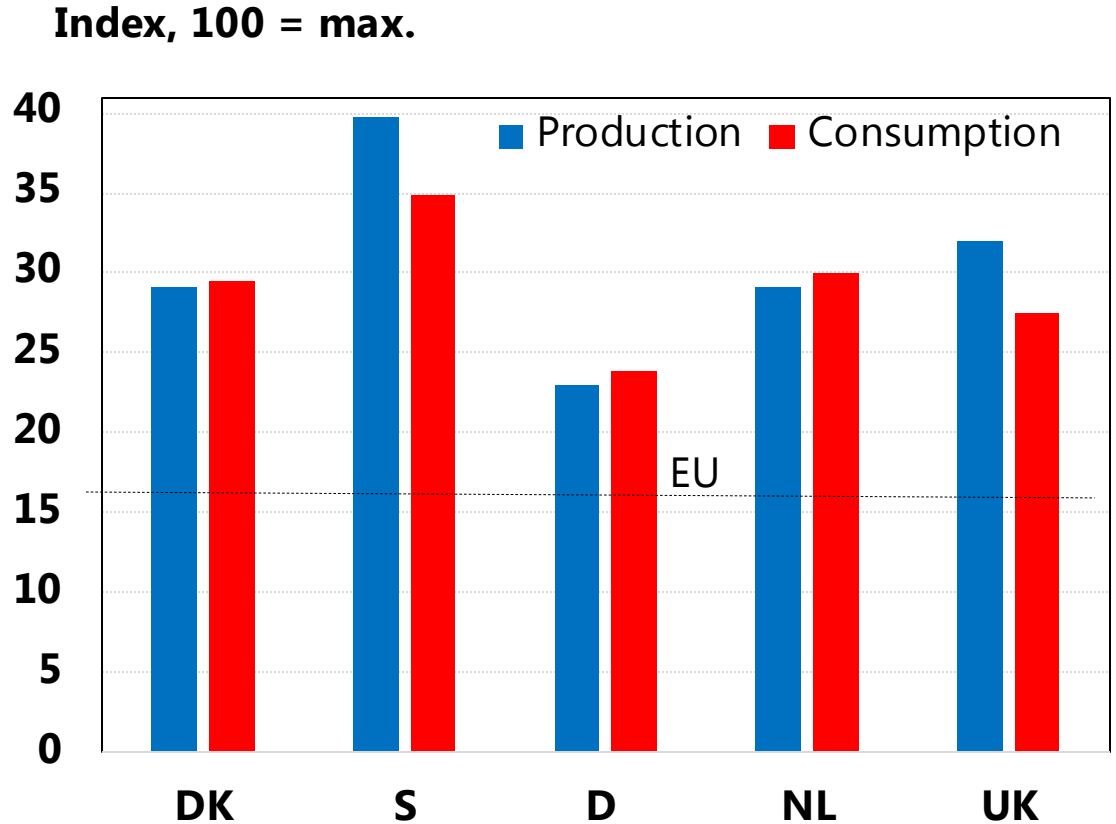
Benchmark value for each country's production and consumption of pork is calculated on a scale from 0 to 100



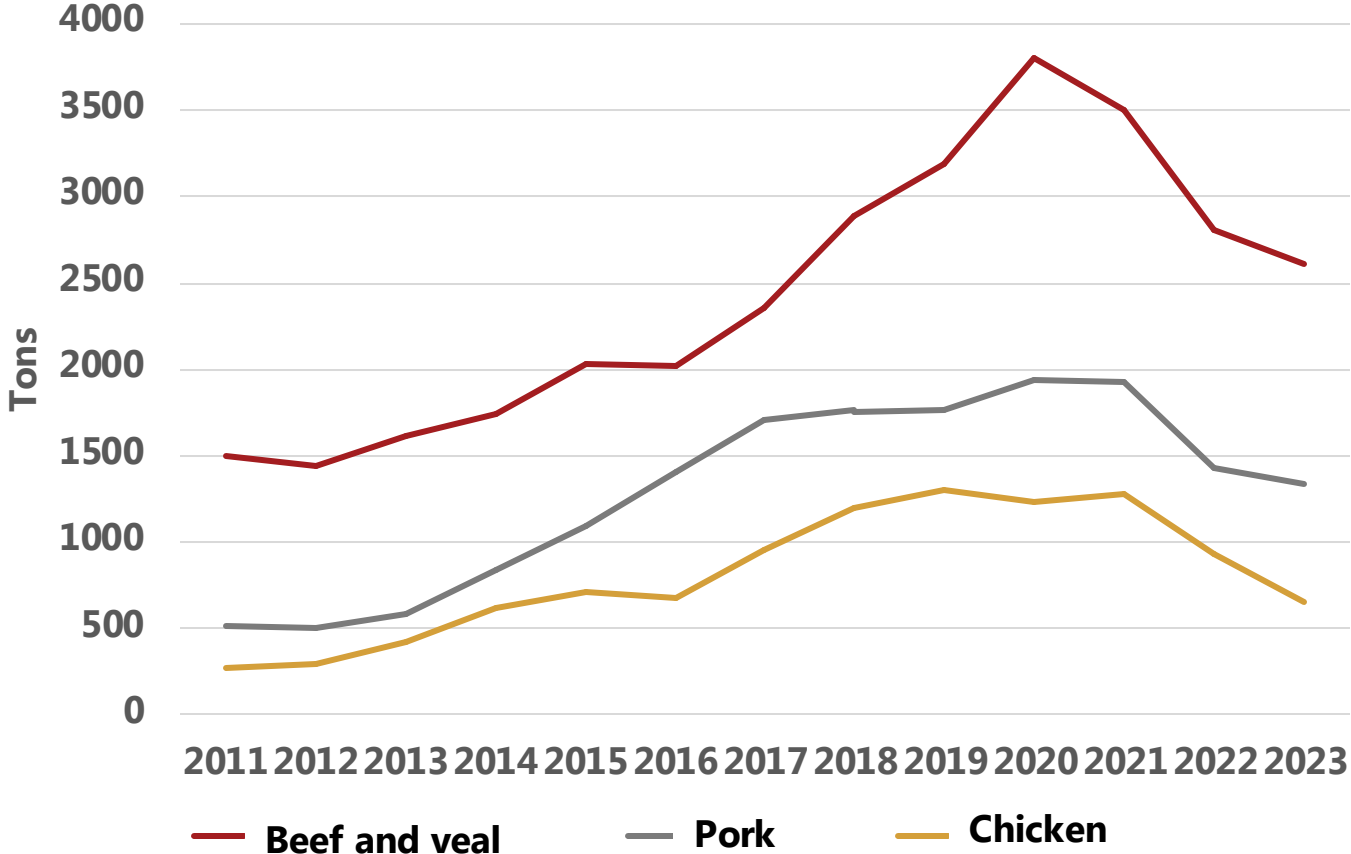
Benchmark for different forms of Danish pig production (2023)



Benchmark scores pig production and pork consumption in five countries (2023)



Danish consumption of different sorts of organic meat 2011-2023 (Source: Statistics Denmark)



Legislation and labelling complement each other

Animal welfare legislation is important to ensure a minimum standards in national production

However, due to free trade across borders

- the effect of ambitious legislation may be offset
- and often politicians aim to protect national production

Labelling can increase welfare output

CSR and branding may boost these developments

And inspire future legislation



How to close the gap between saying and doing?

When it comes to the consumption of welfare friendly pork in DK there is a clear gap between saying (>40% support) and doing (12% consumed welfare labelled pork)

Many practical reasons explain this

The way forward may be to limit consumer choice

- **Via CSR initiatives**
- **Via legislation**

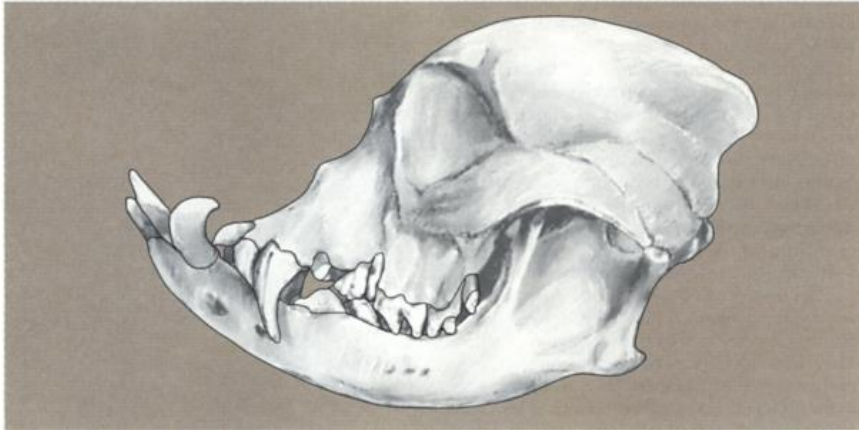
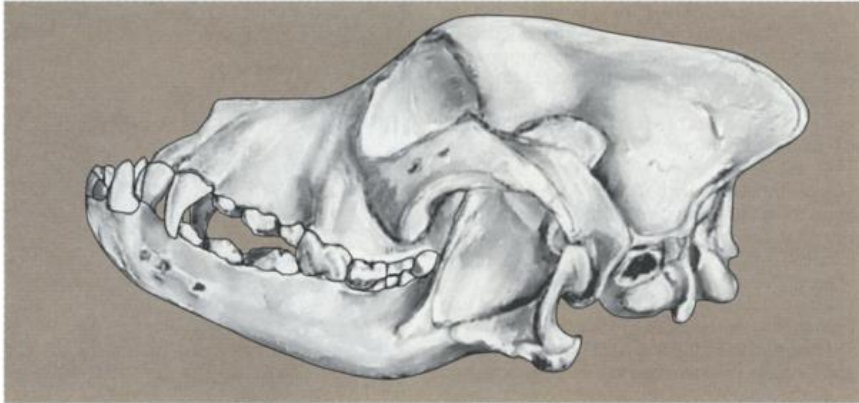


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Breeding for disaster

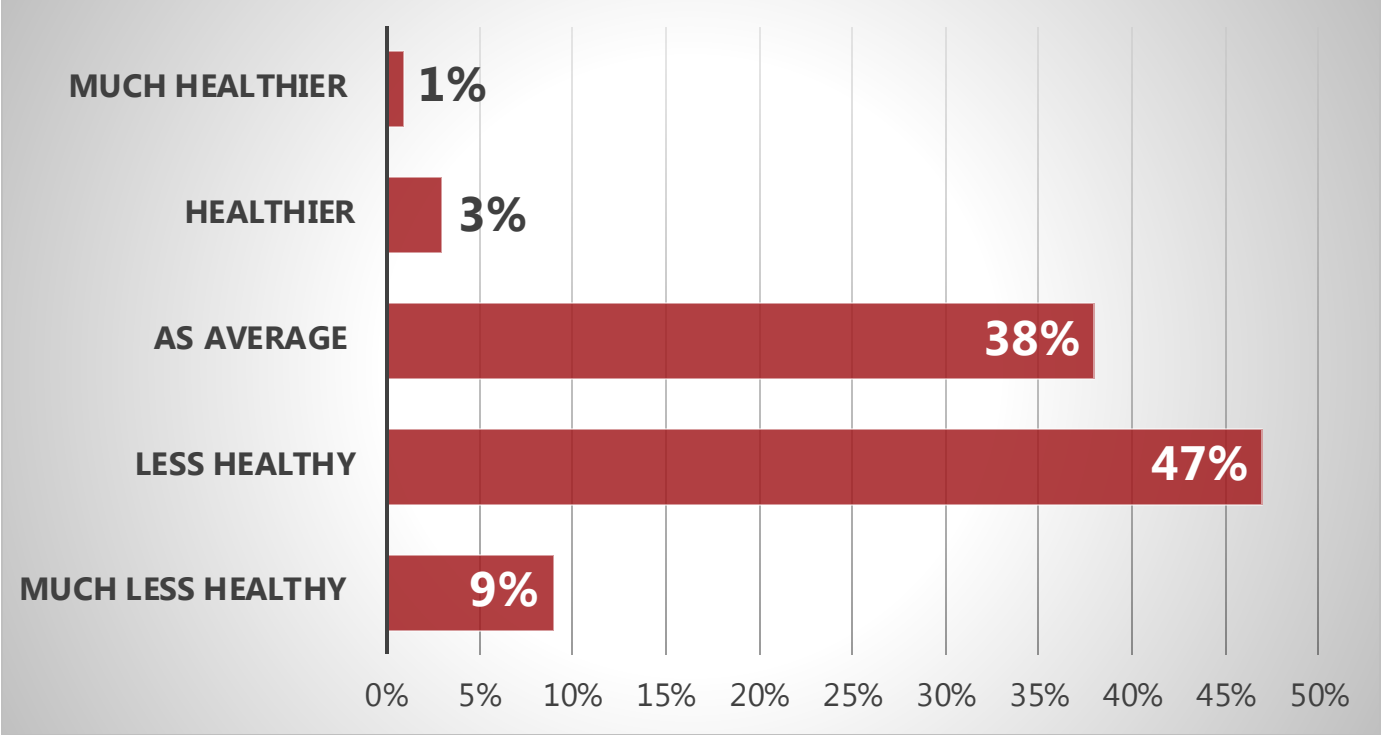


The bulldog paradox

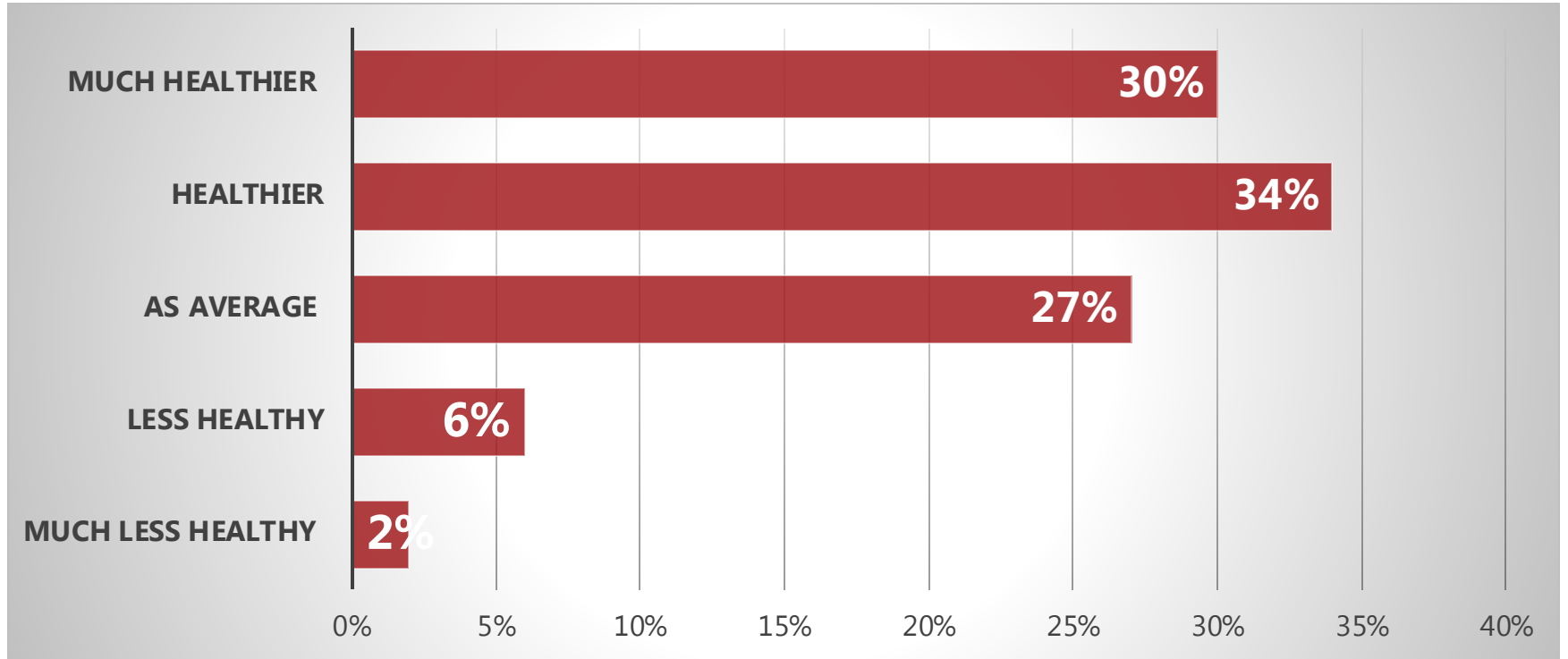
- **Suppose you bought a car that**
 - cost a lot
 - often had to be taken to the mechanic
 - could not be insured
 - didn't last very long
- **Would you buy such a car a second time?**
- **Perhaps not, but many owners of bulldogs just buy a new one when the old one dies**



Are French bulldogs perceived as “healthier” compared to other breeds? (Based on responses from 495 DK owners in 2023)



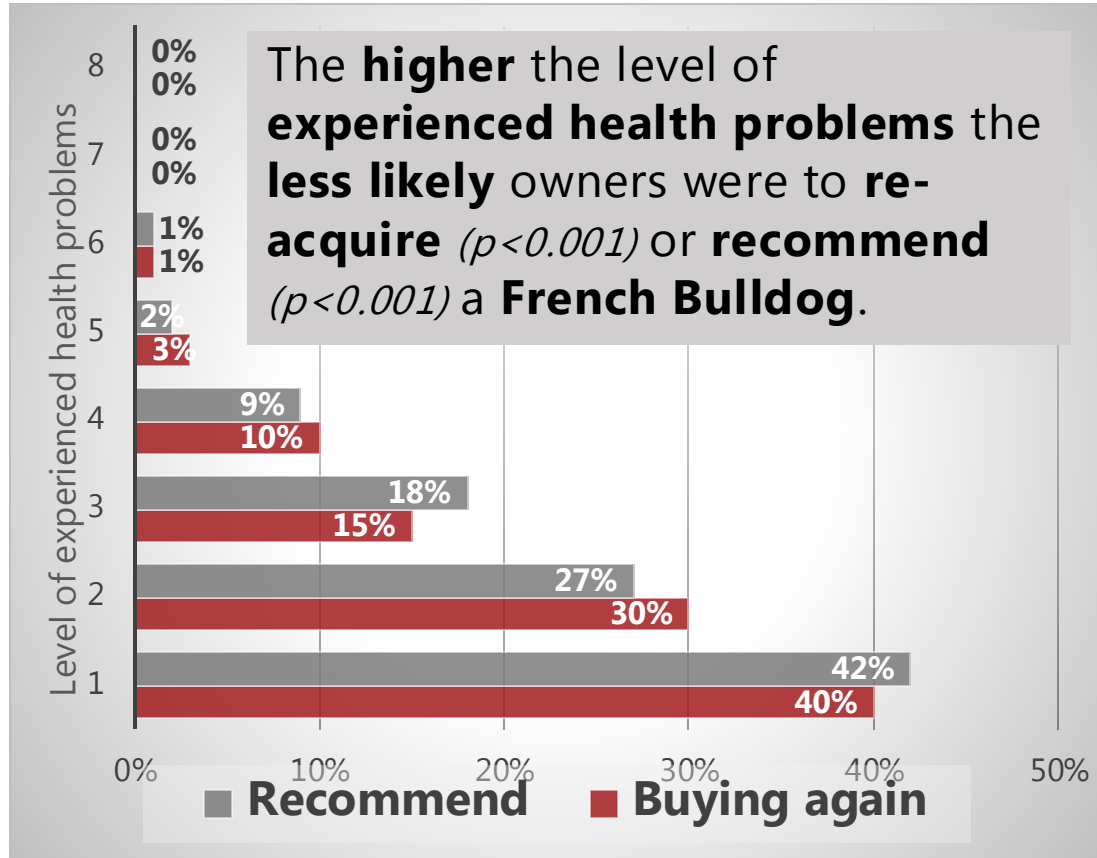
Is one's own French bulldog perceived "healthier" than other French bulldogs? (Based on responses from 495 DK owners in 2023)



Buying again (n=370) and recommending (n=452) a French Bulldog?

81% of owners would **buy** a **French Bulldog again**

67% of owners would **recommend** the **breed** to a **potential buyer**



Information avoidance, dissociation, and wishful thinking

Several psychological mechanisms are at work in the bulldog paradox

- Information avoidance
- Dissociation
- Wishful thinking

Mere "rational arguments" will not serve to counteract these mechanisms

Various forms of social marketing are called for, like what has been done for smoking

And legislation may also play a role



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The way forward

It is highly unlikely that people in a foreseeable future will agree about their animal ethics stances

However, there is still room for overlapping consensus regarding for example pig welfare and change in breeding of brachy dogs

Even if wide consensus is achieved there will be a need to work on how to make the ethical choice the easy and obvious choice



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