

## Symposium: Animal Behavior and Well-Being: Animal Welfare Standards - Who Decides and How?

**518 Animal welfare legislation in the European Union.** D. Wilkins\*, *WSPA, London, UK.*

The debate on animal welfare legislation began in the Council of Europe, not to be confused with the European Union. Between 1977 and 1992, 5 animal welfare Conventions came into force on farm animals, slaughter for food, transport, laboratory animals and companion animals. The first animal protection law in the European Union (then the Common Market) was a 1977 Directive on stunning food animals before slaughter. In the late 1980s and early 1990s many more European laws were agreed and these covered the keeping of pigs, calves and laying hens, animal transport, slaughter, animals used for research purposes, zoos and general farm animal welfare. The circumstances of how this raft of legislation came about make an interesting story. What will happen in the future now that the European Union has expanded to 27 member states and with the influence of international trade rules will also be explored.

**Key Words:** Well-Being, Legislation

**519 Animal welfare assurance programs in food production: a framework for assessing the options.** D. Fraser\*, *Animal Welfare Program, Faculty of Land and Food Systems and W. Maurice Young Centre for Applied Ethics, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.*

A variety of animal welfare assurance programs are being used to encourage or require the adoption of animal welfare standards in food production, and to assure the public that such standards are followed. The programs involve five main formats. Non-mandatory codes/guidelines are relatively easy to institute and appear well supported by the industry, but provide only minimal assurance to the public unless measures are taken to ensure compliance. Programs based on government regulations and inter-governmental agreements are more challenging to institute; they are likely to generate less industry acceptance, but may provide more public confidence if enforcement is adequate. Product differentiation programs, and retailer policies requiring products to meet certain standards, serve a range of functions; these may generate public confidence but only for products covered. The programs include several types of requirements. Requirements

designed to maintain animal health and functioning have a widely accepted scientific basis, are often easy to incorporate into existing production systems, and often provide economic benefits, but do not fully address public concerns over animal welfare in some cultures. Requirements that address pain, distress and other affective states, and those that accommodate certain natural behaviour, have a growing but less traditional scientific rationale and seem likely to generate public confidence; however, they sometimes require significant changes to existing practices. Requirements for more natural surroundings (outdoor, free-range) seem to generate public confidence, but appear most likely to increase costs, least likely to be supported by the existing industry, and may involve trade-offs with productivity and with other aspects of animal welfare.

The various formats and requirements provide a range of policy options for addressing animal welfare concerns in different cultural, industry and market contexts.

**Key Words:** Animal Welfare, Assurance Programs, Options

**520 Pressures to regulate animal welfare and food production in the USA.** K. Johnson\*, *Animal Agriculture Alliance, Arlington, VA.*

The USA faces increasing pressure to regulate animal welfare on America's farms and ranches. The primary drivers of this legislative pressure are animal rights groups. These groups have effectively co-opted the animal welfare issue and are using perceived animal welfare as a wedge to advance an animal rights agenda.

The legislative pressures are being faced at all levels of government, from international to national to state and local. Currently, the greatest concentration of legislative resources is being aimed at state governments.

But these groups' influence isn't just limited to legislation, they are devoting significant resources to legal actions and political campaigns. In 2006, just one group spent \$3.4 million on the elections, more money than ExxonMobil spent, according to *The Wall Street Journal*.

This presentation will cover the issues driving legislation, the groups promoting it, the strategies and tactics being used, and examples of specific legislative initiatives being advanced.

**Key Words:** Animal Welfare, Legislation, Legal