





Animal assisted therapy (AAT) pedagogics (AAP) activities (AAA) on farms

Green care in Agriculture
Vienna, June 2007

The ÖKL working group for animal assisted interventions



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2003: Behavioral effects of goats on disabled persons (S. Scholl, G. Grall, V. Petzl, M. Röthler, L. Slotta-Bachmayrand K. Kotrschal)

- 10 adults (4 women, 6 men) all deaf and with a range of other mental impairments (age 18-45)
- 26 behavioral parameters were observed and coded in the following classes:
 - Locomotion
 - Communication (sign language and acoustical communication)
 - Expression of emotion
 - Activity



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The group was video recorded and behaviour observed in two situations:

1. In contact with 10 goats (video recorded) 3 months, 1 hour per week
 - 1/3 of the time: spontaneous interaction
 - 1/3 of time: organized games
 - 1/3 of time: feeding
2. During an unstructured situation (break-time in the dining room) -

11 observation periods analyzed



Results

In contact with the goats

Increased

- Participation
- Attentiveness
- Expression of emotions
- Homogeneity of the clients behaviour over the weeks

Decreased

- Introversion

In the dining room

No measurable behavioral changes in daily situations









2005: Practical approach

Six pilot farms were established

- They perform animal assisted interventions with socialized, habituated and trained farm animals.
- The whole farm environment is involved - a holistic approach broadens the effects on the clients.

Practical approach - 6 pilot farms



- Sessions are performed by the farmers and the therapeutic/pedagogic professional in teamwork
- Units are goal-oriented
- Sessions are documented and evaluated
- The program with the farm animals includes:
 - spontaneous contact and observation
 - feeding, grooming and petting
 - goal-oriented games involving clients and animals

Farmers are obliged to assure



In 2006, the first educational program for AAI with farm animals started

Both - farmers and therapeutic or pedagogic professionals - attend this program

animal friendly keeping systems





2007: the actual working program



For farmers offering AAT, AAP and AAA we are preparing a certification program in collaboration with experts:

- for animal health (University for Vet. Med.Vienna),
- for animal husbandry and training
- in law and insurance

The certification will be based on the three pillars:

- Safety aspect of the farm
- Education: a new extended education program 2008
- Animal health, husbandry, training and best working requirements

Needs to improve quality management of AAI

Equal European standards
and regulations

Educational programs for
professionals offering
AAT, AAP, AAA

Equal European standards for animal
keeping
training
working

Needs for AAI quality management: research

Effects on clients

Affinity between animal species and client groups (client needs)?

Development of reliable and practicable methods to screen stress levels on the animals involved in AAI

Detailed knowledge for single species:
behavioural specifics
phases of socialisation



Development of animal friendly tailored training schedules



Thank You for Your attention!



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