

A thing or two flying geese can teach man about cooperation

I REFER to last Saturday's article, 'Goose may vanish from dinner plates'. Yet again, bird flu rears its scary head, along with swine flu. Perhaps the deaths of humans and other animals will give us pause to rethink our food sources.

In the case of geese, rather than eat them, we might want to learn from the way they cooperate with one another. For instance, geese in nature fly in a 'V' formation. In this way, as they flap their wings, they create an uplift for those geese immediately behind them in the formation. As a result, the whole flock has a flying range that is at least 71 per cent further than that if each bird had flown alone.

Another example of cooperation among geese arises when members of the flock leave the formation because they fall ill or are shot by hunters. Should that occur, two other members of the formation accompany their flockmates to provide help and protection.

Of course, the geese we eat never have an opportunity to fly in magnificent formations. Like other animals raised to be food for humans, these geese are confined to crowded, unsanitary buildings. Such conditions promote disease among geese, chickens, pigs and other animals.

Perhaps if we humans learn a lesson from geese and cooperate with other animals, such as geese and pigs, we may all enjoy healthier lives.

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