Animal Health and Welfare policies in the EU
Status quo and tendencies

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Introduction

- General principles of EU animal welfare and animal health policies
- Results of the evaluation of EU policy on animal welfare and future strategy
- Implementation of current AW EU legislation on pigs
- European declaration on alternatives to surgical castration of pigs
- Antimicrobial resistance
EU Animal Health and Welfare Policies

- Based on the EU Treaties
- Scientific knowledge
- Impact assessment studies on socio-economic and environmental aspects
- Transparency: Consultation with main stakeholders
- Post-Evaluation
EU Animal Welfare Policy

Article 13 of TFEU: Animals are sentient beings

The Union and the Member States shall pay full regards to the welfare requirements of animals in formulating and implementing the Union’s policies on agriculture and internal market.
Integrated approach: From farms to slaughter

- **Farms**: General Directive on the protection of animals kept for farming purposes and specific Directives for animals raised intensively (2008/120/EC pigs)
  - Minimum standards
  - Welfare indicators in broilers’ directive

- **Transport**: Regulation on the protection of animals during transport (1/2005)

- **Slaughter**: Regulation on the protection on animals at the time of killing (109/2009, Directive 93/119)
Evaluation of EU AW Policy

- Started in December 2009 and completed in December 2010
- Establishes the basis for the future options laid down in the impact assessment study and the strategy
Main results of the evaluation (1)

- Targeted AW legislation has improved the welfare of farm animals
- Reduction of competitive distortions in the internal market
- EU’s international activities: increased awareness of animal welfare issues and standards
- The establishment of equivalent market conditions between EU businesses and those from third countries exporting to the EU is a long term project

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Main results of the evaluation (2)

- EU animal welfare policy: balance between the varied needs and expectations of citizens and other groups
- EU welfare standards have imposed additional costs on the livestock sector. There is no evidence that this has so far threatened the economic sustainability of these sectors

http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/actionplan/actionplan_en.htm
EU Strategy for Protection and Welfare of animals 2011-2015

- New strategy foreseen for December 2011 (impact assessment being finalized)
- Enforcement
- Competitiveness of farmers
- Communication to consumers and stakeholders
- Science and innovation
- Scope of EU legislation
**Scope**

- Farm animals
- Wild animals (kept in captivity)
- Experimental animals
- Pet animals
Actions

Legislation

Research

Communication

International

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Implementation of the EU Directive on the protection of pigs (1)

- Enforcement is a priority
- Enrichement material for pigs
- Avoidance of routine tail-docking and tooth clipping
- High-energy and high-fibre food to dry pregnant sows and gilts
- Reports from the Commission Inspection service
- Specific EU seminars on the welfare of pigs

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Implementation of the EU Directive on the protection of pigs (2)

Group housing: from 1 January 2013 in all holdings sows and gilts are kept in groups during a period starting from four weeks after the service to one week before the expected time of farrowing.
Implementation of the EU Directive on the protection of pigs (3)

- Long transitional period
- Applicable in all new holdings since 1 January 2003 or date of accession
- State of preparedness to implement group housing varies between Member States
- Rural development programmes
European declaration on alternatives to surgical castration of pigs

- Voluntary agreement of major actors of the sector to stop surgical castration of pigs by 1 January 2018 provided certain tools are available
- European partnership on pig castration to develop the necessary tools to achieve this goal

[Link to declaration](http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/farm/docs/castration_pigs_declaration_en.pdf)

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Benefits of the European Partnership

- First time such a voluntary initiative from the sector on animal welfare
- Feed conversion rates
- Environment
- Reduced piglet mortality
- International issue
- Continuity and follow up on several research projects supported by the EU in the last 5 years
European Partnership on pig castration (1)

- Actions to be developed over a period of several years
- Consumers’ acceptance of products from male pigs not surgically castrated (EU and Third Countries)
- Recognised reference methods for the measurement of the compounds responsible for boar taint
- Rapid detection methods for boar taint at slaughter plants
European partnership on pig castration (2)

- Reduction of boar taint compounds by pig breeding and/or management and feeding
- Changes in the production systems and management of entire males during rearing, transport and at slaughter
- Cost and benefit analysis of the end of surgical castration
- Information and training of actors of the whole pork chain
Antimicrobial resistance (AMR)

- Fighting against AMR requires an holistic approach where all different actors have to take their responsibilities
  - Involves human health, animal health and welfare, food safety and environmental contamination
  - Covers medicines for human and animal health and welfare but also disinfectants, antiseptics and hygiene products
  - Staff working paper of the services of the Commission on antimicrobial resistance
  - [http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/antimicrobial_resistance/index_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/antimicrobial_resistance/index_en.htm)
  - Commission communication on AMR to be presented on 18 November 2011- at the European Antibiotic Awareness Day.
Thanks