

HAPPY COW OR MILK MACHINE?

Framing animal welfare in the Dutch dairy industry

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I Summary

Worldwide, the impact of animal agriculture is enormous. It does not only cause climate change and pollution but also puts pressure on animal welfare through the intensive farming system. Especially the welfare of dairy cows is dire because of the intensive milking processes and health issues. This also applies to the Netherlands. However, not everyone thinks that the animal welfare in the dairy industry is bad. There are namely different perceptions on what a good animal life is. This comes from the different frames that people have. Framing creates a social reality that helps actors to give meaning to certain events and to place it in someone's world. In this case, it helps to decide if the current animal welfare is good or not and if bad animal welfare is a problem. Framing also influences the perceptions, actions, and behaviour of people. The more dominant the frame, the more people are guided by it. Currently, the happy dairy frame is dominant. It frames the dairy industry as a fairytale in which farmers take diligent care of their cows which are happy animals with a good life on the green pastures. It denies animal harm and frames animal consumption as the norm. However, there are also actors who disagree with this frame, among others animal liberation movements. They see animal harm as a severe problem that should be solved. They create counterframes with the purpose of destabilizing the dominant frame in order to become the new dominant frame and improve animal welfare. In order to do this, the counterframes use framing techniques and try to gain resonance among the general public. It is important to learn more about how animal liberation movements frame the dairy industry in order to discover their potential to become the dominant frame and to learn what potential improvements can be made. Therefore, this research explores how animal liberation movements contest the dominant animal welfare frame in the Dutch dairy industry.

The research is structured by the core framing tasks, namely diagnostic framing, prognostic framing, and motivational framing. With the help of these tasks, the framing techniques of the counterframes are analysed. Besides, there is researched how the frames try to gain resonance amongst the Dutch general public. The concept of resonance consists of credibility and relative salience. Credibility again contains three dimensions, namely frame consistency, empirical credibility, and the credibility of the frame articulators. Relative salience also includes three dimensions, namely centrality, experiential commensurability, and narrative fidelity. Both the framing tasks and the concepts of resonance are used to analyse how animal liberation movements contest the dominant animal welfare frame. In order to gain knowledge about the framing of animal liberation movements, the websites of nine Dutch animal welfare organisations are analysed. With the help of different criteria, relevant webpages are selected and subsequently analysed by using frame analysis. In this, there was especially a focus on what elements were included or excluded in the frame, but also what the focus of the frame was.

The research found that all organisations were quite united in the definition of the problem and the solution in general. However, there were differences in who is to blame for the problem, in the elements of the problem that were included and in how the solution should be reached and who should take responsibility in this. Most movements framed the government and the food and agroindustry as perpetrators, while only three movements blamed consumers for their role in stimulating the intensive farming industry. Moreover, only one organisation blamed the

farmers for the mistreatment of their cows. This was different in comparison to the literature where farmers were the main actor to blame. It might be interesting to research where this difference comes from. Regarding the solution, most movements pointed to the government to take responsibility, but also to companies and consumers and in a lesser extent to farmers. Besides the differences regarding the problem and solution, some frames had a better motivational frame, while another frame barely included mobilizing language. Although, almost all frames should increase their sense of urgency. As for the resonance, all organisations had a sufficient frame consistency, empirical credibility, and credibility of the frame articulators. The empirical credibility, including scientific evidence and the use of real-life examples, were a strength of the frames. However, there were barely frame articulators. This could be improved by appointing ambassadors to the movements. All organisations also tried to gain relative salience by connecting to people's daily lives and experiences. However, further research is needed to discover to what extent these efforts are effective and connect to the general public.

In conclusion, most frames were quite strong in their cohesiveness and their empirical credibility. Besides, most movements showed how the normal citizen can contribute to improving animal welfare. Some improvements that could be made are an increase in the sense of urgency of the problem and a better credibility of the frame articulators by connecting ambassadors to the frame. When the frames are improved, more people can feel connected to the frame. This increases their potential to become the dominant frame which might lead to a change in people's perceptions and behaviour and a change towards a more animal-friendly farming system.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Animal agriculture has an enormous impact worldwide. In the Netherlands alone, there are 80 million animals in the livestock industry (Ministerie van Landbouw, 2024). The industry causes pollution and climate change, but it also impacts animal health, welfare, and rights (Visseren-Hamakers, 2020). This problem is urgent because the global production of animal products is expected to increase and to be doubled by 2050 (Visseren-Hamakers, 2020). This will not only increase the amount of greenhouse gas emissions, but also puts more pressure on animal welfare, because to reach this higher production, more intensive farming is proposed. In the Netherlands, farming already has become more intensive. For example, the average amount of milk cows is risen from 85 cows in 2014 to 111 cows in 2024 (Wageningen University and Research, 2025). However, these intensive farming systems are known to be less animal-friendly than extensive farming in which animals have more space (Visseren-Hamakers, 2020). Overall, the current animal welfare in animal agriculture is low and an even further decrease is expected. These animal welfare risks are reported to be worse in the dairy industry than in the meat industry (Gilbert et al., 2025). Mandel et al. (2022) explains why dairy cow animal welfare is especially dire. First, dairy cows experience bigger interventions in their daily lives. Farmers milk their cows several times a day, while meat cows are just fed until they are ready for slaughter. Besides, for milk cows there has been a long-term genetic selection, which causes more health problems for the cows and thus a worse welfare. Moreover, dairy calves are commonly earlier separated from their mothers than beef calves and are socially isolated during their first weeks. This is done with the idea to prevent diseases but causes mental and social problems (Mandel et al., 2022). Because of these reasons, this thesis focuses on animal welfare in the dairy industry.

Worldwide there are contested views on animal welfare in the dairy industry. There is a struggle over truth, namely if the welfare of the cows is bad or not. Animal consumption has been the norm for a long time. Governments support the industry and the consumption of animal products with subsidies, but also with justifying the negative environmental impacts of animal agriculture with the argument of protecting the jobs that are connected to this sector (Taylor et al., 2022). However, recently there has been an increase in veganism around the world for reasons as the negative environmental impact, but also animal welfare. According to this movement it is unethical to use animals for products like clothes and food, but also for entertainment and testing (Taylor et al., 2022). These two different perceptions of reality can be found in different organizations in the Netherlands. According to the Dutch NGO 'Wakker Dier', that raises awareness about animal welfare, most milk cows live in dirty and small stables with a high risk of getting diseases. On average the cow is already slaughtered at the age of six years because the cow is exhausted from its life (Wakker Dier, n.d.-c). In contrast, one of the bigger Dutch dairy companies mentions the same average age, but claims that this age is already very high and that this is due to the good care the cows receive from the farmers so they can become old in a healthy way (Vreugdenhil Dairy Foods, n.d.). This divergence reveals the vast difference in perception on the concept of a good animal life.

These two different claims of the truth originate from the different framing that the two organizations do (Benford & Snow, 2000; Hannigan, 2006). Framing creates a social reality with a certain narrative, demands and interests (Cronon, 1992; Mooney & Hunt, 2009). This social reality is a frame that helps actors to give meaning to certain events and to place it in someone's world (Benford & Snow, 2000). It helps an actor to decide what is important and what is good and bad. Thus, the different social realities in which people live influence how they value animals and how they judge animal welfare in the dairy industry. Moreover, it determines what is seen as a problem and what not. Frames also influence the perceptions of people (Wood et al., 2025) and guide their action and behaviour (Benford & Snow, 2000). If a frame is established in an early stadium, it is most likely to stay dominant and if a frame is dominant, it has the most shaping effect on behaviour: it can even influence policy responses. For example, through influencing the debate by emphasizing some aspects of a problem or solution while leaving other aspects out. The policies are formed by the dominant frame, namely by what this frame identifies as the problem and what viable solutions are (Wood et al., 2025). Frames that are established later, are often less dominant and experience constraints from the dominant frame (Snow & Benford, 1988). These frames are less or not visible in the media and lack therefore their chance to have influence on people's behaviour. This can create barriers to act on a problem: when a problem is only identified by the subordinate frames and not by the dominant frame, there is a low chance that the problem will be identified, recognized, and solved (Garth & Roberts, 2022). So, when actors disagree on a problem, they need to destabilize the dominant frame and make their counterframe more visible. In this way, their problem can become more known, recognized, and maybe even solved.

The different views on animal welfare also derive from different frames. These influence an actor's view on animal welfare which influences their vision on the dairy industry and their choice to consume animal products or not. At the moment, the happy dairy frame is dominant in the dairy industry. It focuses on caregiving and frames dairy farmers as helping agents who help their cows to be happy. Issues like animal harm are left out or justified (Gilbert et al., 2025). This frame affects the public perceptions of animal welfare positively. The presence or absence of harm is namely essential for people to make a moral judgement. The absence of harm in this narrative causes that people are positive about the dairy industry (Gilbert et al., 2025). They are caught up in the dominant frame in which cows are happy animals who are cared for by their farmers and who have a good life on the green pastures (Gilbert et al., 2025; Taylor et al., 2022). Animal harm or injustice is not seen as a problem and will therefore not be solved if this frame stays dominant.

The happy dairy frame is still dominant in the Netherlands (Zuivel Online, n.d.). This can be assumed due to different facts. First, the government names the animals in the agricultural industry 'production animals' which already assumes that they see the animals as a means and less care about their individual welfare (Rijksoverheid, n.d.). Besides, they still allow measures like the debudding of cows (Nederlandse Voedsel- en Warenautoriteit, n.d.) and keeping calves in small stalls separate from their mother almost immediately after their birth (Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland, 2015). Also in the parliament, animal welfare is seen as less important than the interests of the agro-industry. Last year, new regulations for better animal welfare were attenuated by some political parties, which caused that there are still no significant improvements in animal welfare legislation (Dier&Recht, 2024). Other interests than

better animal welfare are seen as more important. It is interesting to notice that 8 out of 10 people, when asked, want animal welfare to be improved (Dier&Recht, 2024). However, for most people the problems of animal welfare are not significant enough to quit or decrease animal consumption. The total amount of meat consumption has namely barely decreased (Dagevos et al., 2024). Moreover, in 2023 only about 4% of the population eats vegetarian or pescatarian, 0,5% eats vegan and about 22% is flexitarian (CBS, 2024). Next to the consumption, the production of animal products is also extremely high. For example, in 2024, there were 1.544.051 milk cows in the Netherlands and in total there were more than 80 million 'production animals' like cows, pigs, chickens and goats (Ministerie van Landbouw, 2024). This shows that animal consumption is still the standard and that the pro-dairy frame is still the most influential.

The pro-dairy frame is challenged by the anti-dairy frame. It focuses on the animal harm and injustice that happens in the dairy industry. Besides, it also includes the harm that the industry causes for humans and the environment (Gilbert et al., 2025). This anti-dairy frame includes animal harm, and this is, as earlier mentioned, crucial for people to make a moral judgement. If it would become dominant, people would make different decisions. This could even influence policy responses (Wood et al., 2025). For improving animal welfare, people's perceptions and behaviour need to be changed. Therefore, it is crucial that the dairy industry is framed differently: animal harm must be seen as a main problem that has to be solved. The anti-dairy frame must become the dominant frame. For the frame to become dominant, it must resonate with a larger part of the population (Benford & Snow, 2000). Several animal liberation movements like Wakker Dier (n.d.-c) frame the dairy industry as bad, but this frame remains subordinate. Therefore, this research will examine how animal liberation movements contest the dominant frame and how they try to gain more resonance. The research will explore what framing techniques animal liberation movements use to assess their structure, in search for potential pathways to change the public perceptions of animal welfare in the dairy industry.

1.2 Problem statement

1.2.1 Research objective

The aim of this research is to contribute to a future with a better animal welfare in the dairy industry in the Netherlands by examining how animal liberation movements use framing to challenge the dominant animal welfare frame.

The aim is to improve animal welfare and to achieve this, a change in perceptions, behaviour and policy is necessary. As earlier mentioned, framing influences these aspects significantly. By examining the framing techniques of animal liberation movements and the ways they try to gain resonance amongst the public, there can be learned how they frame the dairy industry. Besides, there can be discovered what their potential is to destabilize the dominant animal welfare frame. If both the strengths as the pitfalls of the subordinate frames are discovered, there can be decided how these subordinate frames can be improved in order to become the (more) dominant frame. If the frames of animal liberation movements become more dominant, more people will let their perceptions and behaviour be led by the frame. This can contribute to more animal-friendly behaviour and choices, which leads to a better animal welfare in the Dutch dairy industry.

1.2.2 Research questions

The main research question that will be researched is: “How do animal liberation movements contest the dominant animal welfare frame in the Dutch dairy industry?”.

By answering the main research question there will be found an answer on how animal liberation movements challenge the existing dominant frame in the Dutch dairy industry. This information gives insight in how animal liberation movements manage this and in which aspects they succeed and in which they fail. This information can be used to improve the framing by the animal liberation movements to make it more successful.

For answering the main research question two elements need to be examined. First, there will be examined how animal liberation movements create counterframes by using framing techniques like images, types of language, types of claims, rhetoric, and evidence. Second, how these frames try to gain resonance amongst the general public in the Netherlands will be examined. These questions give insight in how animal liberation movements contest the dominant frame and what aspects have potential for improvement.

The sub-questions can be formulated as follows:

1. How do animal liberation movements use framing techniques to create counterframes to challenge the dominant animal welfare frame?
2. How do animal liberation movements try to gain resonance amongst the Dutch general public?

1.3 Scientific relevance

The current literature has explored several variations of framing and animal welfare in the animal agriculture. It shows how different parties frame animal agriculture more positive or negative dependent on their own interests and values. Research is done about the framing of the product of meat, the use of technology, the cows, the farmers, and vegans. Only Gilbert et al. (2025) examined the broader frames of animal welfare. Besides, there is no relevant research found about framing and animal welfare in the Dutch dairy industry.

The research of Wood et al. (2025) focuses on the meat industry in the Nordic countries and delved into how meat was framed by the meat industry as providing social, economic, and environmental benefits, while a Nordic authority on food recommended a transition towards plant-based food, based on health and also environmental reasons. Other research investigated the relation between technology on dairy farms and animal welfare. It concluded that technology was almost always positively framed. Within these positive frames, there was a focus on the welfare benefits that it provides for the animals instead of focusing on the benefits it gives for the farmers and the industry in general. The harms that modern technology could cause for animals were mostly left out (Weary & von Keyserlingk, 2023). These two studies show that animal welfare in animal agriculture is positively framed by focusing on the positive welfare benefits that the animals gain and by leaving the harms out.

There is also some research about how the public sees dairy farming, namely the research by Jackson et al. (2022). They constituted frames for how cows are seen and for how farmers are seen and that there are different public opinions of the cow and farmer, both positive and negative. Another research examined conceptions from the other point of view, namely the

conceptions of the dairy farmer. It describes both how the farmers see their cows and how they justify the way they treat their cows (Taylor & Fraser, 2019). The same researchers examined how animal farmers and vegans see themselves and the other. In both cases the other is framed in an extreme and negative way while they justify their own acts (Taylor et al., 2022). These two studies show how groups frame the other negatively by also leaving facts out that could be positive about the other.

These frames, composed by Jackson et al. (2022), Taylor & Fraser (2019) and Taylor et al. (2022) are relevant because they show how the groups frame each other and what their main points are. However, it does not create frames for the dairy industry as a whole: it focuses on how farmers, vegans or cows are seen. Research that has investigated the more general frames is done by Gilbert et al. (2025). They researched how the dairy production is framed on social media by both dairy producers and opponents of the dairy industry. It shows how each group sees animal welfare and how animal suffering is challenged or legitimized. It focuses on the pro-dairy versus anti-dairy debate (Gilbert et al., 2025). This research functions as the base for this research. The two frames that are found in this research are already explained in chapter 1.1 and this explanation will be expanded in the theoretical framework.

All this research is not applied on the Netherlands as country, while the Netherlands is the European country with the highest amount of cattle per square kilometres (NOS op 3, 2022). This intensive farming shows that the use of animals as a product is still the dominant view. This makes the Netherlands an important country in relation to improving animal welfare. Because of this research gap, this research will focus on the animal welfare in the Dutch dairy industry. It especially focuses on how animal liberation movement create counterframes and try to challenge the dominant frame with different framing techniques.

1.4 Societal relevance

By examining how animal liberation movements contest the dominant animal welfare frame in the Dutch dairy industry, there will be knowledge acquired regarding the challenging frames that are created by the animal liberation movements. The research will investigate their potential to destabilize the current dominant frame, and which improvements are needed. Animal liberation movements can use this knowledge to improve their framing techniques to make their frames more successful with more influence. Research suggests that for the status quo treatment of animals to change, the current animal welfare frame must be destabilized through counter constructions and competing discourses about animal life. The more people are influenced by a frame's social reality, the higher the influence of the frame (Benford & Snow, 2000). Therefore, it is important that the challenging frame becomes more important than the current dominant frame. People might realize that animals in the dairy industry are treated worse than they always thought. Since the presence or absence of harm is crucial in making a moral judgement, this may lead to a change in perceptions and behaviour (Gilbert et al., 2025). They may become more aware of the effects of their consumption and adapt their behaviour by decreasing their consumption of animal products and by voting on political parties that fight for better animal welfare policy. This hopefully leads to less animal consumption and a better animal welfare in the Dutch dairy industry.

1.5 Reading guide

In this thesis the different elements of the research will be discussed. First, the theory of framing and related concepts will be explained in the theoretical framework. Some background about animal welfare and the dairy industry will be given. Besides, there will be explained of which elements a frame exists and what makes a frame successful. Moreover, there will be elaborated on previous research regarding the pro-dairy and anti-dairy frames that exist about the dairy industry. Last, some concepts will be operationalized, and the research will be conceptualized. In the following chapter, the used research methods to research the framing of the animal welfare organisations are explained and discussed. Then, in the two empirical chapters, the results of the analysis will be given. In the discussion chapter, the results will be linked to the theory of framing and the limitations of the research will be discussed. Also, there will be given recommendations for the analysed animal welfare movements and recommendations for further research. Last, the main research question will be answered in the conclusion chapter. The thesis is completed by the reference list and some annexes.

2. Theoretical framework

Social movements use frames to ‘inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns’ they execute (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 614). Therefore, it is important to understand what frames are, what they do and how social movements use them. In this chapter, the concepts of animal welfare and the dairy industry will be explained. Then, the theory of framing will be thoroughly explained and connected to the case of animal welfare in the dairy industry. Also, the existing frames about the dairy industry will be elaborated on. Last, some concepts will be operationalized to make them useful for this research and the research will be converted in a conceptual model.

2.1 Animal welfare

As explained in the introduction, there is a major difference in perceptions on the concept of a good animal life. According to the literature, the concept of animal welfare is complex because it contains various aspects which sometimes conflict, namely the physical aspect, the mental aspect, and the nature aspect. For example, an animal can have a good physical state while it does not live according to its natural behaviour. Also, an animal who is kept in an environment that is as natural as possible, can be in a less good physical state. Besides to the aspects of the animal, it is discussed to which extent the human interest has a role into the concept of animal welfare (Hewson, 2003). The definition of animal welfare that is most accepted is that “it compromises the state of the animal’s body and mind, and the extent to which its nature (...) is satisfied” (Hewson, 2003, p. 497). Anti-dairy frames focus on one aspect of this definition or try to take all the three elements into account. These frames show that one or several aspects are inferior (Gilbert et al., 2025). Pro-dairy frames omit animal welfare from its frame and focus on other aspects of the dairy industry like economic and social sustainability effects. At most, they might include some positive elements about animal welfare, but animal harm is excluded or justified by reasons like economy, tradition, or the argument that cows do not experience harm (Gilbert et al., 2025; Taylor & Fraser, 2019; Wood et al., 2025)

2.1.1 Animal welfare and sustainability

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the concept of animal welfare can have conflicts and trade-offs within its own definition. However, it can also have trade-offs with the concept of sustainability (Visseren-Hamakers, 2020). A more extensive and animal-friendly way of keeping animals requires more land and causes more emissions per animal than in industrial farming which is less animal-friendly (Visseren-Hamakers, 2020). This complicates policymaking regarding animal agriculture. However, there are also some solutions that contribute to both more animal welfare and to less emissions. One example is the consumption of fewer animal products which leads to a decrease in the number of farmed animals (Visseren-Hamakers, 2020). The trade-off choice between sustainability and animal welfare might be used in frames: more intensive farming is joined by a lower animal welfare, but the frames emphasize the lower emissions per cow that intensive farming accomplishes, while leaving out the decrease in animal welfare.

2.2.2 Animal welfare in the dairy industry

This research investigates frames regarding animal welfare in the dairy industry. For this case it is helpful to know what practices are meant when there is talked about bad animal welfare practices. These different practices lead to a decrease in animal welfare regarding the physical, the mental and the natural aspects that contribute to animal welfare.

There are different practices in the dairy industry which negatively affect the welfare of the animals. One example is the early cow-calf separation which causes negative developmental consequences for the calf (Gilbert et al., 2025; Taylor & Fraser, 2019). This is done because of economic reasons, because the farmer wants to sell the milk of the cow for human consumption. The longer the calf stays with the cow, the less milk the farmer can sell. Bulls and excess dairy calves are sent to veal farms where they are fed for slaughter (Gilbert et al., 2025).

Other practices that happen are limited or zero-grazing (Gilbert et al., 2025), dehorning, debudding and tail docking (Taylor & Fraser, 2019). These last practices happen often without pain relief (Gilbert et al., 2025). Bulls are forcedly harvested of their semen and cows are forcedly inseminated (Taylor & Fraser, 2019).

The boredom and frustration that cows can experience can also lead to bar biting and tongue rolling practices. Besides, it can cause the cow to shut itself out and imprison itself. This decreases social contact and exercise and can lead to physical problems such as lameness and mastitis (Gilbert et al., 2025).

These practices are explained differently by different frames. In the next section, the theory of framing will be explained, whereafter the theory of framing will be connected to and applied on the case of animal welfare in the dairy industry.

2.2 Framing

Each person has a different frame through which they see the world. Frames are "schemata of interpretation" that allow individuals "to locate, perceive, identify and label occurrences within their life space and the world at large" (Goffman, 1974, p. 21). Thus, it helps to give meaning to certain events and to place it in someone's world. They influence the perceptions of people (Wood et al., 2025) and they guide action and behaviour (Benford & Snow, 2000). The dominant frame has the most influence on people's behaviour and it can even influence policy decisions (Wood et al., 2025). The frame points the design of policies in a certain direction, both directly and indirectly (Cottier et al., 2022; Wood et al., 2025). It proposes a cause, it assigns blame, and it proposes a solution (Cottier et al., 2022; Garth & Roberts, 2022; Wood et al., 2025). Problems that are identified by the dominant frame will more easily be solved than the problems that are identified by subordinate frames. These frames are less or not visible in the media and lack therefore their chance to have influence on people's behaviour. This can create barriers to act on a problem: when the problem is only identified by the subordinate frames it has a low chance to be solved, because of their lack of influence (Garth & Roberts, 2022). This is the case with animal welfare in the dairy industry, as later will be elaborated on.

Frames are created through framing. Framing is "an active, processual phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction" (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 614). This activity of framing is a dynamic process of giving meaning to reality and it leads to the

construction of collective action frames (Benford & Snow, 2000) under the umbrella of a master frame (Mooney & Hunt, 2009). In the process of framing there are hidden agendas which influence which events to include in the narrative of the frame and which to exclude (Cronon, 1992). Sometimes whole areas of real life can be erased from the social reality to advocate a specific interpretation (Entman, 2007; Gilbert et al., 2025). This leads to reframing of the past (Cronon, 1992). When a frame is established, although the process of framing is dynamic and never finished, it will reflect a set of interests and has certain demands. It can be distinguished from other frames by looking at the important and exemplary actors, their position towards certain policies and their interests (Mooney & Hunt, 2009).

In the case of animal welfare in the dairy industry, framing is used to create a certain narrative of how the dairy industry functions and how animals are treated. This can be in a positive or negative way because certain aspects are emphasized, while other aspects are left out. It influences the perceptions of people and if they think that animals are treated well or not. This leads to certain behaviour: supporting or challenging the dairy industry (Gilbert et al., 2025; Jackson et al., 2022).

2.2.1 Master frames and collective action frames

Master frames are generic frames that function the same as collective action frames do. Master frames function on a larger scale and shape the more specific collective action frames (Snow & Benford, 1992). Collective action frames are “action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate activities and campaigns of a social movement organization” (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 614). They are an “outcome of negotiating shared meaning” (Gamson, 1992, p. 111) and not simply the accumulation of individual frames (Benford & Snow, 2000). In this, social movements are “signifying agents that often are deeply embroiled, along with the media, local governments, and the state” (Snow & Benford, 1992, p. 136). They actively give meaning and produce ideas regarding certain subjects or events (Snow & Benford, 1992). In the case of animal welfare, the master frame is the animal welfare frame: animals can be used to produce animal products; they have production value for humans and not the right on their own life. Within this master frame there are different collective action frames with each its own set of beliefs that lead to certain actions. These ideas are produced by social movements like animal liberation movements. In this case, the collective action frames are the happy dairy frame and the anti-dairy frame (Gilbert et al., 2025).

Within collective action frames, there can be focused on injustice frames. In these frames “movements identify the ‘victims’ of a given injustice and amplify their victimization” (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 615). The operations of authorities like the government are seen as unjust. Not all frames include an injustice element (Benford & Snow, 2000), but it is applicable on the anti-dairy frame which focuses on animal harm and injustice. In these frames animals are seen as the victim of the unjust actions by the government, businesses, or farmers (Gilbert et al., 2025).

2.2.2 The core tasks of framing

Within the concept of framing there are different core tasks, namely diagnostic framing, prognostic framing, and motivational framing. These tasks are used to analyse the frames of the animal liberation movements in a structured way.

In diagnostic framing there is a focus on defining the problem and its characteristics, for example the cause of the problem. There is also a search for who is to blame or who caused a problem (Benford & Snow, 2000). This cause is located within its frame, and this leads to different suggestions for causes in different frames (Cottier et al., 2022). However, within frames there can also be disagreements about what the cause of the problem is, and this can lead to conflicts within a movement (Benford & Snow, 2000). The frames can also differ in their outlook on the problem or development. In positive framing there is a focus on the benefits that are or could be present and the positive developments that could happen. In neutral framing developments can be seen as inevitable and not clearly positive or negative. In negative framing there are developments or problems which are seen as crises, as highly problematic (Mooney & Hunt, 2009). Negative framing is most likely to appear in the diagnostic frames since the frames are about finding and defining the problem. However, according to Wang et al. (2020) positive ratings, thus in this case positive frames, have more influence on people's decisions than negative ratings, thus negative frames (Wang et al., 2020). Thus, formulating the challenging frames more positively, could make them more effective.

In prognostic framing there is a focus on defining and proposing a solution and strategies to reach this solution. Prognostic framing is affected by diagnostic framing because the proposed solution must logically follow out of the diagnosed problem. In forming its solution social movements look both for composing a satisfactory solution and for counterframing, in which solutions of opponents are refuted, undermined, or neutralized. It can happen that social movement organizations have the same diagnostic frame but differ in their prognostic frame (Benford & Snow, 2000). In other words, they have a different solution for the same problem.

In motivational framing the focus is to call for collective action (Benford & Snow, 2000). Herein four kinds of vocabularies of motive are important to reach and sustain this action. These are vocabularies of severity, urgency, efficacy, and propriety. These different vocabularies come from different elements that motivate people to act. First, a sense of the severity of the problem: the frame emphasizes the immensity of the problem and the necessity for collective action. Second, there must be a sense of urgency: the frame emphasize that the problem should be solved quickly or in a limited time frame. If only a sense of severity and urgency is spread, then this can also lead to a sense of hopelessness and demobilization. To prevent this, vocabularies of efficacy and propriety are also important. For efficacy, the frame must show that it is reasonable to solve the problem, but that each person's role is important and has influence. Last, propriety means that people must feel that they are an owner of the problem and that they are responsible to act. The combination of these four vocabularies can motivate people to act (Benford, 1993).

2.2.3 Resonance of a frame

There are distinctive features in which collective action frames can differ. One of these features is resonance. That means to which extent the frame is effective or mobilizing and if it really guides action (Benford & Snow, 2000). Resonance consists of two principal elements: the credibility of a frame and the relative salience of a frame. Both elements consist of three dimensions which are displayed in table 1.

Resonance factor	Dimension	Explanation
Credibility of the frame	Frame consistency	The coherence between the articulated beliefs, claims and actions of a social movement. The more contradictions there are, the less credible a frame will be.
	Empirical credibility	To what extent fits the frame with the real facts and events in the world.
	Credibility of the frame articulators	To what extent are the speakers of a movement perceived as credible.
Relative salience of the frame	Centrality	How essential the beliefs, values, and ideas, which are related to the frame, are to the lives of the people who are targeted.
	Experiential commensurability	To what extent the frame resonates with personal daily life experiences of the targets of mobilization.
	Narrative fidelity	To which extent the frame resonates with the inherent cultural narratives.

Table 1 The factors and dimensions of resonance (Benford & Snow, 2000)

All these factors contribute to more resonance of the frame, and this will lead to a higher mobilization of people (Benford & Snow, 2000). For this research, there is investigated how each movement tries to gain resonance amongst the public, because the better the resonance, the more dominant the frame and the better the frame really guides action.

2.3 Existing frames relating to animal welfare in the dairy industry

In previous research there are constructed some frames regarding animal welfare in the dairy industry. In the divide between pro-dairy and anti-dairy two frames were identified by Gilbert et al. (2025). The pro-dairy frame is the dominant frame that is present in society. This is also supported by other research that will be elaborated on. The anti-dairy frame is the challenging frame (Gilbert et al., 2025; Taylor et al., 2022). This counterframe challenges the dominant frame and thoughts. It is in this case established by people and organisations who think that the current dairy system is unjust, so they compete for better animal welfare. The frames will be further explained in the next paragraphs.

2.3.1 The happy dairy frame

The happy dairy frame is a pro-dairy frame focused on the relation between the farmer and the cow: the farmers are caretakers of the cow that need their protectiveness. These roles are linked with positive moral emotions: there is a helping agent that evokes inspiration and there is a patient who receives help from the helping agent. The helping relation evokes relief and happiness. This frame creates the feeling that there are no moral concerns necessary in relation to farmed animals: the existence of harm is denied, or it is said that animals cannot experience harm at all. This helps in denying any wrongdoing and in justifying consumption. It is also argued that dairy farming is natural and that the cows enjoy a good life on the farm. Besides, the concept of veal farms is represented as beneficial for the calves because they get a ‘fancy’ diet of artificial milk powder. In conclusion, we can say that this happy dairy narrative is focused on showing that the dairy industry is essential to the human health, beneficial for the cows and calves and an important part of the farmers’ identity (Gilbert et al., 2025).

According to Gilbert et al. (2025) this frame is inconsistent with objective facts, but they also mention that individual farmers might not be aware of that. According to Taylor & Fraser (2019)

farmers can both feel emotionally connected to their cows while also harming them and justifying these practices. They found that farmers use different techniques to deny or neutralize animal harm. Common sentences that farmers mentioned in the interviews were ‘it is part of farming’ (p. 144) or ‘it is for their own good’ (p. 145). Animal harm is also justified for economic reasons, tradition, and expediency (Taylor & Fraser, 2019). Farmers that are aware of animal harm problems, point to the bigger industrial farms. According to them that is where the animal harm happens, but not on their own farm (Taylor et al., 2022).

All in all, the most important pillars of the dominant frame are that animal farming is not wrong: there is a caregiver-caretaker-relation between the farmer and the cows, dairy farming is seen as natural, animal harm is denied or justified and economic reasons, tradition and expediency are seen as more important than animal welfare. This frame is composed by analysing social media, interviews with dairy farmers and consultants, government spendings and the inclusion of animal interests in organizations. There is investigated how different parties see animal welfare in dairy production, but also how farmers see vegans and conversely (Gilbert et al., 2025; Taylor et al., 2022; Taylor & Fraser, 2019). The research led to a composition of the frames but has also shown that the happy dairy frame is dominant and that most people think of the welfare of animals as sufficient and as a subordinate interest.

The research about the happy dairy fame was executed in Western countries like Australia, New Zealand, and the USA. According to the existing research, this frame is influencing the current policy and behaviour in relation to animal welfare in the animal agriculture (Gilbert et al., 2025; Taylor et al., 2022). In this thesis it is assumed that this dominant frame is also applicable for the Netherlands, since it has a high animal consumption. It is also the European country with the highest amount of cattle per square kilometres. Besides, the government is very supportive regarding animal agriculture (Ministerie van Landbouw, 2024; NOS op 3, 2022) These facts, and other facts that are already explained in section 1.1, make that it can be assumed that the dominant happy dairy frame also occurs in the Netherlands.

2.3.2 The anti-dairy frame

The anti-dairy frame focuses on injustice and animal harm and cruelty. It uses moralized language. The main emphasis of the frame is on the extent to which farm animals are harmed by the farm practices: the dairy industry harms the animals and is bad for cows, humans, and the environment. This can lead to actions, but it could also distract from the fundamental problem that animal agriculture is unjust, even if there would be no harm (Gilbert et al., 2025). Animal agriculture as a whole is seen as unnatural (Taylor et al., 2022).

This negative vision on farming corresponds with how vegans frame farmers in the research of Taylor et al. (2022). They see farmers as a “cruel, primitive and uncivilized group who fail or refuse to see their involvement in systemic animal cruelty” (p. 273). Also, they emphasize that not only farmers ignore animal cruelty, but that the largest part of the population does that (Taylor et al., 2022). This connects to the concept of affected ignorance (Schwartz, 2020). This is “a kind of ignorance generated by what one knows but does not want to hear” (p. 75). People refuse to see connections between their actions and animal suffering and do not want to be informed about it (Schwartz, 2020).

This makes the anti-dairy frame a challenging injustice frame. It challenges the dominant frame by blaming farmers and the population in general of ignoring animal harm and injustice. The dominant frame ignores the connections between farmers’ actions and animal suffering to keep a positive moral idea of animal welfare in the dairy industry. The challenging frame wants to disclose this.

The frame is criticized by animal farmers. They argue that vegans, who are strongly connected to the anti-dairy frame, have lost touch with reality and that they refuse to see the farmers’ perspective. That is also the reason they claim that animal activism cannot be legitimized: the activists do not know where they talk about, and they pick out the worst cases which they generalize for the whole industry. A criticism that a vegan farmer gave, was that vegans focus on all the terrible things, but not on the questions of why we do not do farming better (Taylor et al., 2022).

In this thesis there is examined how animal liberation movements use framing. They use the anti-dairy frame; however, it can be that there appear to be differences between the different frames of the movements. This can be differences in emphasis, on what good solutions are and who should act.

2.4 Operationalization

In order to create an idea and a feeling of each organisation, there will be different elements examined, namely their vision, their mission, their important actors, their lifespan and size, their daily activities, and their collaboration with other actors. This is partly based on the research on the research of Mooney & Hunt (2009) who say that frames can be distinguished from other frames by looking at the important and exemplary actors, their position towards certain policies and their interests. These last two elements will be found through researching the collaboration, the vision, the mission, and the daily activities. The elements of lifespan and size are researched to get a better idea of the background of the organisation.

When the basic biographies of the animal liberation movements are composed, the framing techniques of the movements will be examined. In this research the core framing tasks of Benford & Snow (2000) will be used to structure the analysis of the framing techniques that the animal liberation movements use. These are diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing. In table 2 these concepts are operationalized. Also, within diagnostic framing, the general outlook or direction of the frame will be looked for to determine how successful a frame might be: positive frames have more influence on people’s decisions than negative frames (Wang et al., 2020). This can help decide how effective a frame may be.

Concept	Definition	Operationalization
Diagnostic framing	There is a focus on defining the problem and the characteristics of the problem. Also, there is framed who caused the problem: who is to blame (Benford & Snow, 2000).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the problem? - What are the characteristics of the problem? - Who or what is the cause of the problem? - What is the direction of the frame?

Prognostic framing	There is a focus on defining and proposing a solution. Also, strategies are made on how to reach this solution (Benford & Snow, 2000).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What solution is proposed? - How can the solution be achieved?
Motivational framing	There is a focus on the call for collective action. There is framed why there is a need to act (Benford & Snow, 2000). Herein four kinds of vocabularies of motive are important, namely, the vocabularies of severity, urgency, efficacy, and propriety (Benford, 1993).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why do people need to act? - Is there a sense of severity? - Is there a sense of urgency? - Is there a sense of efficacy? - Is there a sense of propriety?

Table 2 Operationalization of the core framing tasks.

When these frames and their framing techniques are analysed, there will be examined how the frames try to gain resonance (Benford & Snow, 2000). The resonance of a frame is especially important, because the more resonance a frame has, the more people there will be mobilized, and the more action will be guided by this frame. Overall, good resonance techniques could make the frame more successful and are therefore interesting to analyse. How resonant the frames really are is not examined in this thesis, because this goes beyond the scope of the research. The factors that determine the resonance of the frame are operationalized in table 3. With the help of these factors, there will be analysed how the animal liberation movements try to gain resonance amongst the Dutch general public.

Concept	Dimension	Definition	Operationalization
Credibility of a frame	Frame consistency	The coherence between the articulated beliefs, claims and actions of a social movement (Benford & Snow, 2000).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there consistency between the movement's beliefs, claims and actions? Or are there contradictions?
	Empirical credibility	To what extent the facts of the frame fit with the real facts and events in the world (Benford & Snow, 2000).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What facts or events from the real world are included in the frame? - Are there facts that do not align with the real world?
	Credibility of the frame articulators	To what extent the speakers of a movement are perceived as credible (Benford & Snow, 2000).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who are the speakers of the movement? - Are they seen as credible by their audience? - Can they be seen as credible for a broader audience?
Relative salience of a frame	Centrality	How essential the beliefs, values and ideas which are related to the frame are to the lives of the people who are targeted (Benford & Snow, 2000).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which beliefs, values and ideas are existing in the frame? - How do these beliefs and ideas appear in the lives of people?

	Experiential commensurability	To what extent frames are resonant with the personal daily life experiences of the targets of mobilization (Benford & Snow, 2000).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the frame relate to people's own experiences? - How broad is the group that could feel associated with the frame through their personal daily live experiences?
	Narrative fidelity	This is to which extent the frame resonates with the inherent cultural narratives (Benford & Snow, 2000).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How does the frame relate to relevant cultural narratives?

Table 3 Operationalization of elements of resonance.

2.5 Conceptual model

In figure 1 the conceptual model of composing the collective action frames is shown. On the one hand, there are elements which compose the basic biography of the organisation, namely the vision, the mission, the important actors the lifespan, the size of the movement, the daily activities, and the collaboration with other actors. Besides, this information will be completed by analysing the different framing tasks that are identified. From there, the framing techniques will be analysed. All the elements of a collective action frame are included in the conceptual model in figure 1. In the conceptual model there are no arrows because there are no causal relations.

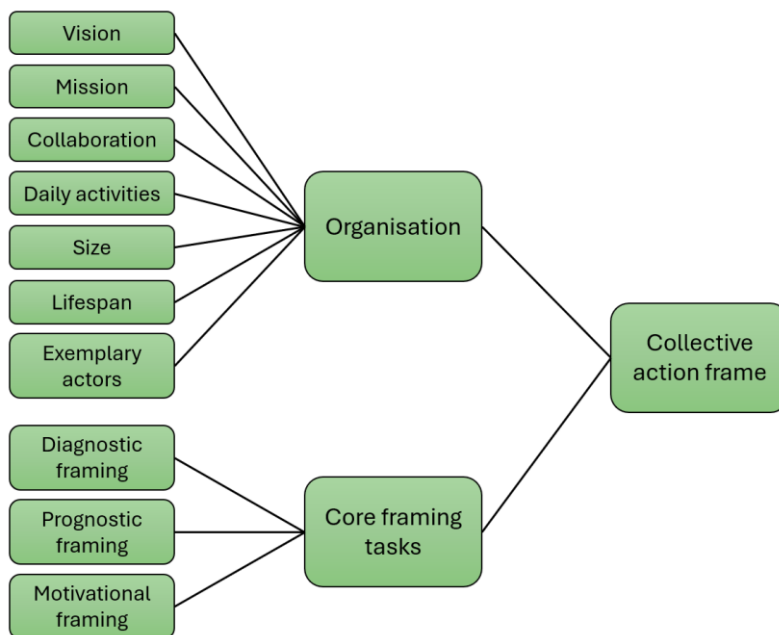


Figure 1 Conceptual model of composing the collective action frames.

In figure 2 the conceptual model is built around how the frame guides behaviour and leads to societal change. All these concepts and relations are already described in the introduction and the different paragraphs of the theoretical framework but are brought together in this conceptual model. To reach societal change there needs to be a change in behaviour. This behaviour includes decisions and actions. This can be for example the choice to quit animal consumption or to vote for a political party that fights for better animal welfare. This second

action can lead to policy which is guided by the frame and via this policy, behaviour leads to societal change. In this case improved animal welfare.

This behaviour is influenced by the perceptions that people have. These perceptions are influenced by the frame: if people resonate with the frame, they will implement the perceptions and adapt their behaviour to this frame. The resonance consists of two aspects: the credibility of the frame and the relative salience of the frame. Both aspects again include three factors that determine these aspects (see figure 2). For all these factors applies that the higher the factor, the higher the resonance. If the resonance is higher, more people will take over the beliefs of the frame. This causes that the frame becomes more dominant and influences more perceptions and behaviour. In this research, the dimensions that contribute to the resonance are examined to learn more about the potential of the frames to lead to societal change.

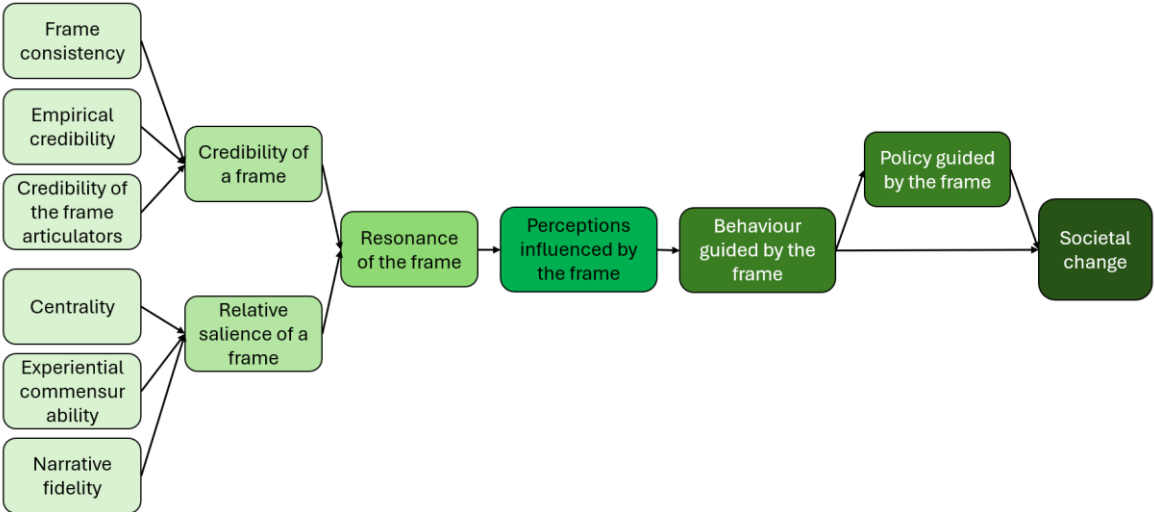


Figure 2 Conceptual model of framing and societal change.

This chapter illustrated that framing guides action and behaviour and that it is therefore important to understand how animal liberation movements use frames. The existing pro-dairy and anti-dairy frames are explained and there is elaborated on what animal welfare means. In the last sections is shown how the research is operationalized and conceptualized. How the collection and the analysis of the data is done, is elaborated on in the following chapter.

3. Methodology

In this research, qualitative research methods were used to answer the research question: “How do animal liberation movements contest the dominant animal welfare frame in the Dutch dairy industry?”. This question was answered with the two following sub-questions:

1. How do animal liberation movements use framing techniques to create counterframes to challenge the dominant animal welfare frame?
2. How do animal liberation movements try to gain resonance amongst the Dutch general public?

This chapter elaborates on how these questions were answered. First, the research approach and methods are explained. Then, there will be further clarified how the needed data has been collected and how the collected data has been analysed by using ATLAS.ti.

3.1 Research approach

In this research there has been performed content analysis and then especially frame analysis. Content analysis is used because this is suitable for interpreting and analysing much textual data. It is qualitative research, because interpretation of nuances and hidden meanings is needed, but it is in a certain way also quantitative because of the systemic way of analysing (Hecker & Kalpokas, n.d.). In this research, a more specific approach was used, namely frame analysis. It was used because it focuses on studying how meaning is constructed (van Hulst et al., 2024) and it explores “what elements of reality are strategically or tacitly foregrounded or backgrounded in conversations and text, and how this includes and excludes voices, ideas and interests in policy and decision-making” (van Hulst et al., 2024, p. 1). In this research it was used to gain insight in the framing of the animal liberation movements and how they include and exclude certain things.

Some advantages of content and frame analysis are that there was no direct interaction with the studied subjects. This prevented that the subjects were influenced by the presence of the researcher. Another advantage was the possibility to analyse a large number of organisations, namely nine animal welfare organisations. This would not have been possible with for example interviews. Besides, in the future, the analysis is easily replicable by using the same data or by using updated data which makes longitudinal analysis possible. A last important advantage was the flexibility in analysis in methods. While some data has been categorized and analysed to compose the frames out of basic information, it was also possible to look for the hidden meanings in the texts or to analyse in a more quantitative way. The different research questions could be answered through using the same method (Hecker & Kalpokas, n.d.).

Some disadvantages of content analysis that were encountered during the analysis, is the dependence on existing data and the impossibility to get more information or clarification within the frame. This can have led to an inequality in depth: while one frame is more elaborate, the other frame lacks some information. Another disadvantage is the coding and categorization of the data. This has cost a lot of time, which made it challenging to stay consistent in the coding. Besides, the analysis can be affected by bias (Hecker & Kalpokas, n.d.). The researcher was aware of these disadvantages and tried to limit the effects of these during the analysis.

The analysis was structured with the concepts of diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing because framing techniques are expressed in these. It focused on the websites of the animal liberation movements. In some cases, the data was complemented with other documents the movements created. With the analysed data several challenging frames were composed. After their composition, the frames were analysed in relation to their framing techniques and the resonance they reach.

3.2 Data collection

In the data collection it was important to include data that was representative and answered the research questions. There is data collected that has been created by the movements themselves, because this data shows the frames that they have. Most of the data were webpages from the websites of the movements. The relevant pages were abstracted from the website. Pages were relevant when they included information that would be coded and used to answer the research questions (Riemann et al., 2022; Wise & Cullerton, 2021). This includes information about the organization, about the problems and solutions they focus on and for example campaigns, because these show the motivational frame. Sometimes this data was expanded by extra material that has been created by the movement, for example a brochure. Newspaper articles and media interviews were excluded because they were not created by the movements themselves and could have been influenced by the frame of the news sources. Most reports that could be found on the websites were also excluded, because they were made by an external organisation or in cooperation with other organisations, which made them unrepresentative for the frame of the organisation. Moreover, social media was excluded because this was beyond the scope of this research.

The organisations that were analysed had to meet certain requirements. First, the organisation had to be an animal liberation movement. An animal liberation movement, also called an animal rights movements, can be defined as “a social movement which seeks an end to the rigid moral and legal distinction drawn between human and non-human animals, an end to the status of animals as property and an end to their use in the research, food, clothing and entertainment industries” (Animal Rights, n.d.-a). Second, the animal liberation movements had to be Dutch or had to have a Dutch branch. Third, they had to have included animal welfare in the Dutch dairy industry in some way, because the research is focused on the Dutch dairy industry. The Dutch dairy industry could both be the main focus of the organization or a part of their focus. If an organization did not include the welfare of animals in the Dutch dairy industry, they were excluded from the research. There are nine animal liberation movements that complied with the requirements and are included in the analysis. These organisations are Wakker Dier, Dierenbescherming, DierNL, Dierencoalitie, Dier&Recht, Compassion in World Farming NL, World Animal Protection NL, Vier Voeters and Animal Rights.

When the animal liberation movements were selected, the relevant data was abstracted. The webpages that were analysed had to include information about the basic biography of the organisation, about animal welfare in the dairy industry or about a more overarching theme which was relevant. For example, a general webpage about animal welfare would be included, while a document specifically about poultry would be excluded. Moreover, there is focused on the static pages that are on the website and not on news articles and other ‘temporary’ pages. These were only included if they were recent and added much relevant data to the information

about the movement’s frame, for example webpages about campaigns. The amount of web pages that are included for each organisation are shown in table 4 It is important to note that more webpages does not necessarily mean that this organisation included more information, because some organisations have many basic webpages while others have few elaborate webpages. The specified list of collected and analysed data can be found in annex 9.2. After all the data was extracted, the data was analysed.

Organisation	Amount of analysed web pages
Wakker Dier	21
Dierenbescherming	12
DierNL	10
Dierencoalitie	5
Dier&Recht	12
Compassion in World Farming NL	16
World Animal Protection NL	9
Vier Voeters	7
Animal Rights	9

Table 4 Amount of analysed web pages per organisation.

3.3 Data analysis

The collected data was analysed with the help of ATLAS.ti. Beforehand, there was made a codebook with codes for the basic information of the organisation, for the composition of the frames and for the resonance (Riemann et al., 2022; Wise & Cullerton, 2021) (see annex 9.1). the data was coded following the codebook. The data was coded in two rounds. The first round was more focused on coding the information regarding the biography and the composition of the frames, while the second round was more focused on the resonance. After the coding, the frames were composed with the help of the labels, word clusters and the researcher’s own interpretation (Garth & Roberts, 2022). For each organization there was created a paragraph with some basic information. Subsequently, the diagnostic, the prognostic and the motivational framing of the movements are analysed to see how framing techniques are used. Besides, there is paid attention to the differences and the similarities between the different organisations.

After composing the frames, the frames from the animal liberation movements were further analysed based on the following factors that determine the resonance of a frame: frame consistency, empirical credibility, credibility of the frame articulators, centrality, experiential commensurability, and the narrative fidelity. This analysis is also done with the help of labels, word clusters and the researcher’s own interpretation. The obtained information reveals how animal liberation movements use framing techniques to counterframe the dominant animal welfare frame and how animal liberation organisations try to gain resonance. This contributes to the exploration of how animal liberation movements try to destabilize the dominant animal welfare frame and of what the potential of their frame is to become dominant.

4. Results: the counterframes of the animal liberation movements

This chapter and the next chapter discuss the results that are found during the analyzation of the data. The results derive from the data that is analysed and mentioned in annex 9.2. The sources of the quotes that are cited are added in the general reference list (chapter 8). The results will be used to answer the two sub-questions, so that the main research question can be answered in the conclusion. In this chapter the first sub-question will be answered: “How do animal liberation movements use framing techniques to create counterframes to challenge the dominant animal welfare frame?”. It will be answered by examining how the animal liberation movements use framing in their problem analysis, their solution proposal, and their call to action. For each organisation there is composed a small biography. Then there is given an overview of the diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing that the organisations do to analyse the framing techniques the movements use. For this analysis, only the most important results are included. The individual diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames of the animal liberation movements can be found in annex 9.3.

4.1 Biographies of the animal liberation movements

4.1.1 Wakker Dier

Wakker Dier (lit. ‘Awoken Animal’) is one of the bigger Dutch animal welfare organisations, established in 1997. Their vision is an animal-friendly life for all animals in the livestock sector. They do not necessarily aim for a full plant-based society, but for an animal-inclusive one. Their mission is to reach this animal-inclusive society by fighting for a livestock sector with less animals and a better welfare. They attain this via diverse activities like creating awareness via campaigning, addressing animal welfare issues directly at companies and fighting for animal rights in the court room. Sometimes Wakker Dier collaborates with other organisations, but it is barely mentioned on their website.

4.1.2 Dierenbescherming

Dierenbescherming (The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals) is the biggest and oldest animal welfare organisation in the Netherlands, founded in 1864. They focus on both pets and farm animals, but also on birds and small wild animals that live in the Dutch nature. Their vision is a world in which animal interests are considered by habit. Regarding the livestock sector, they want an animal-focused and sustainable livestock sector by 2050. The mission of the Dierenbescherming is ‘to protect animals in the Netherlands, [...], acknowledge their value and defend their interests’ (Dierenbescherming, n.d.). They aim to change people’s perceptions and actions and to prevent animal suffering so that less animals have to be saved.

Dierenbescherming does this through many different activities like educating the public, saving animals if necessary, lobbying and campaigning. They try to reach the public and companies as well as the government. Moreover, Dierenbescherming owns a trademark for animal products, namely Stichting Beter Leven Keurmerk. Also, they are connected to Stichting Landelijke Inspectiedienst Dierenwelzijn, which is a national inspection body for animal welfare. Next to these two foundations, Dierenbescherming also collaborates with many parties to reach

solutions, namely the government, other animal welfare and nature protection organisations, farmers, research institutes, companies, and citizens.

4.1.3 DierNL

DierNL (lit. 'Animal NL') is a Dutch organisation that visualizes an improvement in people's attitude and behaviour towards animals. Their mission is to improve animal welfare and combat the mistreatment of animals in the Netherlands. They focus on giving information and education to raise awareness. To reach their goals, they collaborate with other charities and support different projects, among others Stem voor Dieren (lit. 'Voice for Animals') which focuses on pets and livestock animals. The vision of Stem voor Dieren is an improved awareness of individuals' responsibility towards pets and livestock animals, also for children. Their mission is to protect animals that are dependent on humans and to make children already conscious of their responsibility towards the animal. Now, their focus is to stop the burning of piglet tails without sedation. Their main activity is also education, for example by developing information packs and by writing reports. The data does not tell anything about the establishment and the size of the organisation. This is not highlighted in the frame. In further analyzation and the composition of the frames, the data of DierNL and Stem voor Dieren is taken together because they belong together and because the data complements each other.

4.1.4 Dierencoalitie

Dierencoalitie (lit. 'Animal Coalition') is an overarching Dutch organisation which includes sixteen animal protection organisations, among others Compassion in World Farming NL, World Animal Protection NL, Dier&Recht, WakkerDier and Vier Voeters, which are also analysed in this thesis. Together they have half a million supporters. The collaboration is officially established in a foundation in 2021. The board of the organisation is composed of directors of some of the subordinate organisations. The organisation focuses on all kinds of animals, thus also pets and wild animals. The vision of Dierencoalitie regarding the livestock sector is a sustainable livestock farming system in which farms adapt to the needs of the animals instead of the other way around. Their mission is to 'defend the interests of animals in important political and social issues' (Dierencoalitie, n.d.). Next to political and social advocacy, their daily activities include raising funds to support their own activities. They also publish reports about animal welfare in collaboration with other organisations.

4.1.5 Dier&Recht

Dier&Recht (lit. 'Animal&Law') is a Dutch organisation that is established by animal welfare organisation Varkens in Nood (lit. 'Pigs in Need') in 2006. Dier&Recht focuses on calves, horses, dogs, and cats, but includes sometimes also other animals who are exploited by humans, like pigs. Dier&Recht and Varkens in Nood have a strong collaboration. They share knowledge about substantive and juridical issues which decreases costs. It has a small team of jurists, researchers, policymakers, and vets, but a great voice in the field of animal welfare. They also collaborate with other animal welfare organisations like Eyes on Animals. The vision of Dier&Recht is a world in which animals have the right to live according to their natural behaviour. Their mission is to defend the interests of animals and to gain animal rights. They try to accomplish their mission by disclosing misconducts in the media to inform the public, by

lobbying for changes in the law and by conducting lawsuits against the government or against companies that cause animal suffering.

4.1.6 Compassion in World Farming NL

Compassion in World Farming is an international organization which has a Dutch branch since 1998. The organisation is founded by Peter Roberts, a former farmer, and is established in almost all European countries. Their vision is an animal-friendly, healthy, and sustainable livestock sector. Their mission is to reach this and to defend the welfare of cattle at governments, international organisations, and companies. To reach its goals, CIWF NL collaborates with other animal protection organisations and with the CIWF branches in other countries. They also collaborate with national and regional organisations and even with individual animal protectors. CIWF's main activity is campaigning against livestock farming, for example with billboards campaigns and radio spots.

4.1.7 World Animal Protection NL

World Animal Protection is an international organisation spread over thirteen countries, also the Netherlands. The organisation originates from 1950 and has a vision of a world in which animal welfare is important and where animal suffering does not exist. Their mission is to protect animals, stop animal suffering and improve animal welfare, for example in the livestock sector. They focus on all kinds of animals, both domesticated and wild. Their daily activities include educating citizens via campaigns and projects, providing help for animals in case of disasters and lobbying for better regulations. They ensure that the interests of animals are not forgotten in important global policies and plans. In the Netherlands, they work on the food transition towards a plant-based society together with relevant parties like the ministry. They also stimulate companies and financial organisations to improve their policy towards animals and make the transition towards plant-based food. Next to national governments, companies, and financial organizations, they also collaborate with the United Nations and other NGO's who aim for the same goal.

4.1.8 Vier Voeters

Vier Voeters is the Dutch Branch of the international organisation Four Paws which is spread over fifteen countries. The organisation is established in 1988 and visualizes a world in which 'humans treat animals with respect, empathy and understanding (Vier Voeters, n.d.). Their mission is to protect animals that are directly influenced by people, to reveal animal suffering and save animals in need. Within the livestock sector, they aim for an animal-friendly farming system in which animals can behave naturally. To accomplish this mission, Vier Voeters organizes campaigns to raise awareness and mobilize people, inform people with their animal welfare label, rescue animals when that is needed, lobby for better policy and write reports. In some activities Vier Voeters collaborates, for example with other animal welfare organisations and progressive farmers.

4.1.9 Animal Rights

Animal Rights is an organisation which is active in the Netherlands since 2009 and in Belgium since 2015. It has a small paid team which is supported by a large team of volunteers. Their vision is a society which is peaceful, green, and harmonious and in which both humans and

animals have the right on their own life. Animals should not be used as a product and should live for their own and not to serve humans. Their mission is to protect and defend the interests of domesticated animals, but also of wild animals. One of the main activities of Animal Rights is the disclosure of animal suffering by for example secret video footage and rooted research. This is often followed by a lawsuit to persecute those responsible and to improve the law. They also raise awareness for animal rights with campaigns and demonstrations. Animal Rights collaborates with other animal welfare organisations when necessary.

4.2 Diagnostic framing

This research found that the frames in general start from the same problem(s). All nine organisations describe the problem of a livestock sector in which millions of animals suffer, because the system is not adapted to their needs. The organisations emphasize that the animals in the livestock industry suffer terribly due to their exploitation and more structural problems that the sector deals with. For example, DierNL states the following: ‘The coalition agreement is a drama for animals in the livestock industry. An animal-worthy livestock farm seems further away than ever’ (Stem voor Dieren, n.d.-b). The industry is also described as an ‘insane and uncontrollable mess’ (Stem voor Dieren, n.d.-a). Besides, the animals are seen as slaves of intensive farming who lost their dignity. In our society slavery is forbidden, thus with this negative expression, the movements try to stress the dire of the situation where animals are extremely exploited by humans without proper compensation and treatment. They give the feeling that this also should be forbidden. Vier Voeters agrees and compares the treatment of milk cows in the dairy industry with torture. Compassion in World Farming NL (n.d.) also expresses the seriousness of the situation: “The livestock industry is [...] a disaster for animals.” According to CIWF NL the livestock industry is only focused on producing and earning as much as possible at the cost of the animal welfare. All other organisations share this negative view, which can be seen in the extreme language that is used. Dierencoalitie is the only movement that has a more neutral stance on the problem and makes no strong positive or negative statements.

Despite of these similarities, each organisation emphasizes various aspects of the problem, as shown in table 5. While some organisations focus only on animal welfare problems as the intensive milking process, the dirty and small stables, the early separation of mother cow and calve and the diseases and stress that appear with cows due to the intensive farming system. Other organisations also include the consequences for the environment, public health, and the worldwide division of food. Especially CIWF NL is focused on showing the problem in a broader context, by pointing to the influence of the agricultural sector on the unequal division worldwide. These different focuses can attract diverse groups to each frame. Dierencoalitie does not focus on specific problems.

Organisation	WD	DB	DNL	DC	D&R	CIWF NL	WAP NL	VV	AR
Problem									
Intensive milking process with high production levels	X	X			X	X	X	X	
Lack of time outside	X	X				X	X		X
Heat stress	X								

Dirty stables with lack of space	X	X	X		X		X		X
Barn fires	X								
Early cow-calf separation	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Diseases, stress, and inconveniences	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Intensive breeding processes		X			X		X	X	
Long transports		X			X	X		X	
Environmental issues			X			X	X		X
Inadequate diet					X	X		X	
Lack of care					X				
Risks for public health						X	X		X
Unequal food division worldwide						X			
Cloning						X			
Early slaughter	X				X	X		X	
Loneliness							X		
Mistreatment by farmers									X

Table 5 Problems that are emphasized by the organisations.

The movements do not only point out various aspects of the problem but also point to different causes of the problem. Most organisations blame the government for their lack of regulation regarding animal welfare and the food and agroindustry for their lack of animal welfare. Both are focused on economic interests: the production and economies of scale are more important to them than animal welfare. Several frames explain how, after the Second World War, there was a renewed focus on having enough food available for everyone. Farmers had to produce cheaper, and this caused upscaling with more litres of milk per cow and a decrease in animal welfare. Over time this became the norm. At the moment, it is hard to increase the prices again, because the farmers have adapted to the current system, consumers are used to the cheap prices and supermarkets want to keep their costs low. Dier&Recht emphasizes that the narrative that milk is healthy and that everyone needs to drink it, has also contributed to an increasing demand for milk, which has led to upscaling and a more intensive production system.

Moreover, the law lacks good and specific regulations that would force farmers to improve their animal welfare. Especially the welfare of milk cows is barely protected by law. Besides, there are hardly consequences if the existing rules are violated. According to the movements, the government and companies bear the responsibility to improve animal welfare, decrease animal consumption and to make the transition to a plant-based society. However, CIWF NL mentions that world leaders still ignore the negative impacts of the livestock industry, and that the industry also has a firm lobby. This complicates the development of stricter policies.

Some organisations also blame consumers for their role in the high production, namely Dier&Recht, WAP NL and Vier Voeters. They argue that individuals should bear the responsibility of the impact of their animal consumption. However, Dierenbescherming mentions that 40% of the consumers do not know anything about the life of a milk cow and around 34% of the consumers think that milk cows have a better life than other animals in the livestock industry, which is not the case. This fits with the views of other organisations that see consumers as actors who are caught in a system of animal consumption and for who it is hard to change.

World Animal Protection NL emphasizes the role of financial institutions like banks that also stimulate the continuation of the current practices in the intensive farming system. They should

also take responsibility in making a change. Last, the movement Animal Rights is the only organisation that blames farmers for their incompetence and the mistreatment of their animals. This especially causes health and fertility issues: 'Often fertility problems on a farm are the result of poor business operations, inadequate nutrition and incompetence during insemination' (Animal Rights, n.d.-b). This gives a quite negative feeling to the frame, while other organisations emphasize the farmers as wanting to change but lacking the resources to make this transition. This gives a more positive feeling to the frame since there is a desire for change from bottom-up.

Overall, in the diagnostic frame, the framing is mainly done through using extreme language in defining the problem, highlighting aspects of the problem that the organisation considers important and pointing to specific actors who are to blame for causing the problem.

4.3 Prognostic framing

All organisations want more or less the same solution: a system change with farms that adapt to the natural behaviour and the needs of the animals. Farms should contain less animals so a better animal welfare can be ensured. According to Wakker Dier, the production should decrease so it becomes healthy. This implies that the system is unhealthy now and it gives the feeling that it is the only logical next step to cure the system. Dierenbescherming stresses that a system change is beneficial for the animal, the farmer, the citizen, and the environment. CIWF NL explains that farmers can have smaller businesses with healthier animals and less stress, but still the same income through a higher payment per litre. They make it feel even more logical that this step is taken. CIWF NL, but also other organisations, stress that calves should stay longer with their mother and that farms should become more nature inclusive. This increases the welfare of cows and calves and leads later to an increase in production and a decrease in costs for antibiotics. Moreover, farmers should get animal feed in their own region, because this decreases global transport and deforestation, which is better for the climate. Long animal transport to countries outside of the EU should also be forbidden to prevent the animal suffering. All these measures lead to a decrease in dependence on banks and (food) suppliers and to a more local and sustainable farming system. Possible negative consequences for the farmers are not mentioned.

Although the organisations agree on the end vision they want to reach, there are different ways in how the movements want to achieve this solution. All organisations mention the transition from an animal-based to a plant-based and organic diet. In this way, the demand for animal products will decrease and the market will adapt gradually to a system with less animal products for a higher and fair price. In the first place, people themselves should change their diet. Dierencoalitie mentions the goal that the protein consumption should be 50% plant-based and 50% animal-based in 2030.

Dierenbescherming expresses the importance of a trademark to stimulate the consumption of products of animals who have or had a better life. The trademark has various levels, and this can help to improve the livestock sector gradually from a low to a high level of animal welfare. At the moment there is not a sufficient trademark for dairy, so Dierenbescherming aims to develop this on the short term. Wakker Dier also sees this as a solution. In this solution they focus on improving the current farms and animal welfare, instead of totally banning animal products.

The organisations argue for an animal-inclusive society with less animal consumption instead of a society without any animal consumption. This gives the feeling that the goals are attainable. This could attract a wider public because the goal is less extreme.

Next to individuals, companies are held accountable for their responsibility in the protein transition. Big agricultural companies should be sued for their role in the intensive farming industry. Wakker Dier points to the role that supermarkets play. They should be stricter on which products they sell. However, the frames agree that most companies need an incentive, so they have a reason to make the transition towards more plant-based. Most frames point for this to the government who should stimulate plant-based eating by policy and law. They should choose a long-term strategy for the transition including price measures and a better availability of plant protein. Next to influencing the market, the government should also support companies and farmers who really want to become more sustainable and animal-friendly. In this way, the transition towards a more animal-friendly system is stimulated. Next to policies and incentives, the government should make stricter rules regarding animal welfare.

The organisations want different actors to act. They achieve this through different actions that are aimed one or more specific parties, like the consumers, companies, or the government. For example, there are held campaigns to create awareness. With this, the movements try to convince consumers to change their diet and to speak up and to talk with their peers about the impact of the livestock sector. Moreover, they aim to gain signatures for petitions to support the lawsuits against the governments and companies. Organisations also try to gain more awareness through education. For example, DierNL created educational packages to teach children from an early age how to treat animals well.

With support from citizens, organisations file lawsuits against the government to reach stricter regulations, but also to confront companies with their deeds. Some organisations, for example Dier&Recht and Animal Rights, use undercover videos and research to support these actions. These might convince more people of the dire of the situation. Next to campaigns and lawsuits, several organisations lobby at the national and European government. WAP NL is even involved with the United Nations, to improve animal welfare internationally.

Dierenbescherming and Vier Voeters also directly stimulate farmers to improve their farms by showing examples and rewarding farmers who do well. In this way they try to make their frame more attractive for farmers and to stimulate them to adapt. Some organisations, like WAP NL and Dierenbescherming, work directly with organisations and companies to help them to improve their policy.

Overall, the prognostic frames of the organisations point to the same solution of a system change with more animal-friendly and sustainable farms. They point out the benefits for different parties and try to focus on an animal-inclusive and more plant-based diet, instead of full plant-based diet. In this way, the organisations try to attract as many people as possible to the frame. The organisations differ in who they think that should act and in the way they try to achieve their solution.

4.4 Motivational framing

Each frame tries to mobilize people through their vocabulary. In table 6 an overview of the used vocabularies is shown. In the motivational frame the vocabulary of efficacy was always present: every frame showed how the consumer can contribute to a solution, and what role they have to play. The vocabulary of severity is also almost always included, except for the frame of DierNL and Vier Voeters. The vocabulary of urgency was two times included and the vocabulary of propriety was four times included. However, the combination of the languages is crucial and can make a frame more activating. The only organisation that included all the vocabularies is WakkerDier. Besides, Dierenbescherming, CIWF NL and Animal Rights have included three out of four vocabularies. Dierencoalitie has barely a motivational frame, because it is focused on the government and since it is also an umbrella organisation of other animal welfare organisations, it is less focused on the individual consumer. Their only call for action which includes some vocabulary of efficacy is that the consumer can contribute by signing the manifest.

Organisation	WD	DB	DNL	DC	D&R	CIWF NL	WAP NL	VV	AR
Vocabulary of severity	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
Vocabulary of urgency	X					X			
Vocabulary of efficacy	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Vocabulary of propriety	X	X						X	X

Table 6 Vocabularies of the motivational frame (abbreviation list in annex 9.4).

The vocabulary of severity is among others expressed by Wakker Dier ‘the more people join, the more pressure we can execute’ (Wakker Dier, n.d.-a). They emphasize that there needs to be a big movement to make a difference. Other organisations also stress the large amount of suffering animals and that the movements cannot solve the problem on their own, but need help from and cooperation with all the stakeholders. WAP NL underlines this by saying that ‘a sustainable future for our planet can only be achieved if both animals and humans are part of the solution’ (World Animal Protection, n.d.-c) and that ‘your help is invaluable’ (World Animal Protection, n.d.-a).

The vocabulary of urgency in motivational framing is only used by Wakker Dier and CIWF NL. CIWF NL uses word groups like ‘urgent need for change’ and ‘rapidly change’. This stresses that the problem needs to be solved as quickly as possible.

Each organisation includes the vocabulary of efficacy in showing all the diverse ways that citizens can contribute. Their role is framed as important: as a normal citizen you can make a difference by donating, signing petitions and make conscious choices. You can help to make a change. Each frame has used this vocabulary in one way or another. For example, World Animal Protection (n.d.-b) states “With your help, we can end abuses in the livestock industry even faster. See what you can do here.” The other organisations use similar phrases.

The vocabulary of propriety expresses mainly that the citizen is not to blame, but still responsible to act: ‘Do you also get angry when you read about the suffering of a dairy cow?’ (Wakker Dier, n.d.-b) and ‘Do you want them to live a better life too?’ (Wakker Dier, n.d.-d). The consumers have a responsibility to make conscious choices and to not stimulate the intensive

farming industry. Vier Voeters (n.d.) blames the consumer more directly: ‘Your buying behavior and eating choices determine how animals are bred and treated.’

Overall, Wakker Dier has the most complete set of vocabularies included in their frame, while Dierencoalitie barely included one. So, there is a significant difference between the organisations in their ways to convince people to act.

4.5 Conclusion sub-question 1

With the results from the previous sections the first sub-question can be answered: “How do animal liberation movements use framing techniques to create counterframes to challenge the dominant animal welfare frame?”

This research found that animal liberation movements contest the dominant animal welfare frame by framing the problem of bad welfare as negative and as a crisis that should be solved. Each organisation framed the problem of the livestock sector as a system in which millions of animals suffer, because the system is not adapted to their needs. The movements differ in their focus: some frames are purely focused on animal welfare, while other movements includes the risks for the public health and impact on climate change in their frame. Moreover, organisations differ in who they blame for the problem. The cause that is mentioned the most is the focus on economic interests and the upscaling by the government and the food and agroindustry. This caused the lack of animal welfare and therefore they are also responsible for a solution, for example with better policy, regulations, and trademarks. Second, while most organisations see consumers as actors with little influence on the system, Dier&Recht, World Animal Protection NL and Vier Voeters blame consumers for their role and say that they also have to change their behaviour. Although only these three organisations blame consumers, all organisations see consumers as part of the solution by changing their diet and supporting better animal welfare. Last, Animal Rights also blames the farmers who are incompetent and who mistreat their cows, which gives a quite negative feeling to the frame, since the farmers have direct contact with the cows and the biggest influence on their welfare.

Within the prognostic frame there is consensus about the ideal farming system. However, there is are various visions on who should act. There is mainly pointed to individuals to change their consumer behaviour, but also to the government and companies. Governments are ascribed the largest responsibility to act, because they have the power over regulation, but also the power to influence companies and consumers and to help farmers to make a transition to a more animal-friendly system. In the formulation of the solution, there is focused on all the benefits that the solution will bring and for who that is beneficial. However, there is not focused on the negative consequences the solution might involve. Besides, the solution is about an animal-friendly system and not about a society who does not consume animals anymore. In this way, the organisations try to limit their extreme statements and solutions to attract a wider public instead of only the hard core of the animal activist group.

The frames mainly try to mobilize their public by using the motivational vocabularies of efficacy and of severity. WakkerDier, Dierenbescherming, Compassion in World Farming NL and Animal Rights have the most complete combination of vocabularies, while Dierencoalitie lacks a good motivational frame.

5. Results: the resonance of the counterframes

This chapter contains the results regarding the second sub-question: “How do animal liberation movements try to gain resonance amongst the Dutch general public?”. This will be answered by describing and analysing the ways that the movements try to include the elements of credibility and relative salience in their frames to see how they try to gain the greatest possible resonance with their animal welfare frame.

5.1 Credibility

5.1.1 Frame consistency

Each frame is consistent in its beliefs, claims and actions. For example, Wakker Dier believes that animals should get diligent care and social interaction with other animals. However, they say that the industry uses the animals as products and that the animals are exploited. Because of this claim, Wakker Dier takes action and confronts the industry, like agricultural companies and supermarkets, with the aim to improve animal welfare. Dierenbescherming, on the other hand, believes that consumers have a role in changing their diet and focus among others on them to make a change. For each frame the beliefs, claims and actions align. Therefore, the frame consistency is satisfactory and not a differentiating component.

5.1.2 Empirical credibility

Each frame uses many statistics about animal agriculture and the dairy industry in the Netherlands specifically. These facts are among others the amount of consumed meat, the number of exploited animals and the number of cows that never goes outside. Besides, scientific reports of both the organisation itself and of other organisations are used to explain what measures and circumstances are good or bad for the welfare of the dairy cow.

Most frames also include the actions of the Dutch and even the European government in their frame, to place the frame in the real world. Besides, initiatives like trademarks and examples of farmers who already improved their way of farming are mentioned by WakkerDier, Dierenbescherming and World Animal Protection NL.

Dier&Recht and Animal Rights place the problems even more in the real world through their use of undercover videos and their research into specific companies or value chains. This makes the frame more credible and helps people to see how dire the situation is. Vier Voeters also focuses on the history of the dairy industry, to put the problem into perspective.

5.1.3 Credibility of the frame articulators

The frames do not have one or two specific articulators who carry the whole frame. So, for this credibility there is focused on the credibility of the team and organisation behind the frame instead of specific actors. Each organisation has credibility through their ANBI status which means that ‘the organisation’s efforts are almost entirely committed to the public benefit’ (Belastingdienst, n.d.). Besides, many organisations are also acknowledged by the CBF who supervises the collection of money for charities. Organisations apply voluntarily for a verification (CBF, n.d.). DierNL, Dierencoalitie, Dier&Recht, Compassion in World Farming NL and Animal Rights are not monitored by the CBF. However, CIWF NL is verified by the British

Charity Commission which is even more strict than the CBF. Moreover, the organisation World Animal Protection NL has next to their ANBI and CBF status an extra FR (Fundraising Regulator) status. Overall, it can be said that Wakker Dier, Dierenbescherming, CIWF NL, WAP NL and Vier Voeters are the most credible regarding their certifications.

Wakker Dier, Dierenbescherming, Dier&Recht and Animal Rights emphasize their skilled and motivated team and the mission that is underlined by both employees, volunteers, and supporters. Besides, all nine organisations make in some way use of scientific material and experts, which gives them credibility, but this was also mentioned in the section of the empirical credibility.

The credibility of the frame articulators of DierNL is quite satisfactory through the extensive list of support the organization gets. The support comes for example from (former) politicians, like Marianne Thieme, who was the leader of the political Party of the Animals. However, the list of supporters is quite hidden on the website. Next to this support, their initiative Stem voor Dieren has two ambassadors who are known in the Netherlands and who are engaged with the topic of animal welfare. Both have in their own way expertise with the topic, which gives them credibility. Dierencoalitie also emphasizes their large support base: over 33.500 researchers, experts, companies, organisations, Dutch celebrities, and other Dutch people support the organisation's mission. CIWF NL is also supported by other organisations like Caring Farmers and some vets and doctors. Besides, the founder himself was a farmer, and this gives credibility because he criticizes his own industry. He would not do that if there was no problem. Overall, DierNL, Dierencoalitie and CIWF NL have the greatest credibility if there is specifically focused on the articulators and known and credible supporters.

CIWF NL mention explicitly that they do not receive subsidies and that they are independent. This also contributes to their credibility. Dierenbescherming emphasizes its credibility through focusing on their trademark Beter Leven which is verified by independent certified institutions, and which is widely spread across the supermarkets.

5.2 Relative salience

5.2.1 Centrality

The centrality of the frame can be measured in the way that beliefs, values, and ideas that are existing in the frame resonate with those of people. Certainly, it differs per individual which frame resonates the most with their own beliefs, values, and ideas, so there is mostly analysed which values are expressed by each frame.

Wakker Dier emphasizes the value of animal well-being, the connection with animals and the better life they deserve. DierNL also emphasizes this and personalizes the animals by telling stories about some of them. Next to Wakker Dier and DierNL, Dier&Recht and WAP NL also try to strengthen the connection between humans and animals through elaborating on animals' consciousness and feelings like pain, sadness and happiness and that animals should have the same rights to exist as humans. CIWF NL does the same, but through explaining about friendships between cows and the strength of the mother-calve bond.

Dierenbescherming focuses on how your connection to animals should define your actions and choices regarding supporting animal welfare. Dierencoalitie and WAP NL add the values of health and a good environment to their frame and emphasizes that these also play a role in the transition to a plant-based diet. Animal Rights mentions their more general disapproval of all forms of violence, racism, exploitation, racism, and discrimination. People who have the same values can feel connected to the frame. The frame of Vier Voeters lacks language which could be connected to centrality.

5.2.2 Experiential commensurability

Experiential commensurability is about how the frame relates to the daily life experiences of people. The most common connection is made through the recommendations how consumers can contribute to a better system, for example through paying attention to trademarks while grocery shopping, and to prevent buying products like milk which caused bad animal welfare. This is mentioned by Wakker Dier, Dierenbescherming, Dier&Recht, CIWF NL, WAP NL, Vier Voeters and Animal Rights. Dier&Recht focuses on this in their campaign where dairy-free is stimulated. It starts with the question 'Do you still drink mother milk in your coffee?' (Dier&Recht, n.d.). This question connects to the daily live experiences of people. Besides, they are stimulated to change to dairy-free with arguments, tips, and recipes.

Wakker Dier and CIWF NL also emphasize the danger of animal diseases which impacts one's personal health. For example, COVID-19 which is a zoonosis that impacted the entire world and people's daily lives and health. Intensive farming increases the risk on zoonoses and should therefore be stopped or diminished. In this way, the frame relates to people's daily lives. A relation is also made by WAP NL. They explain the influence that people's money has through people's banks, insurances, and retirement investments. These financial institutions often stimulate the intensive animal agriculture.

Vier Voeters makes the comparison that cows who must give milk with insufficient feeding perform the same as a sporter who runs a marathon everyday. This fact makes it more relatable to people and easier to understand how much cows in the dairy industry suffer. Dierenbescherming tries to relate in a different way by emphasizing their active role in society as advisor for animal well-being and their presence in several events. This can connect to people if they have experienced these events or if they have been in contact with Dierenbescherming in a way. DierNL and Dierencoalitie do not have any experiential commensurability included in their frame.

5.2.3 Narrative fidelity

The narrative fidelity is defined by the inherent cultural narratives that are included in or related to the frame. Most of the cultural narratives that are included in the frames are general narratives which are challenged by the frame. For example, both Wakker Dier and Dier&Recht destroy the 'fairytale' of happy cows with green grass. Also, the narrative that milk cows would have a better life than other animals in the livestock sector is undermined by Dierenbescherming. Besides, Dier&Recht refutes the narrative that milk is necessary for humans to be a strong and healthy person. Moreover, Animal Rights also denies a narrative, namely the narrative that the soy that causes deforestation is for vegans. The frame mentions

that this is not the case, and that most soy is used for animal feeding. All these cultural narratives are not directly used to make the frame more resonating but are challenged.

Dierencoalitie includes the story that most people in society realize that there is a need for reforming the livestock sector. This cultural narrative might persuade people to think the same. DierNL also uses a cultural narrative to make their frame more resonant, namely the narrative that Dutch people are seen as caring for their pets and moreover that the Netherlands is a civilised country where the mistreatment of animals does not belong. This gives people new thoughts and might lead to a change in behaviour. CIWF NL, WAP NL and Vier Voeters do not include cultural narratives and thus do not have narrative fidelity.

5.3 Conclusion sub-question 2

With the results discussed in this chapter, the second sub-question can be answered, namely: “How do animal liberation movements try to gain resonance amongst the Dutch general public?”.

Animal liberation movements try to gain resonance amongst the Dutch people by using different resonance techniques. The frame consistency, empirical credibility and the credibility of the frame articulators are all satisfactory and lead to a good credibility of the counterframes. However, the credibility of the frame articulators could be improved by including more prominent ambassadors who give credibility to the frame. On the other hand, the frames have a good empirical credibility by including undercover videos and images and many statistics about animal agriculture in the Netherlands. Next to the credibility, the relative salience of a frame is important to contest the dominant frame. This is harder to analyse and differed more between the frames. Most frames included centrality and experiential commensurability in their frames to connect to the audience and gain resonance. In centrality there was mainly focused on the connection between humans and cows and how the cows can experience the same feelings as we do. In experiential commensurability, the use of dairy products on a daily basis was emphasized. Individuals are encouraged to be more conscious about the story behind the milk or cheese they consume and in this way the problem is connected to the daily lives of the consumers. To a lesser extent, organisations included cultural narratives for a narrative fidelity. Two organisations included cultural narratives to try to make it resonate with people, while four organisations took dominant narratives and challenged these. Three organisations did not include narrative fidelity in an obvious way. It is hard to decide if the connection methods that the organisations use connect to a person. This is very personal. While one person would feel more connected to WakkerDier, another person would feel more connected to Animal Rights.

6. Discussion and recommendations

In this chapter the obtained results will be discussed and connected to the literature. Besides, there will be reflected on the limitations of the research including a reflection on my own position as a researcher. Last, there will be given recommendations for further scientific research, but also for the animal liberation movements.

6.1 Discussion

6.1.1 Interpretation of the results

During the analysis of the results, there were some interesting points that emerged. These will be discussed in this section. First, the differences in blame. All organisations blame the government and the food and agroindustry for upscaling the dairy industry. According to these movements, they also have the main role in solving the problem of bad animal welfare, However, in the anti-dairy frames of Gilbert et al. (2025) and Taylor et al. (2022) the government and the bigger companies are not really mentioned as perpetrators. According to these researchers, the farmers are the ones to be blamed, next to the public who ignores the signs of animal harm. Three anti-dairy frames in this thesis take the same approach, namely Dier&Recht, WAP NL and Vier Voeters. They blame consumers for their role in stimulating the intensive farming industry, while the other organisations see consumers as actors with little influence on the system. Still, all organisations suggest consumers as part of the solution by changing their diet and supporting actions for better animal welfare. There is only one organisation that blames farmers for bad animal welfare, namely Animal Rights who states that farmers are incompetent, mistreat animals and through this cause health problems. Other frames see farmers more as a victim of the system for who it also would be better if the complete system would change. It could be interesting to investigate where these differences in blame come from.

Next to the differences in blame, the movements also differ in their problem focus and in who should solve the problem. This can be a weakness or a strength. On the one hand, the differences in thoughts and interests might make it harder to produce a solution that works for every organisation. However, it might also lead to a bigger support group, because the differences allow more people to feel connected to a frame. For example, when a person feels that farmers are to blame, they can feel connected to Animal Rights, but when they feel that farmers are also a victim, they can feel more connected to Dierenbescherming. You might lose people if you make one overarching frame without any differences. The same applies to the ways on how to achieve their proposed solution. While DierNL focuses more on education, Dierenbescherming prefers trademarks and Dier&Recht focuses on juridical procedures, among others. The way to reach their solution depends on how they think that society should be ruled and who is responsible to act. The personal vision of the citizen on this topic could have influence on how they feel connected to the frame.

Next, it is interesting to note that almost all organisations lack famous people as ambassadors of the frame, while these could improve the credibility of the frame. The frames that do have ambassadors or famous supporters mention this so subtle, that these are most likely overlooked and do not really help to attract people to the frame.

Another topic which might be useful to discuss is how the dimensions of relative salience can lead to more connection with the frame. It is harder to measure than the credibility of the frame because it is more personal. If a person feels connected to the frame, depends on their values, experiences, and cultural narratives and if these match with those of the frame. It is therefore hard to say how well the movements succeeded in trying to gain resonance with the techniques of relative salience.

The frame which might be considered the most complete and convincing for now, might be Wakker Dier, but also Compassion in World Farming NL. Wakker Dier is strong in their motivational frame where they include all types of vocabularies to convince people. Besides, bad animal welfare in animal agriculture is the only focus of their organisation and they go really into detail about the specific problems that are connected to animal welfare. Last, it is one of the most well-known animal liberation organisations in the Netherlands. CIWF NL has also some strengths. For example, they place the problem of bad animal agriculture in the broader context and include public health, environmental issues, and an unequal world food division, instead of only bad animal welfare. This might attract more people to this frame. Also, the organisation exists already for a long time and has good credibility. Next to these two organisations, all the other organisations also have their strengths and weaknesses. With the current results it is impossible to say which frame is really the best and has the most potential to destabilize the dominant frame. To determine this, further research is necessary. One frame, however, still needs a lot of improvement if it wants to connect more to citizens, namely the frame of Dierencoalitie. It is neutral about the problem, it does not focus on specific problems, has little information, and barely contains motivational vocabularies. This makes the frame the least attractive for individuals, but after all it stays an umbrella organisation that is more focused on supporting other animal welfare organisations.

6.1.2 Limitations of the research

In this subchapter there will be reflected on the limitations of the research, the research process, and the potential influence of my own positionality on the research.

Some potential limitations in my research could be that the constituted frames are not fully complete or that a frame is overlooked. This can be for three reasons. First, it could be that I accidentally did not include important data in my analysis which would have been crucial for the research outcomes. Second, it could be that some information or views are not documented but only exist in conversations between people. This information is not considered in the research. Third, I did not focus as much on images, visuals, and language as I should. If I would have included this more in my analysis, this could have led to more valuable conclusions. It is important to be aware of these limitations because these limit the validity the research.

Another limitation is that I assumed that the general dominant animal welfare frame that is present in other Western countries, is also applicable on the Netherlands. Certainly, this assumption is supported by facts, as elaborated on in section 1.1 and 2.3.1. However, it is possible that this research lacks some specific elements of the Dutch dominant frame. A last limitation might be that some nuance of the language of the frames is lost in language transition from Dutch to English since the Dutch data is described in English.

The research and the outcome of the research might also be influenced by own positionality. The data itself is not influenced because it is already existing. However, my own positionality could affect what data is chosen to be relevant for the analysis and what not. This effect is minimized by including objective inclusion and exclusion criteria to collect the data; however it might have had an influence. Next, in the data analysis, my own interpretation plays a significant role. This could also have influenced the outcomes of this research.

My background could also have influenced the research, especially in the analysis. Personally, I am a vegetarian, and I am aware of and critical on the harm that happens in the industry. However, I also know several people who have a farm, work on a farm or are in another way related to farming. This means that I am also aware of their perspective. This background may have caused some preconceptions and expectations about the frames. On the one hand, this can be negative because I may have assumed unconsciously things that are not present in the data. On the other hand, this can also be positive because I could easier interpret the data with my pre-existing knowledge.

6.2 Recommendations

6.2.1 Recommendations for further research

In the future it might be interesting to research the differences in blame. For example, there can be researched why some frames blame the government, while the other blames the farmers. In this, it is also interesting to deepen knowledge about the value chain of dairy and what influence each party really has. With this knowledge, the proposed system change in animal agriculture can be further developed. Next to investigating the differences between the Dutch animal liberation movements, it might be interesting to research why the focus of blame in other Western countries, like Australia and the United States, is different from the Dutch focus of blame that emerged from this research. This could depend on the culture, but also on other factors.

It might also be useful to do this research, focused on the counterframes made by animal liberation movements, again, but then with an increased focus on images and types of language. Besides, there can be focused on other data, such as online interviews and social media. It can also be interesting to have direct contact with the people behind the organisations, like the directors, the employees, and the volunteers. This might give new details about the frames that are not written down. Besides, it gives the possibility to ask further questions when things are not clear.

Subsequently, it might be interesting to further investigate the concept of resonance in relation to animal welfare frames. Researchers should go into the field to research what kind of persons feel connected to the current animal welfare frames and why. Another option is that people are given a frame of which they have to tell if they feel resonance with the frame and which elements make this feeling stronger or weaker. This could generate interesting information on what parts of the frames make really a difference in why people feel connected to a frame or not.

A last recommendation is that there could be done further research into the dominant animal welfare frame in the Netherlands. This might reveal interesting facts about the frame which

stayed unnoticed during this research, since this research was more focused on the counterframes.

6.2.2 Recommendations for animal liberation movements

Next to recommendations for further research, there are also some recommendations for the animal liberation movements that are researched.

First, the movements could improve their visibility and credibility by finding some famous Dutch people, for example influencers, who want to be an ambassador for their organisation. People who feel connected to that person, could feel also more connected to the frame. Besides, if this person also has a background related to animal welfare, this can improve the credibility of the frame. The frames who already have ambassadors or famous people who support them, should promote this better on their website. In addition, some movements should update their website, because some are quite old-fashioned and this makes it less attractive to go through their website.

The movements can also widen their public by placing the systemic problems of animal agriculture in a broader context. For example, they can do this by including the negative consequences for the environment and public health, as some organisations already did. This can help to increase the awareness of the greatness of the problem, but also a feeling of urgency, because currently that is lacking in many frames. This can contribute to convincing more people of the necessity to solve the problem of bad animal welfare.

7. Conclusion

This thesis is built around the main research question: “How do animal liberation movements contest the dominant animal welfare frame in the Dutch dairy industry?”. This research found that animal liberation movements use different framing and resonance techniques in order to try to destabilize the dominant frame. They use negative language to criticize the current animal agriculture and make their frame more convincing by extreme language and scientific evidence. Besides, they include and exclude facts to make one cohesive narrative. For example, the benefits of an animal-friendlier system are discussed while the possible negative consequences are not included.

The frames differ little in their general framing of the problem and solution. However, the movements differed in their focus on who they blame for the problem, their focus within the problem, and how they foresee an achievement of the solution. The differences between the movements can be seen a strength as well as a weakness, as argued in the discussion.

Some general strengths of the movements are the cohesiveness and consistency within the frame and the use of statistics and real-life examples in the frame. Besides, each movement showed clearly how the normal citizen can contribute to solving the animal welfare problem. Also, most organisations used techniques to gain relative salience by trying to connect to people’s personal daily lives and experiences. Whether these techniques are effective, goes beyond the scope of the interview. Some weaknesses that one or several movements could better are the credibility of their frame through ambassadors or frame articulators, but also the sense of urgency, which is in most frames not present.

This knowledge about the strengths and weaknesses of the counterframes can contribute to an improvement of the frames. When the animal liberation movements adapt their frames, the amount of people that feel connected to their frames can improve. In that case, more people will let their perceptions and behaviour be dependent on these frames: they might make more animal-friendly choices and support the transition to a more animal-friendly farming system. When the group of supporters of the anti-dairy frame becomes large enough, the frame can become dominant. Then, the problems that the anti-dairy frame identifies, are seen as important by enough people to be solved more quickly. This may lead to a new farming system with better animal welfare and more animal justice in the Dutch dairy industry.

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9. Annexes

9.1 Codebook

The codes in table 7 are used to code the extracted data in a structured manner.

Main code	Secondary code	More specific code	Description/interpretation of the code	
Organisation	Mission		The organization's core values and purpose	
	Vision		The goals and ambitions of the organization	
	Collaboration		About working together with other parties, like other organizations and the government.	
	Daily activities		The daily activities that the organization executes	
	Lifespan		How long the organization already exists	
	Size		How big the organization is, how many support the organization has	
	Important actors		The exemplary and important actors in the frame.	
Diagnostic frame	Problem definition		What the problem is, how is can be defined.	
	Problem characteristics		What the characteristics of the problem are.	
	Problem cause		Who or what the cause of the problem is.	
	Direction of the frame	Positive direction		A (possible) development is seen as positive and desirable. The frame focuses on the benefits that are or could be present.
		Neutral direction		A development is seen as inevitable and not clearly positive or negative.
		Negative direction		A development or problem is seen as a crisis, as highly problematic. Focus on the negative side of a phenomenon.
Prognostic frame	Solution		The solution that is proposed to solve the problem.	
	Achievement solution		How the solution can be achieved.	
Motivational frame	Call for action		Why people need to act.	
	Vocabulary of severity		The frame emphasizes the immensity of the problem. The necessity for collective action.	

	Vocabulary of urgency		The frame emphasizes that a quick solution is needed or that there is a limited timeframe.
	Vocabulary of efficacy		The frame emphasizes that the problem is reasonable to solve, but that the targeted audience has an important role.
	Vocabulary of propriety		The frame emphasizes that the targeted audience owns the problem and that they should take responsibility.
Resonance: credibility of a frame	Frame consistency	Movement's beliefs	Movement's beliefs: consistency or contradictions with claims and actions?
		Movement's claims	Movement's claims: consistency or contradictions with beliefs and actions?
		Movement's actions	Movement's actions: consistency or contradictions with beliefs and claims?
	Empirical credibility	Real world facts/events	Facts or events from the real world that are included in the frame. Facts that both do and do not align.
	Credibility frame articulators		Who the speakers of the movement are, if they are seen as credible, and how broad the (potential) audience for these people is.
Resonance: relative salience of a frame	Centrality	Relation beliefs to lives of people	The beliefs, values and ideas that are existing in the frame and how these resonate with people.
	Experiential commensurability	Relation beliefs to daily life experiences	About the relation between the frame and people's own daily life experiences. How broad this group is.
	Narrative fidelity	Cultural narratives	Inherent cultural narratives that are related to the frame.

Table 7 Codebook.

9.2 Overview analysed data

In this annex, there is given an overview of all the webpages that are collected and analysed to write the results and to come to a conclusion.

Animal Rights. (n.d.-a). Hoe je kunt helpen. Retrieved May 7, 2025, from <https://www.animalrights.nl/hoe-je-kunt-helpen>

Animal Rights. (n.d.-b). Impact van de veehouderij op milieu en volksgezondheid. Retrieved May 7, 2025, from <https://www.animalrights.nl/plant-power/de-impact-van-vlees-en-zuivel>

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Animal Rights. (n.d.-d). Koeien. Retrieved May 7, 2025, from <https://www.animalrights.be/koeien>

Animal Rights. (n.d.-e). Melkkoeien. Retrieved May 7, 2025, from <https://www.animalrights.nl/stop-de-slacht/melkkoeien>

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Compassion in World Farming NL. (n.d.-b). In Nederland. Retrieved May 7, 2025, from <https://www.ciwf.nl/over-ons/in-nederland/>

Compassion in World Farming NL. (n.d.-c). Klonen. Retrieved May 7, 2025, from <https://www.ciwf.nl/vee-industrie/klonen/>

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Compassion in World Farming NL. (n.d.-i). Over ons. Retrieved May 7, 2025, from <https://www.ciwf.nl/over-ons/>

Compassion in World Farming NL. (n.d.-j). Spreek je uit voor een ander voedselsysteem. Retrieved May 7, 2025, from <https://ciwf-nl.end.it/nl/sign/>

Compassion in World Farming NL. (n.d.-k). Transport. Retrieved May 7, 2025, from <https://www.ciwf.nl/campagnes/transport/>

Compassion in World Farming NL. (n.d.-l). Transport. Retrieved May 7, 2025, from <https://www.ciwf.nl/vee-industrie/transport/>

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9.3 Overview of the frames of the animal liberation movements

In this annex, an overview of the diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames of each animal liberation movement is given.

9.3.1 Wakker Dier

Diagnostic frame

According to Wakker Dier, the problem is that billions of animals suffer in a system that focuses on cheap and massive production of animal products. The rules for good animal welfare are not upheld by the farmers and the government, which causes bad animal welfare. In the dairy industry the cows are exploited extremely: the cows have small and dirty stables and barely go outside. They have to give too much milk, they have a lot of diseases, experience inconveniences and will be slaughtered after six years on average because they are not cost-effective anymore. Naturally, a cow can become twenty years old.

The problem is caused by the government and the food and agroindustry. They focus on the economic interests and want the price of animal products as low as possible. After the Second World War, there was a renewed focus on having enough food available for everyone. Farmers had to produce cheaper and this caused upscaling with more litres of milk per cow and a decrease in animal welfare. Over time this became the norm. At the moment, it is hard to increase the prices again, because the farmers have adapted to the current system, consumers are used to the cheap prices and supermarkets want to keep their costs low. Moreover, the law lacks good and specific regulations that would force farmers to improve their animal welfare. Especially the welfare of milk cows is barely protected by law. Besides, there are barely consequences if the existing rules are violated.

Wakker Dier focuses on different problems of which some are related to the dairy industry. First, the bad circumstances in which the cows live and their lack of time that they go outside. Another problem is stress and suffering from heat: in the tight stables, in the meadows without shadow and during transport. The current rules are insufficient and with the expectation of an increase in warm and tropical days, this problem becomes more urgent. Some other problems that Wakker Dier addresses is the amount of barn fires in which animals die and the cruel separation of mother cow and calve.

Prognostic frame

Wakker Dier proposes to decrease the amount of animals and improving animal welfare. The system should be changed. The animals' lives should be less stressful with better care and interaction with the herd. Besides, the production should decrease so it becomes healthy.

Part of the solution is replacing animal products by plant-based alternatives and if people buy animal products it should be organic or have for example the Beter Leven trademark. The norm of a good animal welfare should be risen and trademarks help with this, because they have certain requisites regarding animal welfare. Wakker Dier mainly focuses on improving the current farms and animal welfare instead of totally banning animal products.

Supermarkets play a role in this, because they can be stricter on which animal products they sell. However, this might decrease their profit, so the government has also a role to stimulate or obligate better animal welfare. The government should also introduce a heat plan and make stricter rules to decrease the risk on barn fires.

Wakker Dier wants to achieve this solution by confronting companies, the government and other organisations. They want to raise awareness by campaigns and execute juridical procedures to reach stricter regulations. They emphasize the role of the food industry which should move their focus to plants instead of animal products.

Motivational frame

The frame of Wakker Dier contains all the vocabularies which motivate to act. The vocabulary of severity can be seen in the call to support the movement because ‘the more people join, the more pressure we can execute’ (Wakker Dier, n.d.-a). They emphasize that there needs to be a big movement to make a difference. The vocabulary of urgency can be seen in the call to join now and that help is necessary now. The vocabulary of efficacy is the most prominent. The role of the citizen is framed as very important: also as a normal citizen you can make a difference by donating, signing petitions and make conscious choices. You can help to make a change. Last, the vocabulary of propriety is slightly included. It is said that the consumers are not the ones to blame. However, Wakker Dier uses the language in a way that the citizen may feel responsible to act: ‘Do you also get angry when you read about the suffering of a dairy cow?’ (Wakker Dier, n.d.-b) and ‘Do you want them to live a better life too?’ (Wakker Dier, n.d.-c).

9.3.2 Dierenbescherming

Diagnostic frame

Dierenbescherming sees a problematic system which is bad for farmers, nature, animals and citizens. Animals in the livestock sector have to adapt to a system which does not fit with their natural behaviour. The problem is caused by the upscaling of farms after the Second World War. The upscaling led to a bad animal welfare, large impacts for the environment and public health and also a decrease in the income of most farmers. 95% of the 400 million farm animals live in intensive farming system. Some small improvements are made on a small scale, but to improve the animal welfare in the whole sector a system change is needed, which does not happen. It is hard to change, because consumers are used to the low prices of animal products and do not want to pay more.

Problems that are included in the frame are the abnormal production goals, the intensive breeding processes and the long and bad animal transports which cause even death. Moreover, it is clearly explained what diseases and other inconveniences are experienced by the cows, because of the way the cows are treated. This include the pregnancies, the amount of hormones cows get, the intensive milking process and the small stables with an insufficient amount of lying areas and a lack of time outside. Also, the cow-calve separation is a significant violation of the well-being of both the cow and the calve.

A large problem is that the government has barely made regulations for the treatment of milk cows, so they are not protected by law. Besides, 40% of the consumers do not know anything about the life of a milk cow and around 34% of the consumers think that milk cows have a better life than other animals in the livestock industry, which is not the case.

Prognostic frame

The solution that is proposed by Dierenbescherming to decrease animal suffering includes several elements. There needs to be a system change so that farms can become future-proof and so that animals can live more according to their natural behaviour. There should be less animals who can get more care and a better life. This is beneficial for the animal, the farmer, the

citizen and the environment. To reach this, they argue that people should shift to a more plant-based diet. Second, animal products should be sold for a fair price and with a Beter Leven trademark which secures better animal welfare. The trademark has different levels and this can help to improve the livestock sector gradually from a low to a high level of animal welfare. At the moment there is not a sufficient trademark for dairy, so Dierenbescherming aims to develop this on the short term.

Dierenbescherming aims to reach this by lobbying at the national and European government, campaigns that reach citizens, companies and policymakers, and by stimulating farmers to improve their farms by showing examples and by rewarding farmers who do well.

Motivational frame

The motivational frame of Dierenbescherming mainly includes the vocabulary of efficacy, but also the vocabulary of propriety and severity. The vocabulary of urgency is lacking. The vocabulary of efficacy is used in stimulating individuals to switch to a more plant-based diet or to choose for products with a Beter Leven trademark. It is emphasized that everyone should contribute. This is also vocabulary of severity, in which is highlighted that the Dierenbescherming cannot solve the problem on its own, but that it needs help from and cooperation with all the stakeholders. Last, the vocabulary of propriety can also be related to this: all actors are responsible and should contribute, thus also the consumer who is mobilized to make conscious choices and to not stimulate the intensive farming industry.

9.3.3 DierNL

Diagnostic frame

DierNL and Stem voor Dieren define the problem that millions of animals in the livestock sector suffer because of their treatment. This is caused by the increasing pressure of producing enough food after the Second World War and the focus on economic welfare. This has resulted in the upscaling of the livestock sector which decreased the welfare of animals. Besides, animals are not sufficiently protected by the Dutch law, while this is important because these animals are dependent on humans for their food and treatment.

DierNL en Stem voor Dieren mention problems such as the pain and stress that cows experience, the large stables with little space per cow, the early separation of mother and calve and the bad treatment of the calve thereafter. Besides, the government does not intervene and tries to hide the misconducts that appear. Also, the large amount of CO₂ that is emitted by the livestock sector is a problem. The emissions are caused by the deforestation for animal feeding, the animals, the manure and the transport of animals and their feeding. Next to CO₂, there are also other pollutants that are devastating for the biodiversity and the water quality.

Prognostic frame

The organisation wants a better treatment of animals in the livestock sector. They want an animal worthy livestock sector which adapts to the animals instead of the other way around. The government needs to help the farmers to make this change. Besides, people should change to a more plant-based diet. The organisation wants to reach this through improving awareness and education about animal welfare, also for children, by being transparent about the facts regarding the treatment of animals in the livestock sector. This can also increase the pressure on the government to intervene.

Motivational frame

This motivational frame contains the vocabulary of severity and of efficacy. The vocabulary of urgency and propriety are lacking. Severity can be seen in the call to action that collective action is needed because the organisation cannot solve the problem by itself since still millions of animals are mistreated. The vocabulary of efficacy is emphasized in the call that the individuals' help is needed and that the individual can make a change.

9.3.4 Dierencoalitie

Diagnostic frame

The Dierencoalitie does barely elaborate on the problem. It mentions mainly that the government is stuck in debating about what animal welfare is while this debate is already outdated, since the science shows clearly what is needed. The government also lacks in supporting the transition to a more plant-based diet.

Prognostic frame

Dierencoalitie wants that the intensive farming industry adapts to the needs of the animals. They should get the space to behave naturally. To reach this, farms should follow the six leading principles that the Dutch Council for Animal Affairs has formulated, namely recognition of the intrinsic worth of the animal, good feeding, a good environment, a good health, the possibility to show natural behaviour and a positive well-being. Also, the Dutch diet should be more plant-based and less animal-based. In 2030, the protein consumption should be 50% plant-based and 50% animal-based. According to Dierencoalitie, the government needs to choose a long-term strategy with policy, price measures and a better availability of plant protein to reach a change in consumption patterns and the intensive farming industry.

Motivational frame

Dierencoalitie does not really have a motivational frame on its own, since it is more focused on the government and since it is also a umbrella organisation of other animal welfare organisations. The only call for action which includes some vocabulary of efficacy is that the consumer can contribute by signing the manifest.

9.3.5 Dier&Recht

Diagnostic frame

According to Dier&Recht animals are exploited and treated as products which deprives their possibility to act naturally. They have to adapt to the intensive farming system and this leads to animal suffering. The problem of animal suffering in the dairy industry is caused by the narrative that milk is healthy and that everyone needs to drink it. This leads to a big demand and a high production pressure. This high production is reached by upscaling and intensive farming which leads to less care for the individual animal and more animal suffering.

Some more specific problems in the dairy industry that Dier&Recht includes are the early separation of mother and calve which has a negative impact on both mother and calve and the long transports that the calves suffer without milk or water and with a high probability to get diseases since their immune system is still weak. Another problem are the bad stable conditions in which calves have to live and the health issues this causes. The regulation that would obligate rubber mats, originating from 2007, is still not implemented, because of the

strong lobby of the veal industry. The diet that calves receive are also inadequate and lead to unnatural behaviour, anaemia and other problems. The overall problem is that the vulnerable calves lack good care and that too many die early. Next to the problems for calves, the problems for milk cows are highlighted: discomfort because of breeding with the aim of high production, the yearly insemination and pregnancy, disbudding, a lack of space to move and their early death because they are not cost-effective anymore.

Prognostic frame

Dier&Recht aims to end these practices and to improve the living conditions of cows and calves. Their solution is an adaptation of the law. To reach this, they file lawsuits against big agricultural companies or even the Dutch government, they inform the general public about the mistreatment of the animals with campaigns and they lobby at the Dutch and European government. Next to an adaptation of the law, it would also be good if consumers on their own choose to avoid dairy.

Motivational frame

In this frame, the vocabulary of severity and efficacy are included in the motivational statements. Severity can be seen in the emphasis that million of animals suffer and also that dairy-free eating would not only be better for cows and calves, but also for the whole world. The vocabulary of efficacy is shown in their campaigns where the role of the individual is highlighted: they can help to support the juridical missions and by consuming less dairy. The vocabulary of propriety and urgency are missing.

9.3.6 Compassion in World Farming NL

Diagnostic frame

CIWF NL defines the problem as follows: the Dutch livestock industry kills millions of animals yearly for the production of animal products. The welfare of these animals is very low and an subordinated interest. Besides, the industry negatively impacts the public health, the climate and the inequal division of food across the earth.

The problem is caused by economic reasons. The industry's main focus is money and a large production. This is done by upscaling: in 2000-2013 the amount of farms have decreased, but the farms that exist have increased in size. These economies of scale often have caused a decrease in animal welfare. Moreover, it is hard to reach improvements, because the industry's lobby stands firm and world leaders keep ignoring the negative impacts of the livestock industry.

Some problems that CIWF NL focuses on are the long transports that some animals have to suffer, the cloning of cattle, factory farms and the impact on the environment. First, long transports cause stress, there is a lack of food and water, the transports are too long and animal diseases spread easily. Not all animals survive the transports. The existing regulations are insufficient. Second, cloning, with the goal to breed more productive animals, causes health issues and thus animal suffering, both for the mother cow as the calf. Third, factory farms are a problem because they emphasize cheap production and do not invest money and time in improving animal welfare. Last, CIWF NL frames the livestock sector as a significant cause of the pollution of air, water and soil. It contributes to climate change.

Within the dairy industry, CIWF mainly emphasizes that cows are intelligent animals which should be outside in a herd. However, most cows are limited in their natural behaviour: they stay

inside the whole year, have to produce as much milk as possible, suffer painful interventions and health issues and get an inadequate diet. Moreover, mother cows and their calves are immediately separated. The mother milk goes to humans instead of the calves who get cheap artificial milk. They wait a future as milk cow or they are slaughtered when they are big enough.

Prognostic frame

Compassion in World Farming NL also proposes a solution. They aim for a lower amount of farm animals, because this can improve animal welfare: there is more space for the animal to show natural behaviour and sick animals can be treated more quickly. Also, it is better for nature, because the amount of emissions like nitrogen will decrease. Moreover, it is better for farmers, because they can have a smaller business with healthier animals. The idea is that they still get the same income, because they get a higher payment per litre. The whole livestock sector has to transform from big factory farms to smaller and healthier livestock farms that are more animal-friendly. In these new systems, calves should stay longer with their mother, because this is better for their development and the herd and increases the welfare of both the mother and the calf. The farms should also become more sustainable by becoming more nature inclusive. All these small elements together make that a farmer can again increase its production and decrease costs for antibiotics and decrease the dependence on banks and (food) suppliers.

Moreover, farmers should get animal feed in their own region, because this decreases global transport and deforestation, which is better for the climate. Long animal transport to countries outside of the EU should also be forbidden to prevent the animal suffering.

To decrease the amount of animals, the government has to intervene, both on a national level as on an international level via the United Nations. To reach the government, CIWF NL organizes campaigns and collaborates with other organisations. They evoke world leaders to make a change and make rules that apply globally. Individuals are asked to sign a petition to support their request. Also, they are encouraged to decrease their own impact by consuming less or no animal products and talk about the impact of the livestock sector with their environment.

Motivational frame

In their frame, CIWF NL includes vocabulary of severity, urgency and efficacy. The vocabulary of propriety is not present. Severity is shown by telling how big the livestock farm is and how it negatively affects the whole earth in several ways. The vocabulary of urgency can be seen in word groups like 'urgent need for change' and 'rapidly change'. The vocabulary of efficacy is used in showing how the problem can be solved and which change the individual can make, like decreasing their animal consumption and signing the petition.

9.3.7 World Animal Protection NL

Diagnostic frame

The problem that WAP NL diagnoses is the enormous amount of animal suffering in the world and thus also in the livestock sector. Animals are treated as machines. Besides, the livestock sector contributes significantly to climate change. The problem is partially caused by the large demand for meat and dairy which has led to upscaling and a decrease in animal welfare. Moreover, the investments in the livestock industry by financial institutions like banks stimulate the continuation of the current practices in the intensive farming system.

Some problems that WAP NL highlights are the bad treatment of animals, like the dirty stables, the crowdedness or loneliness, the lack of time outside and the bad health. Moreover, the high pressure on milk cows is emphasized, including the early separation of mother and calve, the regular insemination and the daily milking process. Another problem that is mentioned is the risks for the public health through viruses and bacteria, but also through sicknesses like cancer that can be caused through eating red and processed meat.

Prognostic frame

The movement argues that animals deserve a better life and that everyone can make a contribution. Consumers should eat more plant-based, which also should be stimulated by the government, companies and other organizations. Besides, these organizations and the government should not invest in companies that do not want to change. Instead, they should focus on companies and farmers that want to become more sustainable and animal-friendly.

WAP NL wants to achieve this by campaigning and raising awareness, but also by lobbying for a better law and by direct cooperation with governments and organizations to help them to improve their policy. Last, WAPNL also does research and uses this to support their actions.

Motivational frame

The motivational frame of WAP NL includes the vocabulary of severity and efficacy. The vocabulary of urgency and propriety are lacking. The vocabulary of severity can be seen in the emphasis that change is necessary, that a sustainable future can only be reached by human and animal contributions and that collective action is needed to make a difference and reach the goal of better animal welfare. The vocabulary of efficacy is highlighted by the different ways that consumers can contribute. Consumers are begged to help and make a change by helping to campaign and by supporting the organisation by donations. Also, eating more plant-based is encouraged to save animals worldwide.

9.3.8 Vier Voeters

Diagnostic frame

Vier Voeters diagnoses that many animals in the livestock sector suffer. They suffer during transport, when they are pregnant, when they have to give milk and when they are separated from their calves. The cows are also slaughtered when they are around five years old while naturally cows can become twenty years old. These problems are caused by the high amount of production that is demanded. Since the eighties, the use of genetics, intensive feeding and artificial insemination have increased. This has led to a higher milk production, but also to more health issues.

Prognostic frame

Vier Voeters wants that the livestock sector changes into a sector in which animals can behave naturally. They want a animal-friendly livestock sector according to the six principles that are mentioned earlier in the prognostic frame of DierenCoalitie. Within the livestock sector, the cow-calve management system has to change. Some farmers have shown that it is possible to separate them after several weeks or months so that the negative effects of separation are diminished. Consumers have the role to decrease their milk consumption and to buy plant-based or organic products.

Vier Voeters wants that citizens, companies and the government take animal interests into account. They try to reach this by campaigns, projects and a trademark for animal welfare. Together with other organisations they lobby for better regulations. Farmers who want to make the transition to more animal-friendly should be supported by the government. Until then, they are supported by Vier Voeters.

Motivational frame

In this frame only the vocabulary of efficacy and propriety are included. The vocabulary of severity and urgency are missing. Efficacy can be seen in the role that consumers have to choose for a plant-based diet and to sign petitions against animals suffering. The vocabulary of propriety can be seen in the explanation that the consumers' choices influence how animals are treated and that they have responsibility to choose consciously.

9.3.9 Animal Rights

Diagnostic frame

According to Animal Rights, the livestock sector causes terrible lives and deaths of millions of animals. The exploitation of cows in the dairy industry is hidden because of the cruel treatment they get. A lot of cows have health issues. These health issues are caused by the lack of care and time in the meadows which is bad through upscaling. Besides, the farmers themselves are a cause: they are incompetent with for example inseminating which leads to fertility problems.

Animal describes different problems: debudding and the accompanying pain, the bad and old stables, the early separation of mother cow and calve and the different health issues the cows suffer. They also focus on the negative impact of the livestock sector on the environment like climate change, biodiversity loss and the nitrogen crisis. The impact on public health is also included: via consumption, zoonoses and fine dust in the air.

Prognostic frame

Animal Rights thinks that the breeding, transporting and slaughtering of animals should be stopped. This can be achieved in different ways. First, citizens should switch to a plant-based diet, which is also better for their health. Second, Animal Rights files lawsuits to improve animal rights and to force institutions to improve the industry's compliance with the law. Animal Rights makes use of undercover videos and research and also creates awareness among the general public with demonstrations and petitions.

Motivational frame

The calls for action include the vocabulary of severity, efficacy and propriety. The vocabulary of urgency is missing. The severity of the problem is expressed in the emphasis on the large amount of animals that are exploited in the livestock sector. Besides, the large impact on the environment and public health is highlighted. The vocabulary of efficacy is seen in the long list of ways that you as a citizen can contribute: by volunteering, donating, demonstrating or eating plant-based. Last, the vocabulary of propriety is mainly expressed in the shift to a plant-based diet. Here it is mentioned that you contribute to animal suffering if you consume animal products and that you can remove this negative impact by eating plant-based.

9.4 List of abbreviations of the animal welfare organisations

WD = Wakker Dier

DB = Dierenbescherming

DNL = DierNL

DC = Dierencoalitie

D&R = Dier&Recht

CIWF NL = Compassion in World Farming NL

WAP NL = World Animal Protection NL

VV = Vier Voeters

AR = Animal Rights