



# **Genetics and the Behavior of Domestic Animals: Chapter 3. How Studying Interactions Between Animal Emotions, Cognition, and Personality Can Contribute to Improve Farm Animal Welfare**

*Alain Boissy, Hans W. Erhard*

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This chapter provides an overview of the current behavioral and cognitive aspects of emotions in animals and explore the impacts of emotional experiences on the animal's adaptation to its current challenging circumstances. There is evidence that animal welfare results from the animal's perception of its environment and its background. The chapter is structured in four complementary sections. The first one addresses the nature of emotions that the animals can feel which is validated from commonalties in physiological and behavioral responses to dangers across and within species. The second section presents advanced features of the relationships between cognition and emotions originally studied in humans, which are now developed in animals to better access their affective states. The third section is devoted to the relevance of the personality concept, as resulting from both genetics and developmental experience, for assessing animal individuality in emotional behaviors and stress. The last section explores some approaches that can alleviate fear and induce positive affective states, with the potential to mitigate detrimental stress-induced effects on the welfare and health status by eliciting positive emotions in animals.

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