

# The Human-Animal Bond



The ways we interact with animals have changed through the ages because of the increase of information, shift in societal values and a dramatic increase in anthropomorphism – the act of assigning to animals human characteristics and emotions. As far back as the Paleolithic Era, humans relied on animals for survival. By 30,000 B.C., animals became domesticated, and the human-animal bond has strengthened ever since.

While there is disagreement on the extent to which humans and animals are similar in anatomy and physiology, we all agree that animals and humans can enrich and nourish each other's lives.

As humans, animals inspire us, entertain us, keep us company, protect us, nourish us, and serve as a bridge to enhanced knowledge about ourselves. While animals are in our care – even if they are destined for the food supply – we have the responsibility to protect them and celebrate their contributions to our lives. Animals provide many gifts to humans: food, fiber, medical, social, recreational and more.

Animals and humans have a symbiotic relationship – one that is beneficial for both species. Our relationships with animals provide countless benefits, resulting in a greater quality of life for both animals and humans.



## How Animals Benefit from Humans

- Companionship
- Protection from the dangers of nature
- Supply of food and water
- Shelter and bedding
- Safety from wildlife
- Medical care



## How Humans Benefit from Animals

- Companionship
- Nutrition - source of energy & protein through meat, milk and eggs
- Humane medical research
- Protection
- Assistance for people with mobility, navigation and emotional support
- Ecosystem indicators



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