Animal Welfare
Prevention is better than cure

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The views expressed may not in any circumstances be regarded as stating an official position of the European Commission
Animal Welfare in 2010: still an expanding policy area

- Animal welfare policies in the EU are today an issue of high public concern and political relevance.
- The critical link between animal welfare, animal health and food safety has been widely assessed.
- Animal welfare is no longer considered a “sentimental issue”
Animal Welfare - Basic Principles

The “Five Freedoms”

- From discomfort
- To express natural behaviour
- From hunger and thirst
- From fear and distress
- From pain, injury and disease
Why animal welfare?

- The Treaty
- Internal market
- Legislation
- Citizens’ attitude
- Consumer
“In formulating and implementing the Union's agriculture, fisheries, transport, internal market, research and technological development and space policies, the Union and the Member States shall, since animals are sentient beings, pay full regard to the welfare requirements of animals, while respecting the legislative or administrative provisions and customs of the Member States relating in particular to religious rites, cultural traditions and regional heritage.”
Treaty of Lisbon – in reality

- Co-decision procedure
- More power to the European Parliament
- More influence from citizens?
Internal market

- Essential to the function of the EU
Policy making ingredients

Common market harmonisation

Minimum standards

NGO reports, Member States reports, FVO inspections

Stakeholders
Public concern
Socio-economics

Scientific evidence
European Food Safety Authority
EUROBAROMETER survey - 2005

82% believe we have a duty to protect animals whatever the cost

If we improve animal welfare...

- 80% believed it would certainly result in better animal health
- 74% believed products would certainly be more ethically acceptable
- 58% believed it would certainly result in better food quality
- 57% believed it would certainly result in better food safety
EUROBAROMETER survey - 2005

Thinking about animal welfare when purchasing: EU average 43%
EUROBAROMETER survey – 2006:

57% would pay extra for AW friendly products

- 25% can accept a 5% price increase
- 21% can accept a 10% price increase
- 11% can accept a 25% price increase or more

Assuming that a person consume an average of 220 eggs per year...

- Extra costs of buying barn eggs instead of battery eggs: 5.5 €cents per week
- Extra costs of buying free range instead battery eggs: 11 €cents per week
Impact of purchasing behavior on animal welfare

Answers: Total "Yes"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>21%</td>
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Total "Yes" and Total "No" percentages for each country are provided.
Consumer CONCERNS: EUROBAROMETER survey - 2006

- Over 70% support the idea of financial rewards for producers applying high AW standards
- 89% think that import should be produced under the same animal welfare conditions as those originating in the EU
AW is an issue which EU citizens rank highly, giving it 8 out of 10 on average in terms of importance.

62% would change shopping habits in order to access more animal welfare friendly goods.

51% think AW friendly goods are healthier than other food and 48% think they are of better quality.
How animal welfare?

- Legislation
- Non-legislative options
- Industry
- NGO:s
Legislation

- The treaty forms the legal base for the EU
- Commission presents proposals
- Council and European Parliament adopts the proposal
- Member States implements the legislation
The result today: Animal welfare legislation in particular concerning

- Farm animals (98/58 EC) – general rules for the protection of animals of all species
  - Laying hens
  - Broilers
  - Pigs
  - Calves
- During transport
- At the time of slaughter or killing
Laying hens Directive

3 types of farming systems

Alternative systems
- Barn
- Free range

Unenriched cages: hens have at least 550 cm² of cage area per hen (until 1 January 2012)

Enriched cages: at least 750 cm²
Data on the Proportion of laying hens in non-cage production systems
(Source: Eurogroup for Animals on the basis of data received from Agra CEAS Consulting, April 2006 and DG AGRI)

<table>
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<th>Member States</th>
<th>1995</th>
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<tr>
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Broilers

**Aim**

- **to reduce the overcrowding of chicken holdings by setting**
  - A maximum stocking density of 33 kg/m\(^2\) or
  - 39 kg/m\(^2\) if stricter welfare standards are met (e.g. climate control, additional record keeping)
  - Possibility - +3 kg

- **Other farming conditions**
  - Fresh litter
  - Feeding and drinkers
  - Light intensity (20 lux) and periods of darkness (6 hours)
  - Ventilation and heating (general requirements for all holdings; temperature, humidity and air quality thresholds for holdings with more than 33 kg/m\(^2\))

- The Directive to be transposed by 30 June 2010
Animal Welfare on the Farm - Pigs


- Ban the use of individual stalls for pregnant sows and gilts during a period starting from 4 weeks after service to 1 week before the expected time of farrowing and the use of tethers,
- Improve the quality of the flooring surfaces,
- Increase the living space available for sows and gilts,
- Allow the sows and gilts to have permanent access to materials for rooting,
- Introduce higher level of training and competence on welfare issues for the stockmen and the personnel in charge of the animals,
- Request new scientific advice in relation to certain issues of pig farming.

From 1 January 2003 these requirements are applicable to all holdings newly built or rebuilt. From 1 January 2013 shall apply to all holdings.
Animal Welfare on the Farm - Pigs


- Light requirements and maximum noise levels,
- Permanent access to materials for rooting and playing,
- Permanent access to fresh water,
- Additional restrictive conditions to carry out mutilations on pigs,
- Minimum weaning age of four weeks.

The Member States have to apply the new requirements from 2003 on.
Animal Welfare on the Farm – Calves


- prohibits the use of confined individual pens after the age of eight weeks from 1 January 1998 onwards for all newly built or rebuilt holdings and from 1 January 2007 for all holdings.

- sets out minimum dimensions for individual pens and for calves kept in group. Calves are not to be tethered (except under very specific circumstances) and must be fed according to their physiological needs.

- their food must contain sufficient iron; a minimum daily ration of fibrous food shall be provided for each calf over two weeks old.
Animal welfare at the time of slaughter or killing

- EU legislation on slaughtering practices aims to minimise the pain and suffering of animals through the use of properly approved stunning and killing methods, based on scientific knowledge and practical experience.
- The Commission adopted 18 September 2008 a proposal for a Council Regulation that aims at replacing the present legislation.
- The proposal was adopted by Council in June 2009.

- New Regulation applicable from 2007
- Fitness of animals to be transported
- Quality of the vehicles
- Handling of animals during loading, unloading and transfer
Ongoing work within the Commission
What is happening right now?

- For the moment no ongoing legislative proposals
- Overview of current legislation
- Holistic view
- Focus on enforcement
- Initiative on education
- International initiatives
- Implementing legislation/reports (transport, broiler, slaughter, laying hens)
Non-legislative options

- Welfare indicators
- Bilateral agreements
- Welfare Label
- Welfare Certification
Enforcement

- Part of the legislation
- Member States
- Industry
- NGO:s
- Commission
LABELLING— Possible EU label for animal welfare

- Enable consumers to make an informed choice
  - Products obtained with basic welfare standards (minimum EU standards)
  - Products obtained with higher standards (voluntary codes of practice, quality schemes or Member States’ legislation beyond EU minimum rules)
- and producers to benefit from market opportunities
  - To promote products elaborated under high welfare standards
This project aims to accommodate societal concerns and market demands, to develop reliable on-farm monitoring systems, product information systems, and practical species-specific strategies to improve animal welfare. The project started in May 2004 and will take five years to complete.

The key is to link informed animal product consumption to animal husbandry practices on the farm. The project therefore adopts a “fork to farm” rather than the traditional “farm to fork” approach.
Equivalent outcomes rather than identical systems are the bases for comparison of AW standards.
Establishing a European Reference Centre for the protection and welfare of animals

- Development, management, research of welfare indicators
- Centre of excellence, for the exchange of information and formation of the “auditors”
- Stakeholder interaction, best practices
ANIMAL WELFARE IS A VALUE FOR ALL SOCIETY AND...

...FOR THE ANIMALS!

Thanks for your attention.