

## Publication

### A Wicked Fairy in the Woods - how would People alter their Animal Product Consumption if they were affected by the Consequences of their Choices?

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The ambivalence of human-animal-relationships culminates in our eating habits; most people disapprove of factory farming, but most animal products that are consumed come from factory farming. While psychology and sociology offer several theoretical explanations for this phenomenon our study presents an experimental approach: an attempt to challenge people's attitude by confronting them with the animals' perspective of the consumption process. We confronted our participants with a fictional scenario that could result in them being turned into an animal. In the scenario, a wicked fairy forces them to choose a ticket. Depending on their choice of ticket they have equal chances of becoming a human being with a certain consumption behaviour (meat eater, organic eater, vegetarian, vegan) or, correspondingly, becoming a certain kind of animal (factory farmed meat animal, organically farmed meat animal, animal for dairy/egg production, free living animal). Our results indicate a strong discrepancy between people's actual consumption habits (mostly regular meat eaters) and their choices in the experiment (strong preferences for the organic or vegan life style). The data reveal a broad spectrum of explanations for people's decisions in the experiment. We investigated the influence of four different factors on the participant's choices in addition to reasons they gave as open-ended answers. Correspondingly, different coping strategies to overcome the tension (cognitive dissonance) between real-life consumption choices and attitudes towards nonhuman animals could be detected. Furthermore, many participants indicated a lack of knowledge concerning living conditions in farming but also concerning capacities and properties of nonhuman animals.

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