

FRCAW Newsletter 53

April – May 2025

Editorial

French Regions can fund agro-ecological transition

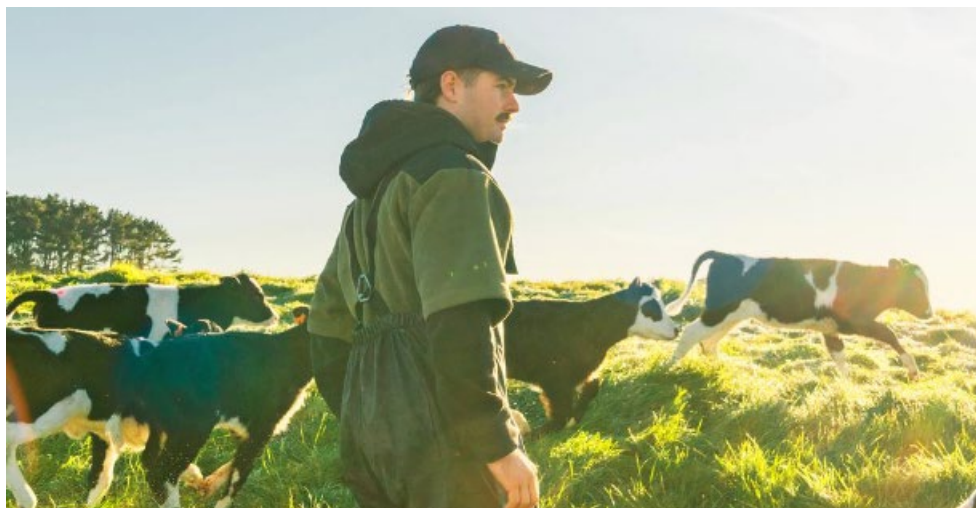


Image from the [CIWF](#) France report

CIWF, in collaboration with JumL, has published [a groundbreaking study](#) of ways for the French Regions to facilitate the agro-ecological transition of livestock farming. Since 2010, a drive towards intensification in the French livestock industry has meant that the country's livestock has become concentrated on fewer, more highly mechanised and specialised farms. This trend has had significant impacts on animal welfare, the environment and public health, also affecting livestock farmers who must already operate under the economic pressures of investors and foreign competition. Changes to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for 2023-2027 have made it possible for France's regional authorities to access EU support for agricultural investment and initiatives, via the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) for example, providing them with strategic levers to assist the sector in moving towards more sustainable forms of livestock farming that also take account of animal welfare needs. Help for set-up costs is one of the main public policy levers available to the Regions in the agricultural sector, and assistance with capital costs is one of the largest budget items.

This study looks at how this financial support has been put to use by the administrations of five French Regions, all with strong livestock and livestock-farming communities and representing a

diversity of agricultural contexts. It reveals variability in the regional budget shares for set-up funding, and differences in the qualifying conditions set by each Region. Moreover, the authors report, the selection criteria for the award of funding for livestock investment projects by the five Regions generally fail to take sufficient account of the need to improve animal welfare, although Nouvelle-Aquitaine's Livestock Modernisation Plan does specifically take welfare issues into account and provides strong support for project proposals from enterprises involved in organic farming or a SIQO (Quality and Origin Identification Mark) scheme. Although the Regions offer financial support for investments that will benefit animal welfare (cage-free rearing of laying hens, access to the open air, free-range maternity pens for sows, etc.), the study reports that the vision they finance remains focused on farm modernisation and competitiveness (with caged rabbits, individual stalls for calves, etc.). While recognising that the Regions have now become key players in increasing the momentum of the transition to more animal-friendly practices, the report's authors suggest that the incentives offered are not sufficiently bold and the eligibility conditions are not strict enough. Priority should be given to livestock farms committed to genuine agro-ecological transition and greater discrimination should be shown in dealing with certification schemes. For example, the Organic Farming and High Environmental Value labels should not be treated as equivalent, given that the latter has no livestock farming practice requirements. The report is nevertheless careful to stress that the regional authorities cannot transform livestock farming on their own, emphasising the need for wider debate at national and European levels. A preview of the report was presented at the recent Salon de l'Agriculture in Paris, and the document is now [available in full](#).

Protecting cats and dogs in France



[Image](#) from the [OCAD](#) website

In the course of the past months, the protection of cats and dogs has featured repeatedly in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty's answers to questions raised by Deputies in the French National Assembly. [Questions 3208 and 3072](#), published in the Journal Officiel de la République Française, turned the spotlight on the exploitation of loopholes in the Law of 30 November 2021 against animal abuse, and in the new version of Article L. 214-6-3 of the French Rural and Maritime Fishing Code (CRPM), banning the sale of dogs and cats in pet shops and online (with some

exemptions). The Deputies cited in particular the failure to conduct checks on advertisements on some social media networks. The Ministry responded that some ten decrees and ministerial orders had been published since the adoption of the 2021 law, intended to strengthen employee training, provide information to new buyers, check that animals in online advertisements were legally identified, and enforce penalties for acts of abuse. However, as pointed out by another Deputy ([Question 1077](#)), no provision for penalties in the event of a breach of Article L. 214-6-3 III of the CRPM had been included in one of the relevant decrees (Decree 2022-1354 of 24 October 2022). In its answer, the Government stated that, while pet shops have, since January 2024, no longer been permitted to sell dogs and cats on their premises, they are still allowed to display cats and dogs belonging to animal protection foundations or associations, in the presence of volunteers. In the particular case of online sales by pet shops, the Ministry further indicated that a forthcoming revision of the Decree of 3 April 2014 would provide a precise set of conditions surrounding the accommodation of the animals concerned. Pending this revision, a so-called 'period of tolerance' applies, subject to the compliance of the premises with health and animal protection rules. The usual penalties continue to apply in this respect. The response also referred to the legal duty of advertising websites and portals, under the Law of November 2021, to carry out prior checks on advertisements for dogs, cats and ferrets. Advertisements may only be posted online if the host has verified that the animals in question have been registered on the national identification database for domestic carnivores (I-CAD) and unverified advertisements may be subject to a fine.

A further question was asked in the French National Assembly on how local elected representatives might apply for the funding allocated to animal welfare associations for the care and sterilisation of stray cats ([Question 126](#)). The Ministry of Agriculture responded that this financial support had been available in 2024 only, as part of a pilot. Recognising that such projects are effective only in the longer term, it had taken the decision to use the limited funding available to support the observation of examples of good practice from local authorities with existing stray cat management systems. These pilot projects would be assessed, and the associated good practices and recommendations would be written up and disseminated to all local authorities.

Pet abandonment was the subject of [Question 1079](#), which asked what steps had been taken following the launch of the French National Pet Welfare Plan on 22 May 2024. In its answer, the Ministry stressed that the first priority of this plan was to establish a better picture of the situations in which abandonment, straying and abuse occur, to allow the production of reliable and accurate statistics. The combined expertise of the members of the Observatory for the Protection of Domestic Carnivores ([OCAD](#), comprising all animal protection agencies and stakeholders, with the FRCAW as its expert body) had been mobilised to report on the different types of abandonment. A single platform (the "Ma sécurité" platform) had also been set up to centralise reports of abuse sent to the authorities. Animal protection associations would be consulted and local mayors' offices would be reminded of the need to combat the straying of cats and dogs and to oversee the management of pounds. A number of actions under this plan had already been taken or are planned shortly, with a particular focus on efforts to encourage private individuals to act more responsibly when they acquire a pet and reduce impulse purchases.

With regard to pounds and shelters, a question was put to the government on the abusive use of euthanasia in certain overcrowded shelters and pounds ([Question 128](#)). In its reply, the Ministry cited a current OCAD project specifically directed at identifying the reasons for which domestic

carnivores enter and leave shelters. Euthanasia would figure among these reasons, and the report would thus allow such practices to be clearly defined and better evaluated.

Last, turning to third sector activities, an [article published in Savoir Animal](#) has announced the launch by SOS Maltraitance Animale of the first Fonds de Solidarité Vétérinaire (Veterinary Solidarity Fund), designed to fund urgent care for abused animals reported to the special [3677](#) telephone line. This will help to make appropriate treatment available to all animals in a way that neither compromises an animal's health nor delays treatment for budgetary reasons, helping the activities of rescue organisations.

FRCAW review on flooring types for pigs: summary with infographics from the French Animal Welfare Chair



[Image](#) from the [Animal Welfare Chair](#) website

Following the publication in November 2024 of a [review by the FRCAW](#) on the impacts on the welfare and behaviour of pigs of slatted, partially slatted and solid flooring systems, [the French Animal Welfare Chair has provided a summary](#) of this work accompanied by simple infographics. There are advantages and disadvantages to each flooring type, with implications for both farming costs and the welfare of pigs and farmers. Judged on the criteria of pig cleanliness, health and behavioural expression, animal welfare can be predicted to improve along a scale of floor types (fully slatted floor < partially slatted floor < solid floor < deep litter) and is linked to the quantity of straw provided in each system.

Concerns over the farming of octopus and crustaceans



Image from the [Sea Food Mag](#) website

Public awareness of the welfare needs of cephalopod molluscs and decapod crustaceans is growing, having been given a particular boost in 2024 by the [New York Declaration](#) on animal consciousness. An article published in April in [Animal Welfare](#) has examined the potential harm to welfare caused by current industry practices involving cephalopods and decapods whose use is primarily for food. The authors consider the evidence in support of the sentience of cephalopods and decapods to be strong but acknowledge a continued element of uncertainty. They highlight the particular areas where research and/or policy intervention might be required, and put forward recommendations for simple short-term changes to practice.

The recent granting of an aquaculture licence to Grupo Profand for a research hatchery to farm octopuses in Spain had already [rekindled concerns](#) over the industrial farming of these animals, which many NGOs and scientists regard as both unethical and unsustainable. Although there is no stated commercial objective for the hatchery, the project forms part of a wider trend that has attracted international criticism, with some countries and states elsewhere already moving to adopt legal measures to prevent octopus farming.

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Cognition-Emotions

19/05/2025 : [Measuring minds: Understanding the mental states of dairy cattle in different management conditions](#)

Document type: short scientific review published in [JDS Communications](#)

Author: Heather W. Neave

Preview: This brief symposium review highlights a selection of ways to assess the mental states of dairy cattle, with a focus on positive emotional states and cognitive function and how they are affected by management practices. It highlights behavioral indicators like play, body postures, and grooming; physiological measures such as heart rate variability and peripheral body temperature; and cognitive tests like judgment and attention bias that evaluate differences in information processing. Tests of cognitive function also reveal learning, memory, and cognitive flexibility as measures of mental state. These methods evaluate how management practices-housing, feeding, and enrichment, for example-positively affect the mental states of dairy calves and cows. Emerging technologies offer exciting possibilities for automated, continuous on-farm monitoring that could enable stakeholders of the dairy industry to adapt practices to support welfare and productivity.

24/03/2025 : [Relevance of state-behaviour feedbacks for animal welfare](#)

Document type: scientific review published in [Biological Reviews](#)

Authors: Montalcini, C.M., Driver, C.C. and Mendl, M.T.

Preview: An animal's behaviour and its state, including its health and affective state, are dynamic and tightly coupled, influencing each other over time. Although both are relevant to the animal's welfare, there has been limited research on their dynamics in welfare studies. Here we aim to: (i) review evidence for feedbacks between state and behaviour that could have beneficial or detrimental consequences for farm animal welfare; (ii) propose ways in which an understanding of such feedbacks could be used to enhance welfare; and (iii) provide practical guidance. We include as state variables any features that could influence the costs and benefits of an animal's behavioural actions, including individual characteristics and aspects of its social environment. We find evidence supporting positive state-behaviour feedback loops in various livestock species, suggesting that these loops could be common in farm settings and have significant welfare implications, such as leading to abnormal behaviours and persistent negative affective states. We suggest (i) estimating within-individual feedback loops to extract individual characteristics for studying differences in welfare; (ii) identifying scenarios where change accelerated by positive feedbacks pushes an animal (or a group of animals) to a new state, also called tipping points; and (iii) generating positive feedback loops to elicit and maintain positive affective states. We end by encouraging use of dynamic models that integrate longitudinal data on animals' behaviour and state to enable exploration of their dynamics, and we provide a practical guide with annotated R code for support. Since the principles and ideas discussed here are relevant to any animals under human care, this approach could foster new perspectives for improving the welfare of all captive animals.

07/03/2025 : [La cognition, pierre angulaire des émotions et du bien-être des animaux](#)

Document type: article published in [NOV'AE](#)

Author: A. Boissy

Abstract in English provided by the author: The cognition, cornerstone of animals' emotions and welfare

The welfare of animals under the responsibility of humans is a major social issue. Animals used for scientific purposes have been subject to regulations at European level for some forty years, which have been significantly strengthened since Directive 2010/63/EU in order to minimise stress and pain during the application of experimental protocols and to reduce the number of animals used, particularly through the development of alternative methods. Taking account of animal welfare and the development of associated regulations is largely based on legal and scientific recognition of the sentience of non-human animals. This article begins by illustrating the richness of animals' emotional and cognitive skills, which shape the way they perceive their environment. Next, the nature of consciousness in animals is discussed in terms of both the simple cognitive processes underlying emotions and more elaborate processes. Finally, the concept of animal welfare is analysed from the point of view of the mental life of animals.

07/03/2025 : The neurobiological basis of emotions and their connection to facial expressions in non-human mammals: insights in nonverbal communication

Document type: scientific synthesis published in [Frontiers in Veterinary Science](#)

Authors: Daniel Mota-Rojas, Alexandra L. Whittaker, Cécile Bienboire-Frosini, Jhon Buenhombre, Patricia Mora-Medina, Adriana Domínguez-Oliva, Julio Martínez-Burnes, Ismael Hernández-Avalos, Adriana Olmos-Hernández, Antonio Verduzco-Mendoza, Alejandro Casas-Alvarado, Karina Lezama-García, Temple Grandin

Preview: Recognizing that nonhuman animals are sentient beings has increased interest in studying their emotional state. Similar to humans, research has shown that some nonhuman mammals can modify facial expressions by contraction/relaxation of facial muscles according to their affective state. From a neurophysiological perspective, emotions are processed in several brain structures, mainly from the limbic system, such as the hypothalamus, hypophysis, hippocampus, prefrontal cortex, and amygdala. The converged pathways between the amygdala, the motor cortex, and its projections to the facial nerve control the movement of facial or mimetic muscles. Thus, facial expression is suggested to reflect the internal emotional state and could serve as an essential mode of nonverbal communication in mammals. In humans, the Facial Action Coding System (FACS) is a method that objectively analyzes facial movements using an anatomical base. In veterinary medicine, AnimalFACS is an adaptation of this system to eight animal species, including domestic animals (dogs, cats, and horses) and nonhuman primates (chimpanzees, orangutans, gibbons, macaques, and common marmosets). Considering these coded facial movements, current research aims to associate certain facial expressions with the animals' emotional states and affective contexts. Thus, this review aims to discuss recent findings associated with the neurobiology of emotions and facial expressions in non-human mammals, using AnimalFACS to understand nonverbal communication. Characterizing each facial expression according to different contexts might help identify if the animal

is expressing a positive or negative emotional response to the event, which can improve nonverbal human-animal communication.

Conferences-Seminars-Training

19/05/2025 : [Quelles avancées et évolutions sur le transport des volailles ?](#)

Document type: announcement of a webinar proposed by [ITAVI](#)

Authors: ITAVI et FIA

Preview: Regulatory proposals have been put forward to change the way poultry is transported. This webinar provides an overview of the various advances on the subject, with contributions from experts and testimonials from transporters.

Moderator: Pauline Créach (ITAVI) with Amélie Navarro (FIA)

When: June 5, 2025 10am-12pm

Duration: 2h00

French language

Target: PO/transporters/slaughterhouse

Tool: Clickmeeting

Program

- Effects of the European Commission's proposal on the protection of animals during transport. Virginie Michel (ANSES)
- Current transport organization and economic impact of the European Commission's proposal on the protection of animals during transport. Virginie Urrutia ITAVI, and Yann Nedelec (ANVOL)
- Characterization of the environment during poultry transport (ducks and chickens) Pauline Créach and Joanna Litt (ITAVI)
- Modeling heat stress during chicken transport and evaluation of mitigation strategies. Yann Guyot (ITAVI)
- Transporters' testimonials. Victor Guyon (Entreprise Mousset) and Jordan Marolleau (Groupe Marolleau)

[Register at](#)

28/04/2025 : [Formation Alimentation et bien-être des équidés](#)

Document type: training announcement from [Resolia](#)

Author: Resolia

Preview: Equine Nutrition and Welfare September 11-12, 2025

14 hours over 2 days

For prices, please contact us

Maximum number of participants per session: 10

Objectives:

- Improve competence in assessing the nutritional needs of horses, taking life stage, activity level and individual characteristics into account.

- Calculate fodder rations on the basis of animals' physiological stage and farming objectives.
- Identify links between feed, digestive health and horse behavior.
- Help farmers to adapt their feed management to the challenges specific to their lands.

[Register here](#) if you are a trainee under the Chambers of Agriculture scheme,

Or send this [form \(.pdf\)](#) to: resolia@apca.chambagri.fr if you are a trainee from a different scheme

28/04/2025 : Formation Bien-être en élevage porcin

Document type: training announcement from [Resolia](#) and the [Chambre d'Agriculture de Bretagne](#)

Author: Resolia

Preview: Welfare in Pig Farming, practical immersion course to be held on an experimental farm on October 28-29, 2025.

14 hours over 2 days

Cost: 980.00 euros

Maximum number of participants per session: 10

Objectives:

- Describe the natural and social behavior of pigs
- Discuss the signs of welfare problems and animal distress on a pig farm
- Choose appropriate management practices to improve welfare on a pig farm.

Other information : No farm visits permitted within 48 hours of the start of the course. This course, recognized by VIVEA, gives you the opportunity to participate in animal welfare certified training courses.

[Register here](#) if you are a trainee under the Chambres d'Agriculture scheme

Or send this [form \(.pdf\)](#) to: resolia@apca.chambagri.fr if you are a trainee from a different scheme.

14/04/2025 : ITAVI - Formation de Formateur : référent bien-être animal en volaille

Document type: announcement of training courses provided by [ITAVI](#)

Author: ITAVI

Preview: Train the trainer course for trainers of animal-welfare advisors on poultry. 05/06/2025, Paris. Length: 7 hours. Price : 450 € without VAT. INTRA price: €2,000 without VAT

[Download the program](#)

[Registration](#)

Training objectives

- To gain the training qualification required to train on-farm animal-welfare advisors for poultry farms.
- To design and deliver an 'on-farm animal welfare advisor for poultry' training course
- To be able to explain the basics of animal welfare / To advise farmers on the layout of their animals' living space, controlling their environment and managing temperature-related risks in relation to animal welfare
- To be able to provide the necessary tools and skills to identify whether an animal is healthy / Establish and communicate to farmers essential disease prevention practices, health alert criteria and the correct course of action

- Advise on the prevention and management of stress and pain during operations on poultry farms
- Adapt and support the implementation of a health-related decision tree, including technical killing methods, appropriate to individual circumstances

Target audience: Technicians / Veterinarians / Animal Welfare consultants

Other training courses:

[Animal welfare referent for poultry](#)

[Training the trainer: animal welfare advisor for rabbits](#)

[Animal welfare referent in poultry: stress and pain prevention](#)

[Poultry animal welfare referent - Prevention of pathologies](#)

[Animal welfare referent in poultry - Farming environment](#)

03/04/2025 : Formation "Responsable protection animale (RPA) en abattoir" et autres formations

Document type: announcement of training courses offered by [Idele](#)

Author: Idele

Preview: Training "Responsable protection animale (RPA) en abattoir" Certificate of competence for the protection of animals in the context of their killing.

From June 18 to 20, 2025 in Paris. 2 days/1 species: 880 euros - 2.5 days/2 species: 1050 euros - 3 days/3 species: 1200 euros (teaching costs net of VAT, lunches provided). Duration: 14 to 21 hours depending on the species chosen. Sessions : Cattle-equines, Sheep-goats, Pigs

How to register

This training course is certified by the French Ministry of Agriculture and Food and registered with the RNCP (ref RS446). It leads to a certificate of competence in the protection of animals during slaughter (after passing the exam). The success rate for candidates presented by the Institut de l'Élevage in 2020 is 100%. Depending on the training modules taken, candidates can be certified for 1 to 3 species groups: cattle-equine, sheep-goat and pig.

Objectives

- Explain the fundamental principles of animal welfare, behavior and handling
- Master the key points of the regulations and develop your animal protection management plan in the slaughterhouse: the RPA coordinator's mission
- Assess compliance with animal protection during the slaughter process: the RPA coordinator's mission
- Supporting operators on a daily basis and passing on key messages: the RPA supervisor/advisor's mission
- Acquiring the RPA skills certificate

Public: Slaughterhouse operatives

Program

Animal protection context and knowledge of the animal

- Different approaches to animal welfare and associated societal issues
- Context and current developments in animal protection at the abattoir
- Knowledge of the animal : general principles of animal behavior and their consequences in the abattoir
- Aspects of the physiology of stress and pain

- Explaining the mechanisms of loss of consciousness and death

Regulations and accountability

- "Animal Protection" regulations: EC Regulation 1099/2009 and implementing texts

- RPA functions and responsibilities

RPA coordinator's mission

Contributions are based on the "Protection Animale en abattoir" Good Practice Guides, divided into species

Drawing up an animal protection management plan

- Design prerequisites

- Establishment of standard operating procedures

- Good animal protection practices in the abattoir

- Checks on the effectiveness of stunning and bleeding

- Standardising information for operators

RPA supervisor/advisor duties

Key messages for operators

Training schedule:

Days 1 and 2: Core course + Cattle - Equines module

Day 3 morning (optional): Sheep -Goats complementary module

Day 3 afternoon (optional): Complementary module Pigs

Knowledge acquired - assessment

The training course concludes with an assessment test, lasting a maximum of 1 hour 30 minutes. Candidates will have to answer 20, 30 or 40 questions (depending on the type of certificate they wish to obtain) on the various points covered in the program. The assessment will be carried out using an online tool, in accordance with the official procedure laid down by the DGER/Ministry of Agriculture. The tests will be marked automatically, and the results will be available immediately. Successful completion of this test is one of the conditions for obtaining the Certificate of Competence.

Other training on the same topic :

[Transports des Animaux Vivants \(TAV\) : bovins, ovins-caprins et porcs](#)

[Protection animale pour les opérateurs d'abattoir](#)

[Référent bientraitance animale en centre de rassemblement](#)

26/03/2025 : Bien-être animal en filière Palmipède (labellisée bien-être animal) - Eleveurs de volailles : formations au bien-être animal

Document type: training announcement published by La [Chambre d'Agriculture du Tarn](#)

Author: Chambre d'Agriculture du Tarn

Preview: As of January 1, 2022, all livestock farms, regardless of size, must appoint an animal welfare advisor. The name of the advisor must be posted publicly at each farm site where he or she operates, and must be recorded in the farm register. The role of the advisor is to raise awareness of animal welfare issues among all farm staff. For pig and poultry farms, a compulsory training course has been introduced: animal welfare advisors must begin to follow the training course within 6 months of their appointment. They then have 18 months to complete the course (minimum 7 hours

training + online module). The training is valid for 7 years. Up-to-date information is available on the French Ministry of Agriculture website.

The Tarn Chamber of Agriculture is providing support for poultry farmers (broilers, layers, palmipeds) in their efforts to comply with the regulations by offering authorised animal welfare training courses. The two training courses below will enable farms and advisors to meet this requirement. The first is for poultry (broilers, layers) and the second for palmipeds.

Objectives

Understand the concept of animal welfare in palmiped farming and the welfare regulations.
Understand the natural behaviors of palmipeds.

Know how to measure animal welfare on the farm and identify action levers to improve welfare.

Program

- Animal welfare : history, those involved and societal demand, human-animal relationships, regulations.
- The 5 animal freedoms.
- Behavioral needs of palmipeds and what to do to satisfy them.
- Animal welfare assessment tools, the EBENE® method.
- Warning signs of welfare problems.
- The regulations on killing and situations where this must occur on farm.
- Building environment parameters, extremes of climate and how to manage them.
- Different types of access to runs and layouts.

Who qualifies to attend the course?

Animal welfare advisors in poultry farming (palmipeds).

Those working for a professional qualification who have identified a need for this training when meeting with their supervisor .

Delivery methods

Presentations, talks, discussion.

Evaluation methods

Multiple Choice

Bénédicte PENNANGUER, Aviculture Technician and Trainer for ITAVI

[Further information](#)

Precision farming and AI

[23/04/2025 : Precision farming in aquaculture: non-invasive monitoring of Atlantic salmon \(*Salmo salar*\) behaviour in response to environmental conditions in commercial sea cages for health and welfare assessment](#)

Document type: scientific article published in [Frontiers in Robotics and AI](#)

Authors: Burke Meredith, Nikolic Dragana, Fabry Pieter, Rishi Hemang, Telfer Trevor, Rey Planellas Sonia

Preview: Studies show that Atlantic salmon in captivity adjust their distribution in sea cages based on environmental gradients like temperature, waves, and photoperiod. This study used a computer vision algorithm at three marine farms to analyse fish group swimming behaviour termed “activity” (measured in percent), which includes fish abundance, speed, and shoal cohesion. The activity metric inferred the depth distribution of the main fish group and was analysed with respect to environmental conditions to explore potential behavioural drivers and used to assess changes in fish behaviour in response to a stressor, a storm event. During winter conditions, Farms A and B showed distinct thermal stratification, with fish activity demonstrating preference for the warmer lower water column ($39.6 \pm 15.3\%$ and $27.5 \pm 10.2\%$) over the upper water column ($16.3 \pm 5.7\%$ and $18 \pm 3.3\%$; $p \leq 0.001$). At Farm C, with thermally homogenous water, fish activity was similarly distributed between the upper ($18.2 \pm 6.9\%$) and lower ($17.7 \pm 7.6\%$) water column. Severe weather increased wave heights, influencing fish horizontal distribution differently at Farms B and C. At Farm B, a deeper site, fish remained in the warmer lower water column and avoided surface waves, while at Farm C, with shallower cages, they moved toward the side of the cage nearest the centre of the farm, presumably less exposed due to nearby cages. Understanding fish behavioural responses to environmental conditions can inform management practices, while using cameras with associated algorithms offers a powerful, non-invasive tool for continuously monitoring and safeguarding fish health and welfare.

23/04/2025 : Using deep learning models to decode emotional states in horses

Document type: scientific article published in [Scientific Reports](#)

Authors: Phelipon, R., Lansade, L. & Razzaq, M.

Preview: In this study, we explore machine learning models for predicting emotional states in ridden horses. We manually label the images to train the models in a supervised manner. We perform data exploration and use different cropping methods, mainly based on Yolo and Faster R-CNN, to create two new datasets: 1) the cropped body, and 2) the cropped head dataset. We train various convolutional neural network (CNN) models on both cropped and uncropped datasets and compare their performance in emotion prediction of ridden horses. Despite the cropped head dataset lacking important regions like the tail (commonly annotated by experts), it yields the best results with an accuracy of 87%, precision of 79%, and recall of 97%. Furthermore, we update our models using various techniques, such as transfer learning and fine-tuning, to further improve their performance. Finally, we employ three interpretation methods to analyze the internal workings of our models, finding that LIME effectively identifies features similar to those used by experts for annotation.

Publication resulting in a press release by INRAE: [L'IA au service du bien-être des chevaux montés](#)

Ethics-Sociology-Philosophy-Law

08/04/2025 : A comparison of attitudes towards animal welfare between British and Japanese zoo visitors: Where and when do cultural differences diverge?

Document type: scientific article published in [PLOS One](#)

Authors: Yumi Yamanashi , Yuko IkkataiMoe Honjo, Nahoko Tokuyama, Rie Akami, Duncan Andrew Wilson, Hannah M. Buchanan-Smith

Preview: Scientific evidence should form the basis for policy and practice decisions concerning animal welfare. However, cultural attitudes inevitably influence decision-making processes. We conducted a survey of general attitudes towards the welfare of zoo-housed animals, live prey feeding and trust in zoo management in British and Japanese zoo visitors (1,611 visitors aged over six years from one British zoo and two Japanese zoos). We asked respondents about their general attitudes towards animals, concepts of animal welfare, and acceptance of using a range of vertebrates and invertebrates as live prey. Overall, both British and Japanese respondents were concerned about animal welfare. However, when considering what is important for animal welfare, Japanese respondents mostly limited responses to basic factors such as food and sociality, whilst British respondents referred more to providing stimulation in the captive environment and positive emotions. The level of tolerance regarding live prey feeding was similar between countries, except for feeding octopuses which was less acceptable to British zoo visitors. Respondents differed in their reasons for this distinction; Japanese respondents often referred to personal preference and feelings in deciding which prey is acceptable to live feed, while British respondents often referred to animal intelligence and behavioural and life complexities. The tendency in trust in governing countries, zoos, and caregivers was similar between the two countries. Overall, British and Japanese respondents showed many similar views, but Japanese respondents tended to make more subjective decisions than British respondents. These attitudes are not directly reflected in legislation concerning animal welfare in each country.

20/03/2025 : Rethinking Animal Welfare in a Globalised World: Cultural Perspectives, Challenges, and Future Directions

Document type: sociological synthesis published in [Animals](#)

Authors: Oxley Heaney, S.; Szydlowski, M.; Hill, K.; Hooper, J.

Preview: In an increasingly interconnected world, human and other-than-human-animal welfare has emerged as a significant global concern. The welfare of these entangled lives, whether through anthropocentric, biocentric, or other-than-human-centred posthuman lenses, face challenges arising from cultural, political, and social boundaries. Urbanisation, globalisation, pandemics, and evolving ethical standards have amplified the focus on how other-than-human animals are treated across various settings. Realising that both human and other-than-human-animal societies co-evolve and interrelate, often beyond human imaginations, human societies must navigate the complexities of their relationships with other-than-human animals in the era now classified as the Anthropocene. The need for a nuanced understanding of the interconnectedness of human and other-than-human-animal welfare is becoming increasingly urgent. By “animal welfare”, we refer to the welfare of all

animals, including humans, unless specified otherwise. This acknowledges the trans-species nature of our intertwined lives in the biosphere. (...)

19/03/2025 : Developments in Chinese Attitudes to Animal Welfare

Document type: sociological synthesis published in [Animals](#)

Author: Clive J. C. Phillips

Preview: China has strong traditions of respect for animals, but momentous changes in recent history have changed society dramatically, and it cannot be assumed that animal welfare is always good. Farm animal production is being intensified rapidly, which can reduce resources offered to animals, in particular space for comfortable living. However, amongst workers in the animal industries, there is little optimism about their ability or need to improve animal welfare. Nevertheless, there is growing attention to animal welfare science in China, which is focused on remote sensing and technological approaches. The Chinese government currently has relatively little involvement in supporting good animal welfare standards, although legislation is in place. Attitudes are influenced by many factors, including the law, age, experience, occupation, and gender. The relatively strong involvement of women in caring for farm animals is encouraging as they tend to have more empathetic attitudes toward animals. It is concluded that attitudes are changing rapidly, but so are animal production systems, which make the development and improvement of animal welfare on farms especially important.

17/03/2025 : The Protection of Selectively Bred and Gene Edited Farm Animals under EU Law

Document type: legal article published in [European Journal of Risk Regulation](#)

Preview: Since the eighteenth century, animal breeding has significantly evolved, culminating in the use of gene editing (GE) technologies like CRISPR-Cas9. These technologies offer unprecedented capabilities to modify animal genomes, potentially revolutionising breeding practices by achieving desired traits much faster compared to traditional selective breeding (SB). Because breeding programmes focussed on productivity traits have often compromised animal welfare, this article provides an analysis of the ethical issues underpinning the use of GE in animal breeding, and the current laws regulating such practices. In doing so, this article critically examines the European Union (EU)'s regulatory framework for SB and GE in farm animals, highlighting significant gaps and inconsistencies. Specifically, the use of GE animals is currently regulated under the EU's GMO legislation, while SB is more loosely regulated, posing substantial risks to animal welfare. The authors advocate for a regulatory framework that prioritises animal welfare goals and proposes reforms to enhance animal protection objectives by ensuring a more consistent and humane approach to farm animal breeding.

Animal welfare assessment and labelling

13/05/2025 : Good animal welfare and environmental score for French poultry producers

Document type: article published in [Poultry World](#)

Author: Ruud Peys

Preview: The French poultry industry is on track to achieve its animal welfare and environmental targets. What is even more encouraging is that the vast majority of consumers appear to be aware of these efforts and appreciates them. Whether consumers are prepared to pay for the consequently more expensive chicken or turkey remains an entirely separate issue.

Expectations regarding welfare and the environment

In 2020, the organisation for the poultry industry, Anvol, published its Plan Ambition 2025 with 6 targets designed to “meet the expectations of the general public regarding welfare and the environment”. This initiative was partly prompted by supermarkets that continuously demand higher standards for chicken and turkey. Anvol has now done an evaluation and sees a positive outcome.

- More than three-quarters of the French population indicates that they are aware that the sector is actively working on “continuous improvement of practices in the poultry industry”.
- More than 80% also know that France is focusing primarily on quality chicken, while a similar percentage states that the poultry industry is vital for the preservation of the countryside.

Natural light

With regard to specific targets, by 2025, 50% of the animals were required to have access to natural light, while this is currently the case for 74%. For French quality chickens under the Label Rouge scheme and for organic chicken, the figure stands at 100% as this is included in the requirements. In the meantime, ever more conventional poultry benefits from natural light. Heijmans said, “Many poultry producers have installed windows in the houses or constructed a covered outdoor area for the birds.”

Antibiotics and feed

Another target was to reduce the use of antibiotics by 60% over a 15-year period starting from 2010. Today, the reduction already stands at 72%, with a 12% decrease achieved in 2021 alone. Furthermore, the sector has directed efforts with regard to the feed used towards achieving zero deforestation, a requirement that is now met for 95% of the feed. The French feed industry has managed to increase the share of raw materials sourced domestically to 80%, while the remainder is obtained from sustainable sources elsewhere in the world.

Enough chicken?

One challenge remains: the delivery of sufficient conventionally grown chicken to retail outlets. The French sector supplies many chickens under the Label Rouge, Organic, or other quality labels, yet these are proving too expensive for many consumers. Anvol notes: “A quality chicken Label Rouge is, per kilo, essentially not more expensive than conventional chicken that has been pre-sliced.” Convincing consumers of this, however, remains a difficult task.

07/05/2025 : Animal welfare definitions, frameworks, and assessment tools: Advancing the measurement and laying the

foundation for improved animal welfare through a three-step approach

Document type: scientific synthesis published in [Animal Welfare](#)

Authors: van der Staay FJ, Goerlich VC, Meijboom FL, Arndt SS.

Preview: To qualify and quantify animal welfare, novel assessment tools have been and are being developed, while existing assessment tools are being modified so that they can be applied to multiple species living under different housing and management conditions. The results of such assessments should be reliable, consistent and reproducible. We review the steps that should ideally be taken to develop, validate and apply animal welfare assessment tools. The first step should be to find a definition of animal welfare that the various stakeholders can agree upon. The second step should be to formulate and agree upon a framework for the evaluation of animal welfare. Both theoretical/conceptual frameworks, which provide a structure for research and suggest which facets are considered important, and ethical frameworks, which explicate the underlying moral position, should be considered. Finally, animal welfare assessment tools should be developed and validated based on both the adopted welfare definition and the welfare evaluation framework(s). However, this three-step approach has not always been followed in the development of welfare assessment tools currently in use. We expect that transparency and clarity regarding the underlying definitions and frameworks will increase the likelihood that the resulting welfare assessment tools will give similar weight to the aspects considered relevant to animal welfare, as it helps to specify the aspects that are considered to be key elements of animal welfare. This approach should lead to convergent assessment results and higher correlation of welfare indicators between assessment tools.

11/04/2025 : ChickenTrack

Document type: article published by [CIWF Agroalimentaire](#)

Author: CIWF

Preview: [The Better Chicken Commitment framework](#) involves a set of evidence-based criteria which, when implemented, significantly improve the lives of millions of broiler chickens every year. Implementing the BCC also leads to better working conditions and therefore greater satisfaction among farmers, consolidates the brand image of companies, and helps meet the growing expectations of consumers, stakeholders and investors.

More than 380 companies have committed to the BCC in Europe. [ChickenTrack 2024](#) assesses the progress of the 93 most influential companies. The original 2026 deadline is fast approaching, and the progress achieved by companies varies: while some are making clear progress towards their targets, many others are still not reporting. (...) Breed change and stocking density are the two most difficult criteria to implement, and have the lowest transition rates. Despite this, companies such as M&S and Norsk Kylling, which have achieved full BCC compliance for their fresh produce and total production respectively, demonstrate that such a transition is possible.

ChickenTrack 2024 also highlights the satisfactory progress made by some companies (such as Premier Foods, Greggs plc and Eataly), overall or for three or more criteria. Despite this, ChickenTrack 2024 is also a clear call to immediate and decisive action for many companies to activate their transition to the Better Chicken Commitment. (...)

9 companies have published a global report on average progress for all criteria: Average progress for all criteria 44.7%. (...)

11 companies are reporting progress for the first time

7 companies that were included in ChickenTrack 2023 but had not yet provided data published their first reports in 2024:

- Alcampo
- Auchan Poland
- Burger King United Kingdom
- Eataly
- Galliance
- Okay
- Bofrost (Italy)

4 companies evaluated in ChickenTrack for the first time this year also reported for the first time in 2024:

- Big Mamma Group
- Les 3 Brasseurs
- Taiko Foods
- Yo! Sushi

Roadmaps for the BCC framework

This year, two companies have published a roadmap detailing intermediate targets for each criterion: Burger King France, Big Mamma Group

29 companies have not published any reporting

Public commitments are only the first step in ensuring that broiler farming is more respectful of the welfare of chickens. It's when a company implements changes and reports on progress in its transition to BCC that it demonstrates accountability to its commitments and highlights the work it has done. We therefore encourage the following companies to report on their transition: (...)

New strategies on sustainability

(...) The environmental impact of breed changes and lower rearing densities are a source of concern for industry players. To be sustainable, a broiler production model must reconcile animal welfare and environmental impact, by applying effective mitigation strategies that reduce the environmental impact of breeding systems guaranteeing a better level of animal welfare. For example, replacing unsustainable soya in bird feed with local, sustainable proteins can massively reduce emissions, while using slower-growing breeds can reduce how much protein is needed in feed. Other strategies include converting effluent into biofuels, making use of all parts of the carcass, or reducing the proportion of meat in prepared meals. BCC production offers a range of additional advantages that need to be taken into account, including benefits for human health (e.g. reduced use of antibiotics) and better working conditions for farmers, while meeting growing consumer demand for production conditions that guarantee better animal welfare. (...)

Concrete measures to meet the 2026 deadline

The BCC's 2026 deadline is fast approaching, and the time has come for decisive action. To avoid delays or hesitations that could push us off course, here are a few practical measures to put in place that will help us to stay on track and bring about real change.

- Reaffirming company commitments (...)

- Updating operational plans (...)
- Investing in transition (...)
- Phased implementation (...)
- Reporting on progress: publishing roadmaps for transition (including beyond 2026, where exemptions are requested), as well as annual reporting, are essential to bolstering the confidence of consumers, stakeholders and investors. Internally, clarity enables teams to know where the plan is heading.

CIWF is aware of the challenges facing companies who have signed up to BCC, and is here to support you and help you make the transition. That's why we've launched the [Better Chicken Business Network \(BCBN\)](#) which connects supply chain stakeholders and helps them address their sourcing needs (see our new [BCBN product supplier list](#)), improve carcass balance and develop cost mitigation strategies. A series of webinars, forums and study tours will be offered in the coming year.

31/03/2025 : A Guide on Fish Welfare in Spanish Aquaculture – Volume 4: Welfare of rainbow trout

Document type: guide to good practices from [APROMAR](#) (Spain)

Authors: Garazi Rodríguez Valle, Javier Ojeda Gonzalez-Posada, Daniel Sánchez Lacalle, Daniel Ryle, María J. Cabrera Álvarez, Pablo Medina and José Pablo Medina Cea, Héctor Moran Cabero, Diego Mendiola, Laurent Villaeys-Sakalian, Ramón Fariña, Susana Portela, Raúl Viedma, Zara Pedreño, Delio Lombardero, Leandro Fernández, Rufi del Olmo, Luis Miguel Sánchez, Luis César Alijas, Carmen Angoso, Álvaro Robles, David Bravo, Juan Cigarria, Roberto Jiménez, Andrés Gonzalez Lecuona, Helena González Delgado, Andrea Martínez Villalba, Roberto González Garoz, Rubén Bermejo Poza, Jesús de la Fuente Vázquez, Álvaro De la Llave Propín, Morris Villarroel, Juan Miquel Mancera, Lluís Tort, Pablo Arechavala López

Preview (translation provided by the authors): Fish welfare in aquaculture is a top priority for APROMAR. As a primary production sector, aquaculture refers to the farming of aquatic species. The objective of this activity is to provide the population with nutritious, safe, and high-quality food. As is widely recognized, proper fish production requires ensuring fish welfare. In other words, the correct growth and development of farmed fish are only possible when animal welfare parameters are met. Therefore, it is important to remember that fish farmers are the most invested in ensuring the highest level of care for their animals. Beyond their passion for fish, welfare is directly linked to the profitability and sustainability indicators of any business. This guide serves as a manual of best practices for farming rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) in Spain. This subsector is highly diverse, ranging from small family businesses to large corporate groups. Aquaculture production in Spain began with the farming of this species, and today, for many farm workers, dedicating their lives to it is a family tradition. The knowledge of farming requirements is extensive, carried out in natural environments of high ecological and scenic value, and represents an economic pillar for many rural communities. Readers of this guide should keep these aspects in mind to appreciate the work of these fish farmers and the purpose of this guide, as it embodies the effort and dedication of multiple generations striving to ensure that their rainbow trout grow in the highest quality waters, under the best conditions, and with the most appropriate and healthy management practices. Funded through national and European re- sources, this rainbow trout welfare guide is the result of

a collaborative effort among key actors in the Spanish aquaculture sector, including MAPA, APROMAR, expert scientists in animal welfare, fish farming companies, and animal protection organizations (NGOs). The guide includes a) biological characteristics of the species, b) operational welfare indicators, c) critical welfare points in different farming systems and development stages, d) best practices for farming this species, e) staff training and communication strategies, and f) challenges facing the sector.

For the first time, a single document compiles the latest scientific knowledge on rainbow trout welfare, outlining a series of operational indicators for monitoring. These indicators are specific, measurable, and adaptable to different life cycle stages and production systems. The guide also defines critical welfare points during the reproduction, incubation, fry, pre-growth, and growth phases. Additionally, it describes practices related to various common farm procedures, such as feeding, environmental conditions and confinement, stunning and slaughter, handling and maintenance, reproduction, animal health, and transport.

The training of personnel and the management of fish farming companies have a direct impact on the welfare of fish raised in controlled environments. This guide acknowledges their importance and is designed as an educational and informational tool. Training should be updated regularly and include specific sections on welfare concepts and evaluation methods, as well as distinct practices and challenges in fish farming. Lastly, the sustainable and responsible development of Spanish aquaculture presents several challenges, one of the most significant being the need to ensure the welfare of farmed fish. The final chapter of the guide highlights key factors, such as the application of humane slaughter techniques, climate change, cross-sector collaboration, research, science and technology, and the establishment of a binding legal framework that adequately protects the welfare of aquatic animals.

Population management and animal welfare

[25/02/2025 : The Dark Side of the Moon: A Good Adoption Rate Conceals the Unsolved Ethical Problem of Never-Adopted Dogs](#)

Document type: survey study published in [Animals](#)

Authors: Corsetti, S., Natoli, E., Malandrucchio, L.

Preview: The "no-kill" policy for domestic dogs, adopted in Italy in 1991, reflects a growing interest in animal welfare and increases dogs' chances of being adopted and living with a family. However, non-adoptable dogs have to spend their entire lives in shelters. This article presents adoption figures from the "Muratella" shelter (Rome) over the periods 2012-2016 (first period) and 2018-2022 (second period), illustrating the results of the no-kill policy in a major metropolitan area. In addition, it discusses the ethical implications after 34 years of implementation of Italian laws on the management of dogs at large. During the first period, 7888 dogs entered the shelter, of which 4247 (53.84%) were adopted and 307 (3.89%) were not. Similarly, during the second period, 8853 dogs entered the shelter, of which 4251 (49.11%) were adopted and 278 (3.16%) remained at the shelter at the end of 2022. We also report on the fate of unadopted dogs at the end of 2024. Despite the success of our adoptions, the small percentage of dogs condemned to remain at the shelter for the rest of their lives still represents a significant number and warrants ethical reflection.

Animal welfare initiatives

12/05/2025 : Une étude inédite sur les financements régionaux et la transition de l'élevage

Document type: Report published by [CIWF France](#)

Author: CIWF

Preview: CIWF France, in collaboration with JumL, has published a ground-breaking study on the use of EAFRD (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development) funds by the French Regions. Focusing on investment and start-up aid, the study highlights the regional levers available to support the transition to more sustainable and animal welfare-friendly livestock farming. Presented as a preview at the last Salon de l'Agriculture in Paris, the report was a recurrent talking point with the Presidents of the Regions during a round table on the subject. The report is now available in its full and final form.

[Download the report](#)

28/03/2025 : SOS Maltraitance animale crée le premier Fonds de Solidarité Vétérinaire pour soutenir la prise en charge d'animaux maltraités

Document type: article published in [Savoir Animal](#)

Author: Agence Yoann Latouche Group

Preview: Every day, dozens of abused animals require urgent veterinary care. Yet the high cost of care is a major obstacle to their rescue. Faced with this reality, SOS Maltraitance Animale has created the first Fonds de Solidarité Vétérinaire, a unique scheme designed to fund essential medical care for rescued animals. Thanks to this fund, each animal will be able to benefit from the appropriate treatment, with no compromise to health or delays due to budgetary constraints.

Lack of funds for veterinary expenses: a major obstacle to rescue operations

For many associations who come to the rescue of abused animals, one of the major obstacles to intervention is the cost of veterinary care, which can place unbearable strain on limited funds. For this reason, some associations choose to bring a halt to rescue operations in the middle of the year, so as not to put the lives of animals already in their care at risk for lack of funds to feed or care for them.

200 euros: average cost of veterinary care per rescued animal

Readers may not be aware that the average cost of veterinary care for an abused animal cared for by 3677 SOS Maltraitance Animale is two hundred euros. This sum only covers the cost of the first veterinary visit, identification, vaccinations and the administration of antiparasitic drugs, to enable the rescued animal to be taken as soon as possible to a shelter, association or foster family, who will be responsible for overseeing the animal's recovery and restoring its confidence in humans, in order to find it a new home. Of course, this sum is not nearly adequate when the animal requires more extensive care, such as blood tests, perfusions, surgery, therapy or equipment adapted to a handicap caused by abuse.

5 to 20 cases of abuse a day

Since the launch of 3677 in June 2024, the dedicated telephone hotline to report cases of animal abuse throughout France has received more than 27,000 direct telephone reports, and more than 5,000 reports using the form available on 3677.fr. While the majority of calls and forms do not result in the investigation and systematic removal of the animal in question, every day the teams at 3677 have to deal directly with 5 to 20 extremely urgent cases. Starving, neglected, physically abused, and deprived of care, these frightened animals suffer from malnutrition, cachexia, severe parasitism, fractures, psychological and physical trauma, some of which require long and costly treatment.

A unique solidarity fund

To meet these veterinary expenses and enable 3677 to save ALL the animals reported to it, SOS Maltraitance Animale has decided to create the first Veterinary Solidarity Fund. This fund will be used to finance:

- The transfer of animals to the nearest veterinary clinic for medical treatment
- Payment for all examinations and emergency care
- Payment for the surgery required for the complete recovery of the animal
- Payment for treatments and therapy for long and chronic illnesses and pathologies
- The transfer of animals to a shelter, association or foster family

By creating this Fonds de Solidarité Vétérinaire, SOS Maltraitance Animale wishes to ensure that all animals in its care (...)

Who can contribute to the fund?

- Individuals
- Companies
- Local authorities (town halls, regional authorities, government departments, etc.)

Where can I make a donation to the Fonds de Solidarité Vétérinaire?

3677.fr/fonds-de-solidarite-veterinaire

The Conseil National de la Protection Animale is an independent association that receives no subsidies. Donations to the CNPA, a public interest association, are tax-deductible up to 66%. If you donate 100 euros, you will actually be donating 34 euros.

Figures that speak for themselves

Since its launch, the animal abuse hotline (3677) has received 27,041 calls, i.e. over 3,800 calls per month. 20,705 of these calls are from individuals who have witnessed animal abuse in their neighborhood and wish to report it. 20,277 reports concerned domestic animals, 465 livestock (cattle, sheep, goats, etc.) (...)

28/04/2025 : Newsletter EURCAW-Poultry-SFA - Edition 11

Document type: [EURCAW-Poultry-SFA](#) Newsletter

Author: EURCAW-Poultry-SFA

Summary: Issue 11 of the EURCAW-Poultry-SFA Newsletter, containing answers to the most recent Questions to EURCAW (Q2E), two infographics now available in French: [Accès des poulettes à la litière pour des baigns de poussière \(.pdf\)](#) and [Accès à l'extérieur pour les poulettes](#) (.pdf), along with many other items.

[Link to download the Newsletter](#) (pdf in English)

28/03/2025 : Newsletter – EURCAW Ruminants & Equines – Volume 09

Document type: [EURCAW Ruminants & Equines](#) Newsletter

Author: EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines*

Preview: Welcome to the first edition of the EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* newsletter in 2025. In this edition, we share details on our outputs since December 2024, Meet the Scientist, website improvements, the Care4Dairy App and other news related to ruminant and equine welfare.

New outputs

Since December 2024, EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* has published the following outputs:

- [Indicator](#) and [Thematic](#) factsheets on Confinement in domestic horses
- [Q2E on Animal-based measures to monitor on-farm welfare at slaughter](#)
- [Q2E on Social contact and freedom of movement in horses](#)
- [Q2E on Shelter for robust breeds on pasture](#)
- The Calf Feeding Podcast Series
- Factsheet Translations (including [Visual & Tactile Contact in Individually Housed Calves](#), in French)

25/02/2025 : Financements régionaux et transition de l'élevage : quels leviers pour des modèles plus durables ?

Document type: report published by [CIWF France](#)

Author: CIWF France

Preview: The French regions as a key level of government, on condition that they leverage transition

Shaping tomorrow's livestock farming: available levers in the regions

Analysis of regional livestock farming policies reveals an overall lack of ambition in the face of the challenges of animal welfare and agro-ecological transition. Most Regions do not mention animal welfare in their agricultural strategies and, when they do, this is rarely translated into material, binding criteria in their financial support structures. When discussing transition, the Regions often place organic farming on the same level as High Environmental Value (HVE), a certification that includes no livestock farming criteria. The amount of additional funding granted to more sustainable models remains too low, which limits their impact.

There are nevertheless significant disparities between the Regions:

- The Pays de la Loire and Brittany set ambitious targets, but their systems are still not robust enough to reverse the trend towards industrialized livestock farming.
- Grand Est and Hauts-de-France focus on competitiveness and productivity, imposing few or no conditions to encourage sustainable farming.
- Nouvelle-Aquitaine is the most advanced region, with funding schemes geared more towards organic farming and more exacting animal welfare criteria. Their impacts on the livestock industry have yet to be demonstrated. (...)

For the regions to play their full part in the transformation of livestock farming, five major changes are needed:

1- Introduce real conditionalities in access to public aid (...)

- Exclude from regional support projects that do not commit to a real transition (e.g. cage farming, overcrowding).
- Integrate strict, progressive criteria to make access to aid conditional on measurable commitments to the environment and animal welfare.

2- Prioritize and reward virtuous practices in the allocation of subsidies (...)

- Prioritize funding for farms committed to a genuine agro-ecological transition (free-range farming, access to pasture, food autonomy).
- Clearly differentiate levels of certification: no longer equate approaches with very different requirements (e.g. AB and HVE).
- Significantly increase bonuses for models that respect animal welfare and the environment.

3- Anticipate regulatory changes and support farmers in the transition (...)

- Prioritize FEADER regional aid for investments that will be affected by legislative changes (e.g. phasing out cages, improving rearing conditions).
- Set up a specific support plan for affected farmers, including financial support for investment and training to help them make the transition.

4- Support the demand for transitional sectors and ensure the existence of outlets for livestock farmers (...)

- Respect and reinforce EGAlim obligations, by ensuring a sustainable and local supply of livestock products in public catering.
- Prioritize investment in processing facilities (abattoirs, fruit factories, etc.) adapted to sustainable production, to guarantee the autonomy of these livestock sectors and ensure local links between farmers and consumers.
- Develop organic farming sectors, from upstream to downstream, to ensure better remuneration for farmers and encourage transition.
- Strengthen the resources allocated to Territorial Food Projects (TAPs) and move their focus to agro-ecological transition.

5- Coordinate public policies for a coherent transition (...)

- Support a controlled development of livestock herds, adapted to local environmental challenges, by limiting the loss of capital currently experienced by those farms most committed to transition.
- Adopt a national livestock transition plan, combining a production component with a consumption component, with quantified, local objectives.
- Change the CAP to align European funding with the challenges of transition, in particular:
 1. Encourage the "Food Not Feed" approach, and prioritize crops for human consumption rather than those destined for animal feed.
 2. Reinstate support for organic farming, to stabilize farms already committed to transition.
 3. Increase Pillar II funds to finance agro-ecological transitions more widely.
 4. introduce eco-regimes linked to animal welfare, by imposing exacting criteria and providing incentive funding.

Report leading to a news item on 25/02/2025 on the CIWF France website: [Transition de l'élevage et leviers régionaux : notre nouveau report présenté au salon de l'agriculture](#)

Invertebrates

22/04/2025 : Animal welfare risks from commercial practices involving cephalopod molluscs and decapod crustaceans

Document type: scientific synthesis published in [Animal Welfare](#)

Authors: Browning H, Burn C, Schnell AK, Crump A, Birch J.

Preview: There is increasing recognition that the welfare needs of cephalopod molluscs and decapod crustaceans are important. Current commercial practices involving these animals include a range of potential threats to their welfare, such as conditions of farming, capture, transport, and slaughter. This article draws from and updates our 2021 review for the UK Government, recommending a range of relatively simple and impactful changes that could benefit welfare while highlighting important research gaps that should be prioritised to facilitate the drafting of guidelines for best-practice.

Housing and Enrichment

08/04/2025 : Impacts des différents types de sols sur le bien-être et le comportement des porcs

Document type: Infographics published by La [Chaire Bien-être Animal](#)

Author: The Animal Welfare Chair

Preview: In November 2024, the French Reference Centre for Animal Welfare (FRCAW) published a literature review on the impact of partly or fully solid flooring systems on the welfare and behavior of pigs. Here is our summary of that work.

In France, the vast majority of pigs are reared inside farm buildings. The flooring systems in these buildings can vary depending on the type of farm and the animals' growth stage (farrowing sows and piglets, weaners, fatteners). Each flooring type has advantages and disadvantages, whether in economic terms or in terms of the welfare of both animals and farmers. Where the pigs' welfare is concerned, particular attention is paid to the impact of flooring types on their cleanliness, health and behavioral expression.

Key points to remember:

- Most French pig farms use fully slatted flooring systems (entirely made up of slats separated by openings)
- The type of flooring and the presence of litter will influence how the pigs express their behaviors.
- Pig welfare increases as a function of floor type along a sliding scale (fully slatted < partially slatted < solid < deep litter) which is linked to the quantities of straw a system allows.

21/03/2025 : Developing appropriate environmental enrichment strategies for broiler breeders

Document type: scientific article published in [Scientific Reports](#)

Authors: Baxter, M., O'Connell, N.E.

Preview: There is a recognised need for environmental enrichment strategies to be developed for broiler parent stock. We evaluated the use and tested preferences for three forms of enrichment in commercial broiler breeder housing: (1) perches (platform perches, round metal perches, round rubber-coated metal perches), (2) pecking enrichments (silver reflective gazing balls, multi-coloured reflective gazing balls, non-reflective gazing balls), and (3) dust baths (oat hulls, sawdust, 50:50 mix). Observations from video footage were conducted during early, peak and late lay of a 44 week production phase on one farm. There was a clear preference for platform perches over both round perches, and for rubber-coated perches over metal perches until late lay. Perching was highest at night but reduced over the cycle. We found a drop off in perching once 23 cm of linear space per bird had been reached, suggesting this represented comfortable maximum capacity. All pecking enrichments attracted interest, with no difference between the three types, although pecking rate reduced across the cycle. House litter was well maintained and dustbathing was widely observed throughout the house, making additional dustbathing areas largely superfluous on this farm. We suggest platform perches and suspended gazing balls to be suitable environmental enrichments for commercial breeder housing.

07/03/2025 : [L'enrichissement du milieu de vie](#)

Document type: article published in [NOV'AE](#)

Authors: Céline Tallet et Violaine Colson

Preview: The living conditions of animals in captivity often prevent them from fully satisfying their physiological and ethological needs, for example, when human control is exercised over reproduction or the formation of social groups. In addition, certain practices inherent to the keeping of animals (e.g. their movement between locations) are a source of stress for the animals, as they perceive these as threats when they cannot be predicted by the animals and are therefore outside their control or far removed from their expectations. Last, sensory and cognitive stimuli are less frequent in captivity than in the wild. Environments that lack stimulation will induce chronic stress in animals by preventing them from fulfilling certain behaviors or physiological needs. Such chronic stress is problematic for animal welfare, not only in its own right, but also in the impact it has on the results of scientific research carried out on the animals in question.

One Welfare

30/04/2025 : [Healthy cows, happy farmers? Exploring the dynamics of mastitis and farmer well-being](#)

Document type: scientific article published in [Journal of Dairy Science](#)

Authors: Lind Nina, Hansson Helena, Emanuelson Ulf, Lagerkvist Carl-Johan

Preview: Clinical mastitis, a prevalent production disease in the dairy industry, causes significant pain and swelling in dairy cows' udders. Although previous research highlights a symbiotic relationship between humans and animals, particularly in terms of health, this study investigates how animal health, specifically clinical mastitis, influences farmers' well-being. Acknowledging farmers' pivotal role in mitigating animal health problems, we examined the human-animal relationship by

exploring how dairy cow health relates to the psychological well-being of dairy farmers. This was performed by investigating the connection between animal and farmer health and whether it is mediated by farmers' perceptions of mastitis as a production disease and their sense of control over the situation. For the current study, we combined and matched data from a large questionnaire study covering dairy farmer's well-being (n = 356) with data on dairy cow herd health. For statistical analyses we used the PROCESS macro (ver. 4.2) for serial multiple mediator analysis, an analysis that allows for the estimation of the effect of multiple mediators in a causal chain. We found that farmers' well-being is indirectly related to animal health when mediated through their illness perception and perceived self-efficacy, underscoring the importance of cultivating awareness and control over mastitis occurrences. For these estimations, we controlled for the effect of farm size, expected income from dairy production, marital status, and cohabitation status of the farmer, as well as age and gender. Our results indicate that maintaining healthy animals with minimal mastitis incidents, coupled with farmers' perceived self-efficacy, is positively related with farmer well-being.

28/04/2025 : Améliorer le bien-être des animaux d'élevage est-il toujours bénéfique pour l'environnement ?

Document type: article published by La [Chaire Bien-être Animal](#)

Author: The Animal Welfare Chair

Preview: Improving animal welfare can have positive effects on productivity and health, thereby contributing to environmental, climate and biodiversity benefits. However, in some cases, such improvements can also increase the environmental impact of livestock farming. Compromises therefore need to be found to reconcile the needs of animal welfare and environmental protection. From this point of view, a reduction in meat consumption would appear to be a fundamental first step. This article seeks to take stock of the impacts produced by changes in farm animal welfare on the environment, taking into account not only greenhouse gas emissions, but also biodiversity, agricultural land use and inputs (straw, feed, etc.). One way to improve animal welfare while limiting negative impacts on the environment would be to reduce our consumption of animal products so as to reduce farmed animal numbers. The article does however start from the assumption that the production and consumption of animal products exist in equilibrium.

20/03/2025 : Fermes-usines de saumons : des députés veulent un moratoire de 10 ans

Document type: article published in [Reporterre](#)

Author: Reporterre

Preview: A thorn in the side of large-scale salmon farming projects? A [white paper](#) to introduce a moratorium on hyperintensive closed-containment salmon farming projects was tabled on March 18, 2025 at the French National Assembly.

The text is championed by parliamentarians from all political backgrounds: La France insoumise, Les Républicains, Les Écologistes, the Socialist Party, Libertés, indépendants, outre-mer et territoires, Ensemble pour la République... They intend to impose a ten-year pause on the issuing of environmental permits for salmon farms in closed-containment systems.

Ecological and economic threat

The MPs are critical of the living conditions of the salmon in these high-density farms, but also of the pollutants discharged by the industry. In their view, these constitute an ecological and economic threat (particularly for fishing and oyster farming) in the local areas. The energy consumption of these factories and their dependence on small fish caught in West Africa - which are used to feed farmed salmon - are also decried by environmental associations.

In a press release, the NGOs Welfarm and Seastemik describe this text - which has not yet been adopted or even examined - as a "victory". Two industrial salmon farm projects are currently underway in France: *Pure Salmon* in Gironde - which aims to produce 10,000 tonnes of fish each year - and *Local Ocean*, in Pas-de-Calais. The French currently consume 270,000 tonnes of salmon a year, with only a small proportion being of local origin. (...)

17/03/2025 : As corporations seek to advance breeding efforts, EU must act to stop octopus farming

Document type: article published by [Eurogroup for Animals](#)

Author: Eurogroup for Animals

Preview: The recent acquisition of an aquaculture activity permit by Grupo Profand for a research hatchery to breed octopuses in a warehouse in Moaña, Spain, has raised concerns among animal protection organisations who question the long-term implications of such research. While the company claims that the primary objective of this phase of the project is to optimise the larval phase of the common octopus, "without the aim of production or commercialisation," the project description in their permit request states that the research is for "industrial exploitation." Regardless of the company's intentions, such research could advance knowledge on the captive breeding of octopuses for future aquaculture purposes - an unethical and unsustainable practice that would have devastating impacts on these unique, intelligent creatures.

Two years ago, plans of another Spanish company, Nueva Pescanova, to establish the world's first commercial octopus farm were met with widespread criticism from scientists and animal protection organisations. As well as having serious animal welfare concerns, the proposed farm poses significant threats to the environment, including threats to wildlife and public health, as well as exacerbating overfishing. These significant environmental risks led to the Canary Islands Government's rejection of the company's simplified environmental impact assessment in 2023, now requiring a second, more exhaustive assessment before the farm can advance. The company is now reported to be conducting research into optimal diets of captive octopuses.

Last year, research by Compassion in World Farming (CIWF) revealed that governments in Europe have spent millions in public funding to develop octopus farming, with the Spanish government spending €9.7 million. A 2024 survey published by Eurogroup for Animals and CIWF showed that the majority of EU citizens believe public funds should only support farming practices that ensure high welfare (86%) and are sustainable (79%).

In the United States, bans on octopus farming have already been introduced in the states of Washington and California, and a bipartisan bill has been introduced in the US Congress which could prohibit commercial octopus farming throughout the entire country. Canada has introduced a similar bill at the federal level.

Pain management

26/04/2025 : Les poissons ressentent-ils le stress, la douleur ou la souffrance ?

Document type: article published in [Ouest France - Le Mag des animaux](#)

Author: Nathalie Truche

Preview: The sensitivity of fish has long been underestimated, as these silent animals are often perceived as being without consciousness or sensation. Yet recent research shows that they can experience pain when hooked or netted. Our article explains how pain and stress operate in fish, and how scientists assess how they feel. Understanding the mechanisms involved in their suffering allows us to better comprehend their welfare needs and take appropriate measures.

What is the mechanism of pain?

Pain is a biological reaction that enables an organism to detect and avoid injury [...]

What is stress? [...]

Do fish feel stress?

Fish do feel stress, as has been proved by numerous studies that have measured their cortisol levels after exposure to anxiety-provoking situations. When fish are captured, handled or placed in an unsuitable environment, their breathing accelerates and their behaviors change. Some become agitated, others adopt a lethargic state, and many lose their appetite. Further, prolonged exposure to stress can make them more vulnerable to infection, reducing their life expectancy.

How can you tell if a fish is suffering?

Scientists have conducted a number of experiments to determine whether fish are indeed suffering. Here are just a few examples:

A landmark experiment was carried out by biologist Lynne Sneddon, a specialist in pain in fish. In this study, rainbow trout were injected with bee venom or acetic acid into their lips, an area with many nerve endings. The results showed that these fish exhibited abnormal behaviors, frantically rubbing their mouths against the floor or walls of their aquarium, breathing more rapidly and refusing to feed. These reactions suggest that the fish were experiencing persistent pain and were actively seeking relief. When these same fish were given morphine, a powerful analgesic, their behavior returned to normal, proving that pain was not simply a reflex but a conscious sensation. In a different experiment, conducted by Dr Victoria Braithwaite, fish were placed in a tank where they could choose between a neutral space and one containing an analgesic substance. Injured fish preferred the analgesic-enriched environment, suggesting that they are able to detect and seek active relief from their pain, a behavior similar to that observed in mammals. Other studies have analyzed fish reactions to painful stimuli by measuring their levels of cortisol (a hormone linked to stress, see above). For example, when individuals are caught in nets or handled out of water, their cortisol levels rise significantly, indicating physiological distress as well as possible pain. Last, neurobiological research has demonstrated the presence of nociceptors and pain-processing structures in fishes' brains. Although different from those of mammals, their brains contain functionally similar regions, such as the pallium, which plays a role in sensory perception and emotional reactions. Brain imaging studies have confirmed that these regions are activated when a fish is exposed to a noxious stimulus.

Is a fishhook painful for fish?

A fishhook pierces particularly sensitive areas of the fish's mouth or throat, where many nociceptors are located. In addition to this physical injury, the animal experiences intense stress as it struggles to free itself and, if pulled out of the water, asphyxiates, a process comparable to suffocation in humans. Numerous studies have shown that fish that have been caught and released continue to show signs of stress and pain for several hours, calling into question the belief that the practice of "no-kill" causes no suffering.

Does net fishing cause fish to suffer?

Industrial net fishing also generates pain and stress in fish. Trapped in a confined space with hundreds or thousands of other fish, a fish will struggle to escape, sometimes leading to serious injuries (scrapes, contusions, and even fractures). Some fish, such as those caught in gill nets, become caught up by their gills or fins and suffer gradual asphyxiation if they are not quickly brought to the surface. In trawling, where a huge net is dragged behind a boat, some fish are often crushed under the weight of the others, causing internal lesions and haemorrhaging. On being hauled aboard, the fish undergo a brutal pressure differential that can bring about barotrauma, causing burst swim bladders, bulging eyes and damaged internal organs. Moreover, most fish caught in nets die of asphyxiation after being removed from the water, being unable to breathe outside their natural environment. Their suffocation lasts for anything from a few minutes to several hours in the case of stronger species. Fish are sometimes still alive when they are gutted or frozen, prolonging their agony.

How can suffering in fish be avoided?

A number ways to mitigate fish suffering have been identified: for example, amateur fishermen can use unbarbed hooks to reduce injury to the fish they catch, and can limit capture time to minimize stress. Some industrial fisheries are beginning to try out faster, less painful methods of slaughter, such as electronarcosis (using an electric current to stun the fish) or immediate exposure to iced water saturated with CO₂. However, these continue to be minority practices and are rarely employed out at sea. Better regulation of commercial fishing and the raising of public awareness of the conditions under which fish are caught would help improve the latter's fate. Consumers can get involved by choosing to buy products from fisheries and farms committed to animal welfare.

Regulation

08/05/2025 : Parlement européen : Réponse à la question E-001189/25 : Access to open air areas for young organic poultry

Document type: Answer from the [European Commission](#) to question E-001189/25

Authors: Question: Christine Singer (Renew). Answer: Mr. Hansen on behalf of the European Commission

Question: Regulation (EU) 2018/848 (Regulation on Organic Products) requires poultry to have access to open air areas 'from as early an age as practically possible', which can be interpreted as from the first day of life (Annex II, Section 1.9.4.4(e)). This rule is neither conducive to animal welfare nor practical and creates health risks for young poultry, especially in the first weeks of life. Chicks are particularly susceptible to diseases, sensitive to the cold and at risk from predators at this early stage of development. Premature access to open air areas increases the risk of infection, as the

immune system is only fully developed from the third or fourth week of life. In addition, it leads to greater energy consumption, and damp bedding can cause health problems. Many farms also face insurmountable infrastructural challenges, as their existing housing facilities are not designed to provide access to open-air areas at such an early stage. Strict implementation of the provision could significantly reduce organic poultry farming and jeopardise the survival of many farms.

1- How does the Commission intend to ensure that the requirement for access to open air areas only applies when this is actually possible without causing problems, in line with the physiological development of the animals, and does it intend to consider clarifying or adapting the requirement?
2- What measures does the Commission intend to take to enable Member States and certification bodies to implement the regulation flexibly so that businesses are not forced to take measures that are contrary to animal welfare?

Answer: Access to open air areas for poultry for at least one third of their life is one of the key features for the organic production of poultry and iconographic images of this requirement are often used as a marketing tool. Rules on access to open air areas for poultry were reviewed by Regulation (EU) 2018/848 on organic production and labelling of organic products [\[1\]](#) following the recommendations of the Expert Group for Technical Advice on Organic Production [\[2\]](#). Regulation (EU) 2018/848 provides a certain flexibility in the implementation of continuous daytime open-air access for poultry in relation to the physiological and physical conditions of the birds (feather coverage) or temporary animal health restrictions imposed on the basis of EU legislation but does not cover permanent structural settings without any access to open air areas or only access to verandas [\[3\]](#). Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2018/848 empowers the Commission to set minimum surfaces for outdoor areas for poultry production. Annex I part IV to Regulation (EU) 2020/464 [\[4\]](#) sets minimum outdoors area surfaces for different categories of poultry that may be adapted by Member States. Article 26(7) of that regulation [\[5\]](#) sets transitional periods for poultry producers to adapt in case where structural changes are needed. The current regulatory framework provides high animal welfare standards for organic production in the EU.

[\[1\] http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/848/2024-12-01](http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/848/2024-12-01)

[\[2\] https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/document/download/580c76bb-6cef-4183-9713-28afaa983161_en?filename=final_report_on_poultry.pdf](https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/document/download/580c76bb-6cef-4183-9713-28afaa983161_en?filename=final_report_on_poultry.pdf)

[\[3\]](#) Points 1.6.5 and 1.9.4.4 of Part II of Annex II to Regulation (EU) 2018/848 ‘1.6.5. Open air areas may be partially covered. Verandas shall not be considered as open air areas. 1.9.4.4 (h) open air areas for poultry shall be covered mainly with vegetation’.

[\[4\] http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2020/464/2021-11-25](http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2020/464/2021-11-25)

[\[5\] http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2020/464/oj](http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2020/464/oj) Article 26(7) of Regulation (EU) 2020/464: ‘7. By way of derogation from Section 2 of Part IV of Annex I to this regulation, for holdings or production units producing pullets in poultry facilities built, refurbished or brought into use before the date of entry into application of this regulation in compliance with Regulations (EC) No 834/2007 and (EC) No 889/2008 and for which major adaptations of the structure of the poultry houses or additional land acquisition are necessary to comply with the rules of Section 2 of Part IV of Annex I to this regulation, shall comply with the stocking density and the minimum surface of indoor and outdoor areas for pullets and brother roosters laid down in Section 2 of Part IV of Annex I to this regulation as from 1 January 2030 at the latest’.

06/05/2025 : Assemblée nationale : Réponse à la question n°126 : Budget alloué aux associations pour la stérilisation des chats errants

Document type: reply to question no. 126 published in the [Journal officiel de la République française](#)

Authors: Question: Mr. Karl Olive (Yvelines (12e circonscription) - Ensemble pour la République).
Answer: French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty

Question: Mr. Karl Olive would like to draw the attention of the French Minister for Territorial Partnership and Decentralization to the funding allocation earmarked to deal with the problem of stray cats, and in particular their sterilization, which concerns many local authorities. Cats proliferate rapidly, since a single pair of cats can give rise to 20,000 others in the space of just four years, a problem that needs to be addressed. Numerous associations take care of stray cats, but the associated costs are considerable and taking on this burden is a heavy responsibility. Sterilizing a female cat costs an average of 150 euros, and sterilizing a male cat 100 euros. To enable local authorities to respond to the growing problem of cat population growth and the increase in abandonment, funding of 3 million euros was approved by Parliament as part of French Finance Act 2023-1322 of December 29, 2023 for 2024, with a view to supporting local authorities in the sterilization process. He would therefore like to know how this law will be implemented in practice, and what steps local elected representatives need to take to benefit from this aid. *(Question sent to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty)*

Answer: The French budget for 2024 set aside the sum of 3 million euros (M€) for the sterilization of stray and domestic cats by local authorities. In this context, the French Ministry of Agriculture's Food Directorate launched a call for projects to manage stray cats run by municipalities and, through a transfer of powers, by voluntary public establishments for inter-communal cooperation (EPCI). This money has been awarded as part of the pilot provided for in Law 2021-1539 of November 30, 2021 to combat animal abuse and strengthen the bond between animals and humans. This law effectively provides for the establishment of agreements between the State and Mayors or the Leaders of local authorities and Chairs of voluntary EPCIs, so that the management and care of stray or stray cat populations can be improved, and the competences and resources of each signatory can be recorded with this objective in mind. In overseas departments and regions, special arrangements may be put in place under the responsibility of Regional Prefects. For example, depending on the specific features of the region, dogs of domestic species may also be eligible, provided that both species - canine and feline - are involved in the project. To apply for this grant, the municipalities and EPCIs concerned were invited to respond to the above call for projects, which was open from September 2 to October 10, 2024. Full details of this call for projects are available on the website of the French Ministry of Agriculture. This €3 million fund is not sufficient to finance the management of stray cats throughout France, and therefore cannot fulfil its objective. Moreover, several studies have shown that stray cat management only works in the long term, and that a sporadic campaign will not be effective. In light of this, it was decided to support local authorities who already have a stray cat management system in place (given that this is one of their authorised areas of action), to see what good practices are in existence and make the best use of this money. The pilot can thus

be properly implemented within the bounds of this funding available in 2024 only. Looking forward, the pilot scheme will have to be evaluated so that the Government may draw up its report to Parliament, as provided for in the above law. The pilot could then put forward recommendations and best practices that would benefit all communities.

06/05/2025 : Parlement européen : Réponse à la question E-000939/2025 : Legislative initiatives and minimum standards for the use of horses in sport

Document type: Answer from the [European Commission](#) to question E-000939/2025

Authors: Question: Niels Fuglsang (S&D), Thomas Waitz (Verts/ALE), Sebastian Everding (The Left). Answer: Mr. Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission

Question: Nowadays we are seeing an increased focus on animal welfare in equestrian sports. Scandals with the mistreatment of horses have led, among other things, to several riders [1] withdrawing from the 2024 Olympics and later being suspended. The Danish Animal Ethics Council (DAEC) [2], which was established pursuant to Section 38 of the Danish Animal Welfare Act, presented legislative proposals in December 2024 [3] to ensure respect for horses' needs. The legislation should be a supplement to equestrian sport's own initiatives, which the DAEC does not believe are sufficient.

1- Does the Commission agree with the DAEC that legislation is needed to ensure animal welfare in equestrian sport, which is a widespread, economically important and prestigious sport in Europe?
2- Does the Commission believe that the current legislation is sufficient, as Article 13 of the Treaty of Lisbon [4] states that 'animals are sentient beings' and must be treated accordingly, when recent events have proved that they do not always benefit from such treatment in equestrian sport?
3- Will the Commission consider revising Directive 98/58/EC [5], which currently covers horse welfare only in relation to farming, or does it plan to introduce legislative measures to sanction the mistreatment of horses in sport?

[1] <http://www.olympics.com/en/news/paris-2024-olympics-three-time-olympic-gold-medallist-charlotte-dujardin-withdraws-from-games>.

[2] <https://detdyreetiskeraad.dk/english>.

[3] <https://detdyreetiskeraad.dk/publikationer/2024/henvendelse-om-brug-af-heste-til-sport-2024>.

[4] <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:12016E013>.

[5] <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:31998L0058>.

Answer: The Commission is aware that animal welfare issues arise in equestrian sporting activities and has been engaging in discussions on this topic with the International Federation for Equestrian Sports and other actors representing equestrian sports. However, at EU level, the welfare of Equidae is covered by Directive 98/58/EC [1] concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes. Directive 98/58/EC is only applicable to animals kept for farming purposes and not to animals kept for other activities such as equestrian sports. The welfare of Equidae used for such activities is therefore subject to Member States' national legislation, and it pertains to them to adopt such legislation if they deem it necessary. Currently the Commission is not considering revising the scope

of Directive 98/58/EC nor introducing measures applicable to Equidae kept for equestrian sporting activities.

[1] Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes (OJ L 221, 8.8.1998, p. 23).

15/04/2025 : ESA urges Norway to continue to strengthen welfare controls for laying hens and chickens kept for meat production

Document type: article published by [ESA](#) (EFTA watchdog)

Author: Jarle Hetland

Preview: In January this year, ESA conducted a follow-up audit on poultry welfare in Norway. Previous audits in 2009, 2012 and 2022 found serious non-compliances with animal welfare rules on poultry farms, concerning both laying hens and broiler chickens. The follow-up audit's objective was to assess the implementation of actions proposed by Norway in response to the recommendations included in ESA's 2022 audit. ESA concluded in 2022 that Norway's lack of commitment to act on recommendations from past audits, had resulted in serious breaches of animal welfare rules at laying hen farms. The official controls were weak also for broilers as the Norwegian Food Safety Authority (NFSA) did not verify the usable area to prevent overcrowding of chickens. ESA issued five recommendations to Norway to address non-compliances detected during the 2022 audit. During the follow-up audit in January 2025, ESA noted some progress in the laying-hen sector. However, the NFSA did still not carry out official controls to ensure the welfare of broiler chickens. ESA found that corrective actions to improve welfare for laying hens had been initiated. However, most of the actions still need to be incorporated into inspectors' regular fieldwork to ensure better bird welfare, including proper enforcement when non-compliance is detected. The NFSA's annual control plans in 2023 and 2024 did not include any broiler farm inspections. As a result, no official controls on broiler farms were carried out those years. The lack of official controls can lead to persistent overcrowding for extended periods, causing unnecessary distress to the animals. In response to ESA's draft report, Norway has provided additional information to their action plan to address all the recommendations. This plan is attached to the [report](#).

14/04/2025 : Instruction technique DGAL/SDSBEA/2025-254 du 14-04-2025 : Certificat d'engagement et de connaissance délivré avant acquisition d'un animal de compagnie

Document type: Technical instruction from the French Animal Welfare Office (BBEA), [Ministère de l'Agriculture et de la souveraineté alimentaire](#)

Author: French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty

Preview: This technical note specifies the content of the certificate of commitment and knowledge issued prior to the acquisition of a companion animal, as referred to in Article L. 214-8, Paragraph V, and sets out the procedures for its issue and use. The note takes account of the withdrawal of Instruction DGAL/SDSBEA/2022-835 of 14/11/2022, following the Conseil d'Etat's decision of March

21, 2025 to replace the seven-day period following signature of the document by a seven-day period following the issue of the document, as indicated by CRPM Article L. 214-8, Paragraph V.

[Link to the instruction \(pdf\)](#)

01/04/2025 : Assemblée nationale : réponse écrite aux questions n°3208 : Application de la loi visant à lutter contre la maltraitance animale, et n°3072 : Vente illégale d'animaux sur Internet

Document type: reply to questions no. [3208](#) and no. [3072](#) published in the [Journal officiel de la République française](#)

Authors: questions : Ms. Lisa Belluco (Vienne (1re circonscription) - Écologiste et Social). Mr. Kévin Pfeffer (Moselle (6e circonscription) - Rassemblement National). Answer: French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty

Question from Ms Belluco : Ms. Lisa Belluco draws the attention of the Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty to the implementation of Law 2021-1539 of November 30, 2021 to combat animal abuse and strengthen the bond between animals and humans. A report by the Quatre Pattes Association has demonstrated several shortcomings in the application of both the letter and spirit of this law. For example, offers of pets on certain social networks do not comply with the regulations concerning the sale of pets online, notably because no prior verifications of advertisements are currently carried out, for example by platforms owned by Meta. What is more, deceptions are practised by illegal sellers to evade detection by the authorities and moderation by platforms, for example, sales adverts are published with brief descriptions that enable transactions to be conducted via private chat channels (messaging, phone calls). Although Article L. 214-8-2 of the French Rural and Maritime Fishing Code stipulates that any public communication service or advertiser authorizing the publication of offers for the sale of pets must put a control system in place that operates prior to the publication of each advert, the law does not provide for any specific control mechanism in cases where platforms do not authorize this sort of advert, but whose users fail to respect the website's prohibition. Public communication services and advertisers are left to decide their own responses to breaches of their terms and conditions. Article L. 214-6-3 of the French Rural and Maritime Fishing Code prohibits the sale of cats and dogs in pet shops, whether for a financial consideration or free of charge, but still allows animals to be present in the shop. Shopkeepers still keep these animals for sale, which contradicts the spirit of the law. Further, the virtual shop windows provided by pet shop websites continue to encourage impulsive purchases of animals which should no longer be sold by pet shops. For this reason, she asks what the government intends to do to enforce this law in both its spirit and its letter.

Question from Mr. Pfeffer : Mr. Kévin Pfeffer draws the attention of the Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty to the sale of animals on the Internet. The entry into force of Ordinance 2015-1243 on the trade and protection of companion animals made it compulsory for breeders to declare sales from the very first dog or cat onwards. Law 2021-1539 to combat animal abuse and strengthen the bond between animals and humans has tightened the conditions for the legal online advertisement of animals for sale. This recent legislative framework has led to a drastic reduction in the number of

animals being sold on the Internet, thereby strengthening the fight against trafficking and increasing buyer responsibility. However, hundreds of fraudulent online advertisements still escape government control. He would therefore like to know what resources the government is deploying to ensure compliance with the current legislative framework, and whether it plans to introduce additional resources and controls to put an end to trafficking and impulsive purchases that lead to thousands of animals being abandoned every year.

Answer: The government has for several years been committed to animal welfare, responding to a powerful and legitimate societal expectation, and it condemns all acts of abuse towards animals, whether by breeders, or in slaughter establishments or the home. To this end, since 2020 and thanks to the France Relance plan, more than 36 million euros have been granted to animal protection associations and veterinary medicine. Similarly, since the adoption of the law to combat animal abuse on November 30, 2021, four implementing decrees and six ministerial orders have been published, to enable the strengthening of training for employees in contact with pets, provision of information to new buyers, control of animal identification for online sales, as well as the strengthening of penalties for acts of abuse. To continue the momentum created by the Government, a plan dedicated to the welfare of companion animals was announced on May 22, 2024. Its national monitoring committee, chaired by the Minister for Agriculture, brings together four ministries, industry professionals and civil society players, to ensure that its actions are properly coordinated. For the government, the aim is to support and make the most of current and future initiatives in three areas: prevention and mitigation of pet abandonment, improving the management of canine and feline strays, and prevention and mitigation of pet abuse. To this end, it is constructed around concrete measures contributing to five key areas: understanding the situation and identifying levers for action; informing, questioning and training; facilitating synergies between players involved in animal protection; increasing the protection provided by regulations; and renewing funding mechanisms. Several actions within this plan have already taken place, are underway, or are planned in the short term, notably to increase the responsible behavior of participants in the purchase of pets. In application of the law of November 30, 2021 to combat animal abuse and strengthen the bond between animals and humans, pet shops may no longer sell dogs and cats on their premises, whether for remuneration or free of charge, as of January 1, 2024. They may, however, offer cats and dogs in the care of animal protection foundations or associations, where volunteers from the said foundations or associations are present. The final clause in Paragraph VI of Article L. 214-8 of the French Rural and Maritime Fishing Code allows pet shops to sell pets online for a fee.

An upcoming revision of the Decree of April 3, 2014 setting out the health and animal protection rules to be followed in the course of activities related to pets of domestic species, providing a more precise framework for premises where dogs and cats are kept in this case. Given the time that will be needed to revise this Decree, a transitional period is currently underway, during which leniency is being exercised with regard to the housing of dogs and cats by pet shops for online sales. During this period of grace, though, animals must continue to be kept in facilities that comply with health and animal protection regulations. In the event of non-compliance with current regulations, inspectors may be required to issue a penalty notice. In addition, with regard to online sales, the law on animal abuse requires advertisers to carry out prior checks on sales offers of dogs, cats and ferrets, whether for a fee or free of charge. Only verified advertisements containing all the mandatory information can be authorized and uploaded. This mandatory information, concerning both the

animal and its owner, must be checked against the national identification database for domestic carnivores. To this end, the French Ministry of Agriculture has worked with Ingenium Animalis, the company that runs the identification database, to set up a tool to verify this mandatory information that has been available to advertisers since May 2024. The authentication process will provide those wishing to acquire a dog or cat through an online sales site with a guarantee of the animal's origin, the accuracy of its description and the agreement of the registered owner. Although failure to check advertisements is punishable by a fine of 7,500 euros, ensuring that private individuals are aware of the importance of this authorization process remains a major challenge that must be overcome if the measure is to succeed. The government is determined to step up its efforts to protect animals, and will remain attentive to reports of cases of stray, abandoned or abused animals. Such cases may be prosecuted, both in mainland France and in its overseas territories.

01/04/2025 : Assemblée nationale : réponse écrite à la question n°3103 : Soutenir le droit à l'abattage à la ferme

Document type: reply to question no. 3103 published in the [Journal officiel de la République française](#)

Authors: Question: Mr. Jean-Philippe Tanguy (Somme (4e circonscription) - Rassemblement National). Answer: French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty.

Question: Mr. Jean-Philippe Tanguy would like to draw the attention of the Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty to the issue of slaughtering provision, and in particular the development of on-farm slaughter. The question of slaughter is part of the livestock cycle, and cannot be ignored forever. On December 14, 2023, the European Commission finally authorized on-farm slaughter, extending this to sheep and goats at risk if transported. At a time when the number of abattoirs is in a continuing state of decline (there are 263 currently, compared with 1,700 in the 1960s), the development of new slaughtering methods is essential. The gradual removal of local abattoirs and their replacement by large industrial enterprises is forcing livestock farmers to travel long distances, forcing animals to travel across France to be slaughtered as the result of the specialization of some abattoirs, which are set up differently for different species. In response to the lack of local coverage, on-farm slaughter would meet economic and local needs by compensating for the decline in local abattoirs. Indeed, under such a system, animals need not be transported to abattoirs, but are slaughtered on the farm where they have been reared, thus preventing possible injury to the animals during transport. According to European Commission data, over 40% of journeys involving cattle, horses, goats and sheep living in the European Union last between 8 and 24 hours. It should be emphasized that the current slaughter process is a source of stress for the animal, caused by various factors such as the distance travelled, the change of environment, separation from the rest of the herd or repeated handling by strangers. While animals entering an abattoir are often exposed to health risks from inter-species contact or contact with animals of different origins, the development of on-farm slaughtering would make it possible to avoid, or at least control, these risks. Provided that it is carried out under the correct conditions, on-farm slaughtering will provide animals with a less stressful end to their lives. Reducing stress indirectly improves meat quality. Many farmers want to stay with their animals until their deaths and to control how they die, this being a need that is social, ethical and economic. It also gives them the ability to manage what happens to the carcass, and offers greater transparency concerning the conditions under which slaughter occurs. This method

therefore allows farmers greater flexibility in their choice of animal slaughter, subject to its compliance with hygiene rules to guarantee food safety. Associations such as "Quand l'abattoir vient à la ferme" (When the abattoir comes to the farm) have sprung up, lending strong support to the introduction of a legal framework for mobile slaughter. Beyond the implications for farmers, this issue is also of interest to members of the public wishing to act responsibly in their consumption habits. However, it is essential that this system should be effective, and that it should be staffed by competent, regularly-trained personnel. Animal handling must be carried out calmly and with respect for the animal, which means in particular that stunning must be instantaneous and guaranteed. The development of on-farm slaughtering is crucial to meeting the challenges of the return to local economies and the establishment of small-scale livestock farming and local supply chains, while ensuring respect for animal welfare. He asks what the government intends to do to support the right to on-farm slaughtering, in order to take account of farmers' concerns.

Answer: The regulatory requirements applicable to the slaughter of animals, in terms of both health and animal protection, are covered by the current European bio-regulations package (in particular EC Regulation 853/2004, laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin, and EC Regulation 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing). The purpose of these regulations is to guarantee a very high level of food safety and animal protection throughout the European Union (EU), while avoiding distortions in the market. These regulations stipulate that the safe slaughter of animals whose meat is destined for food sales must be carried out in a professional setting, in an approved abattoir, where health checks are carried out on both live animals and the meat derived from them. As such, on-farm slaughtering by farmers themselves without any sanitary controls is forbidden, except for certain species in the context of personal consumption. The practice of on-farm slaughtering, as a means in particular to avoid the transport of animals and to encourage short distribution chains, was however brought before the European Commission by France in 2022, enabling the recognition of mobile abattoirs and mobile slaughter units [Delegated Regulation (EU) 2024/1141 of December 14, 2023 amending Annexes II and III of Regulation (EC) 853/2004 with regard to the specific hygiene requirements applicable to certain meat, fish, dairy and egg products]. The French authorities now support projects that comply with these regulatory requirements. In particular, the French government supported the "Ethical Beef" mobile abattoir project, subsidizing it via the France Relance stimulus package. While this first project failed to materialize, several others are currently under development, and four farm abattoirs have already been set up in 2024. A dozen farm-based abattoirs could be in operation by the end of 2025. Slaughtering is a free and competitive market activity, carried out for the most part by private operators, who have the main responsibility for ensuring compliance with regulations. There are currently 226 abattoirs in France, a fall of 16% over the last six years. Each time an abattoir closes, it affects geographical coverage and the possibility for livestock farmers to have their animals slaughtered close to their farms. In July 2023, the French Ministry of Agriculture launched a comprehensive action plan to consolidate the network of abattoirs to help the livestock industry and local communities. This four-pronged approach brings together professionals and local government to create local area strategies. The details were provided in a press release on the abattoir strategy published on the website of the Ministry of Agriculture on December 7, 2023. Despite this, given the current state of the network, animal transport times to abattoirs in France remain in general moderate. A study carried out by the French Ministry of Agriculture, using 2022 data, shows that, for the beef industry, one in two animals is

slaughtered within an hour and a half of where it has been reared, and only one in ten travels for more than four and a half hours to be slaughtered (Agreste, June 2023 no. 10).

27/03/2025 : Animal welfare during transport: Update on the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005

Document type: report published in [Think Tank - European Parliament](#)

Authors: Mounier Luc, Warin Aurelia, Livingston Ann, Roth Paul-Marie

Preview: This study, commissioned by the European Parliamentary Research Service at the request of the European Parliament's Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, examines the implementation and enforcement of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, with particular focus on animal fitness for transport and data recording. It adopts a mixed-method approach, combining desk research, quantitative data analysis, and stakeholder consultations. The analysis indicates that key compliance challenges persist, especially in relation to journey conditions, documentation, and the transport of vulnerable animals such as unweaned calves and end-of-career animals. While some positive practices were observed, enforcement remains inconsistent, and notable shortcomings were identified, particularly concerning inspection procedures, documentation practices, and the assessment of animals' fitness for transport. The findings highlight the need for clearer regulatory definitions, improved coordination among authorities, and more harmonised inspection and data recording procedures.

[Link to the report](#) (pdf)

24/03/2025 : Les clauses-miroirs : quels moyens d'imposer certaines normes européennes de bien-être animal aux importations de produits agricoles et alimentaires ?

Document type: report published by the [Ministère de l'agriculture et de la souveraineté alimentaire](#)

Authors: Loïc Evain, Marie-Hélène Le Henaff

Preview: As a follow-up to the work carried out by MASA under the French Presidency of the Council of the EU in the first half of 2022, CGAAER has been asked to assess the possibilities of imposing certain European procedures and production methods (PPMs) on agricultural and food products imported into the Union, in particular PPMs relating to animal welfare, and to consider possible changes to international rules and standards to take better account of societal expectations.

[Link to the CGAAER report 21129-P](#) (pdf)

18/03/2025 : Assemblée nationale : réponse écrite à la question n°2243 : Indicateur de bien-être animal sur les produits alimentaires d'origine animale

Document type: reply to question no. 2243 published in the [Journal officiel de la République française](#)

Authors: Question: Mr. Mickaël Bouloux (Ille-et-Vilaine (8e circonscription) - Socialistes et apparentés). Answer: French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty

Question: Mr. Mickaël Bouloux draws the attention of the Minister of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry to the need to take animal welfare into account in the marketing of food products of animal origin. Despite the promulgation of the law on the transparency of information on agricultural and food products of June 10, 2020, which makes it compulsory to provide consumers with information on the provenance of the products they consume, the issue of animal welfare, and in particular the conditions under which animals are reared and slaughtered, remain a secondary concern. It might therefore be appropriate to consider the introduction of an animal welfare indicator for all food products of animal origin, similar to that used for eggs. While the government has repeatedly stated that it considers animal welfare to be a priority, he would like to know how it intends to improve the information provided to consumers on the welfare of farmed animals intended for consumption, whether in raw or processed form.

Answer: For several years now, the Government has working to support animal welfare, in response to a strong and legitimate social demand, and it condemns all acts of animal abuse, whether in livestock farming, abattoirs or in the home. In the livestock sector, farmers are the first to come into contact with animals, and are the key actors in their welfare. The Government is aware of French consumers' expectations regarding the origins of the products they consume. In this respect, packaging labels, or shelf labelling for non-pre-packaged products, are a particularly important means to provide information on product origins and farming conditions. To date, France has favored a voluntary approach to animal welfare labelling, enabling producers who wish to do so to highlight practices that go beyond simple compliance with the European legislation. Moreover, any labelling must not diminish the value of compliance with European legislation on animal welfare, among the strictest in the world, in the case of imported products that might fail to meet this standard. What is more, while there is currently no specific animal welfare labelling, it is important to emphasize that some official quality and origin identification indicators or other labels may provide useful information. In particular, they can provide evidence of specified farming conditions. Sometimes, these may be clearly described, as in the case of "free-range eggs", but for the most part, this information lacks specificity. As part of the roadmap that came out of the "États généraux de l'alimentation", the French National Food Council was asked to look into the possibility of trialling labelling on livestock farming methods. This could result in a label similar to that already in place for eggs, but for all animal production sectors. This trial will enable us to determine the conditions under which such labelling could be implemented, providing consumers with better information. In addition, the French Food, Environmental and Occupational Health Safety Agency (Anses), which is aware of the numerous private initiatives in the field of animal welfare standards for animal production, has commissioned its own expert services to produce guidelines, based on a collective scientific expertise, that would ensure both the appropriateness of labelling standards with regard to animal welfare and harmonization between the various standards. In addition to the Anses, the French national research institute for agriculture, food and the environment, the national veterinary schools and the French research institute for marine fisheries contributed to this expert appraisal. In this context, the Government has taken due note of the work carried out by the Anses on the implementation of farm animal welfare labelling. More generally, it should be noted that the services of the Ministry of

Agriculture remain fully committed to the protection of farm animals during transport, as well as to their welfare needs in abattoirs.

18/03/2025 : Assemblée nationale : réponse écrite à la question n°1077 : Interdiction de la vente de chiens et chats dans les animaleries

Document type: reply to question no. 1077 published in the [Journal officiel de la République française](#)

Authors: Question: Ms. Karine Lebon (Réunion (2e circonscription) - Gauche Démocrate et Républicaine). Answer: French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty

Question: Ms. Karine Lebon draws the attention of the Minister of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry to the implementation of the ban on the sale of dogs and cats in pet shops since January 1, 2024, following the adoption of Law 1539 of November 30, 2021. Indeed, the new Article L. 214-6-3 III of the French Rural Code now stipulates that the sale of cats and dogs, whether for consideration or free of charge, is prohibited in pet shops. Decree 2022-1354 of October 24, 2022 on the protection of companion animals, which lays down the penalties relating to the above law, does not provide for any penalties in the event of violation of Article L. 214-6-3 II of the Rural Code. No regulatory text has yet been issued to remedy this situation, which leaves us with a legal prohibition, but no possibility of penalties in the event of any failure to comply. As a consequence, initial findings by animal protection organizations have shown that some pet shops are failing to comply with this legal provision, and are still openly offering puppies and kittens for sale on their premises. Furthermore, some pet shops state on their websites or on their premises that puppies and kittens can be viewed in a dedicated area within the establishment on request, which again constitutes a clear violation of the law that prohibits all sales in these establishments. She would therefore like to know when the Ministry intends to publish the decree setting out the criminal penalties applicable to the ban on the sale of dogs and cats in pet shops, and whether stricter controls will be enforced to punish establishments that circumvent the legal ban.

Answer: Pursuant to law no. 2021-1539 of November 30, 2021, aimed at combating animal mistreatment and strengthening the bond between animals and humans, pet shops have been prohibited from providing dogs and cats in their establishments, whether for payment or free of charge, since January 1, 2024. They may, however, offer cats and dogs belonging to animal protection foundations or associations, in the presence of volunteers from these foundations or associations. The final clause of Article L. 214-8, Paragraph VI, of the French Rural and Maritime Fishing Code stipulates that pet shops are permitted to sell pets online for a fee. An ongoing revision of the Order of April 3, 2014 laying down the health and animal protection rules with which all activities related to pets of domestic species must comply will provide a more precise framework for locations where dogs and cats are kept in this latter case. Given the time required to revise this decree, a transitional period is currently underway, during which the housing of dogs and cats by pet shops for online sales is tolerated. During this period of tolerance, however, animals must continue to be kept in facilities that comply with health and animal protection regulations. In the event of non-compliance with current regulations, inspectors may be required to issue a formal notice. An inspection visit is then scheduled, and if the formal notice is not complied with, penalties may be

imposed. Additionally, the European legislation is currently being changed, at the instigation of the French government, with the European Commission's December 7, 2023 proposal on the welfare and traceability of dogs and cats on the European market. The French government played an active role in the European discussions on this draft regulation, proposing strong measures such as a ban on the use of electric collars, tail docking and the prolonged use of muzzles in places where animals are kept. This draft regulation is currently being debated by the European Parliament.

18/03/2025 : Assemblée nationale : réponse écrite à la question n°128 : Euthanasies d'animaux

Document type: reply to question no. 128 published in the [Journal officiel de la République française](#)

Authors: Question: Ms. Maud Petit (Val-de-Marne (4e circonscription) - Les Démocrates). Answer: French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty

Question: Ms. Maud Petit alerts the Minister of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry to animal euthanasia being carried out in France and the Drom-Com. In particular, she alerts her to the abusive "euthanasia" being carried out in the vast majority of animal pounds. Based on data from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty, the Animal Cross Association estimated that, in 2016, out of a total of 112,508 animals, 8,428 dogs and 19,450 cats had been euthanized without justification on health grounds in shelters and pounds. To this can be added the "comfort euthanasia" carried out by vets in their surgeries. According to a study carried out by Claire Borrou-Mens, veterinary advisor for the Grand-Est Region, there are some 40,000 such cases every year. Given that these data come from a variety of sources, the Deputy asks the Minister whether it would be possible to establish an observatory that would bring together the Ministry, associations, professionals in the sector and members of parliament, to record the case numbers for pet euthanasia in France. Having been alerted by the Amis de Sam association, the Deputy asks the Minister how this practice might be stopped. She asks to what extent the existence of kitten and puppy fairs, and the sale of pets on social networks by pet shops or private individuals might not encourage it. Many of these pets are bought on impulse and without due thought over the internet, and many are often abandoned, ending up in already overcrowded pounds. She therefore asks what measures the Minister could put in place to regulate the pet trade and thereby put a stop to pet euthanasia.

Answer: Pet welfare is a government priority. A plan dedicated to this issue was published on May 22, 2024 to extend the positive momentum established since 2020 through the France Relance plan. The Observatory for the Protection of Domestic Carnivores (OCAD) was set up by the Minister for Agriculture in May 2021 to identify, monitor and assess the situation of dogs, cats and ferrets in France, with a view to providing objective evidence on the facts and contributing to the development of public policies on animal protection. OCAD brings together all the players involved in animal protection: representatives of associations, pounds, breeders, pet shops, veterinarians, pedigree and studbook managers, manufacturers, the French Mayors' Association, the National Reference Center for Animal Welfare (FRCAW) and the French Ministry of Agriculture, in a steering committee responsible for the definition of OCAD's main working guidelines. One of OCAD's priority missions is to better qualify and quantify dog and cat abandonment, in order to organize actions to combat it. A first report has been published by its expert body, the FRCAW, and a second referral is currently

underway with the aim of defining a common definition of abandonment in order to better quantify it. This second referral also aims to provide details of the reasons for which animals enter and leave shelters (pounds, shelters and associations without shelters). Euthanasia will be included among these reasons, so that it can be characterised and better evaluated. According to an October 12, 2020 press release on animal euthanasia issued by the French National Veterinary Association, euthanasia is generally carried out for medical reasons, when there is no alternative to alleviate pain or suffering, but in certain specific situations it can be motivated by non-medical reasons. In such cases, it is up to the veterinarian to assess these reasons in the light of his or her code of ethics and conscience. It is also the veterinarian's responsibility to seek alternative solutions wherever possible. In all cases, each veterinarian makes his or her decisions independently, respects the animals, and is responsible for his or her decisions and actions [article R. 242-33 of the French Rural and Maritime Fishing Code (CRPM)]. The Conseil National de l'Ordre des Vétérinaires defines veterinary euthanasia as follows: "Animal euthanasia is a veterinary act consisting of inducing the death of an animal by a parenteral route, resulting in the rapid and irreversible loss of consciousness with a minimum of pain and distress, and carried out in accordance with good professional practice. The veterinarian performs euthanasia after assessing the need and obtaining the informed consent of the owner. The act of animal euthanasia may be justified by a medical reason (a state of health, intense suffering experienced by the animal or those surrounding it), by a regulatory reason, or by an overriding reason of general health or environmental interest". In this sense, the OCAD's work will enable us to better characterise and quantify abandonment and euthanasia. Further, the pet trade is governed by Article L. 214-8 of the CRPM, which stipulates, among other things: the list of documents to be issued in the event of the transfer of a pet; that only dogs and cats over eight weeks old may be transferred; the obligation to sign a certificate of commitment and knowledge; the rules governing the transfer of pets online; etc. Article L. 214-8-1 of the same code sets out the compulsory information to be included in offers of sale, while the following article, L. 214-8-2, provides for a monitoring system and a label for sales offers of domestic carnivores. The aim of all these measures is to provide a framework for the sale of animals, make future purchasers more aware of their responsibilities and promote responsible adoption.

18/03/2025 : Assemblée nationale : réponse écrite à la question n°1079 : Mise en œuvre du plan pour le bien-être animal

Document type: reply to question no. 1079 published in the [Journal officiel de la République française](#)

Authors: Question: Corinne Vignon (Haute-Garonne (3e circonscription) - Ensemble pour la République). Answer: French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty

Question: Ms. Corinne Vignon draws the attention of the Minister of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry to the implementation of the national plan to improve the welfare of companion animals, published in May 2024 by the Minister, Marc Fesneau. This plan, described as a roadmap to strengthen the fight against pet abandonment and abuse, officially confirms the concerns on which progress is desirable and for which action by the state is required. This plan is the result of a careful process of consultation with stakeholders, and aims to bring together and coordinate the resources of the various ministries involved. She would like to know what actions are now to be taken to follow

this clear roadmap in the realm of pet protection, and what logistical and financial resources will be allocated to make the speediest use of the various levers identified in the plan.

Answer: The government has been committed to animal welfare for several years, in response to a strong and legitimate societal expectation, and condemns all acts of animal abuse, whether on farms, in abattoirs or in private homes. To this end, since 2020 and thanks to the France Relance plan, more than 36 million euros have been granted to animal protection associations and veterinary practices. Similarly, since the adoption of the law to combat animal abuse of November 30, 2021, four implementing decrees and six ministerial orders have been published to enable the strengthening of training for staff in contact with pets, of the provision of information to new buyers, of the monitoring of animal identification in online selling, and of the penalties for acts of abuse. To maintain the positive momentum created by Government actions, a plan devoted to the welfare of companion animals was announced on May 22, 2024. The government's national monitoring committee, chaired by the Minister for Agriculture, brings together four ministries, industry professionals and civil society players, to ensure that its actions are properly coordinated. For the State, the aim is to support and achieve the best outcomes for current and future initiatives in three areas: preventing and combating pet abandonment; improving the management of stray dogs and cats; and preventing and combating pet abuse. To achieve these, the plan is structured around concrete measures that contribute to five key areas: understanding the current situation and identifying levers for action; informing, asking questions and training; facilitating synergies between players involved in animal protection; increasing the protections provided by the regulations; and renewing and refreshing funding mechanisms. The first priority of this plan is to better characterize and objectify situations of abandonment, straying and abuse, and to produce reliable and accurate statistics. In this respect, the expert involvement of the Observatory for the Protection of Domestic Carnivores and the centralization of data relating to the above issues on a single platform will enable the public authorities to make informed decisions. In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture will make it easier for professionals and private individuals to take on board their new regulatory obligations, notably through a program for the responsible acquisition of pets, and by launching fresh communication campaigns on the fight against abandonment and abuse, on the sterilization and identification of animals, and on access to animal care for those less able to pay. In addition, the Ministry will endeavor to integrate these concerns into animal-related vocational training courses. If these measures are to be effectively implemented, synergies between the various actors involved in animal protection will need to be facilitated, in particular through the establishment of an interministerial governance structure setting out the roles of the different bodies.

Within this framework, the Ministry of Agriculture steers public policies relating to the protection of domestic animals, the Ministry of Ecological Transition and Territorial Cohesion is concerned with those relating to wild animals, while the Ministry of the Interior and Overseas Territories oversees the suppression of animal abuse and trafficking, and supports the other ministries in the application of legal procedures, under the control of the Ministry of Justice. As part of this framework, an interministerial training course on combating animal abuse has been developed for all agents involved, including law enforcement officers, and will go online in Autumn 2024. In addition, the "Ma sécurité" platform, run by the Ministry of the Interior, will be consolidated, to become the preferred centralized tool for reports of abuse sent to government departments. Similarly, discussions will be held with animal protection associations to identify ways of professionalizing local associations in

terms of training in best practices and regulatory provisions. Last, the Ministry of Agriculture will increase its efforts to raise awareness among Mayors of the need to prevent the straying of animals and to manage pounds. The aim will also be to increase the protections provided by current regulations, on the one hand by assessing the application of the Animal Abuse Act of 2021 and on the other by updating the April 3, 2014 decree framing pet-related activities. In addition, a change in European legislation is underway, under the impetus of the French government, with the European Commission's proposal on December 7, 2023, on the welfare and traceability of dogs and cats placed on the European market. The French government has played an active role in the European discussions on this draft regulation, putting forward strong measures such as a ban on the use of electric collars, tail docking and the prolonged use of muzzles in places where animals are kept. This draft regulation is currently being debated by the European Parliament. The French State is ready to renew the funding mechanisms implemented under previous Finance Acts, notably for the sterilization of stray animals and financial assistance to local authorities for this purpose, through the creation of a special fund entitled "France protection animale", designed to collect future donations from companies. Several actions under this plan have already been completed, are underway, or are planned for the near future, notably that to introduce greater responsibility in pet purchases. Under the law of November 30, 2021 to combat animal abuse and strengthen the bond between animals and people, pet shops have, since January 1, 2024, no longer been allowed to sell dogs and cats in their establishments, whether for payment or free of charge. They may, however, offer cats and dogs belonging to animal protection foundations or associations, in the presence of volunteers from the said foundations or associations. The last paragraph of Section VI of Article L. 214-8 of the French Rural and Maritime Fishing Code allows pet shops to sell pets online for a fee. A forthcoming revision of the Order of April 3, 2014 laying down the health and animal protection rules with which activities related to pets of domestic species must comply will provide a more precise framework for dog and cat holding premises in this instance. Given the time required to revise this decree, a transitional period is currently underway, during which flexibility is permitted with regard to the housing of dogs and cats by pet shops for online sales. During this period, however, animals must continue to be kept in facilities that comply with health and animal protection regulations. In the event of non-compliance with current regulations, inspectors may be required to issue a formal notice (...).

13/03/2025 : Final Report of an Audit of France carried out from 13 to 24 November 2023 in order to Evaluate the Protection of Unweaned Calves during Long Journeys

Document type: DG(SANTE) audit report published on the [European Commission website](#)

Author: DG Santé – Commission européenne

Preview: This report describes the outcome of an audit of France, carried out remotely from 13 to 17 and on 28 November 2023 and on-the-spot from 20 to 24 November 2023 as part of Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety work programme.

The objective of the audit was to assess the effectiveness of the official controls on the protection of unweaned calves (still on a milk diet) during long journeys.

The audit concludes that overall, there is a system well set up and official controls are generally implemented as planned. The combination of certain deficiencies (gaps in the procedures, inadequate or not at all risk-based prioritisation of official controls and inadequate follow-up in some cases) impacts in the capacity of the system to ensure compliance.

The official control system avails of sufficient level of competence of involved staff (high level of competence at the central level), detailed documented procedures, and well-established reporting, communication, and coordination between local and central level as well as with other Member States. With some exceptions, the authorities deliver the official controls as planned and additional activities provide information on the long transport of unweaned calves. Gaps in documented procedures relate to the verification of specific requirements for the transport of unweaned calves during long journeys, for example:

- no guidance for evaluating the suitability of the watering systems for unweaned calves in the vehicles,
- no guidance for assessing requirements for the training of staff during the approval of a control post and the frequency of provision of liquids in assembly centres.

Other factors that reduce the effectiveness of the official controls are the occasional lack of or inadequate follow-up when checks found journeys exceeded the allowed time, and the absence of verification control procedures that could identify shortcomings in the official controls and provide insights for improvement and assurances to the stakeholders of compliance with animal welfare legislation.

The report contains a recommendation to the competent authorities aimed at addressing areas in which further improvements are required.

Transport, Slaughter, Pick-up

06/05/2025 : Brussels at a Standstill: The Fight Over Animal Transport Rules

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Author: The European Institute for Animal Law & Policy

Preview: It's a bleak time for animals this Parliamentary term—but one glimmer of hope has been the long-overdue revision of the EU's outdated live transport rules. After years of horror stories and policy inaction, it finally looked as if meaningful reform was on the table. Now, even that faint glimmer is in danger of being extinguished. The European Parliament's agriculture and transport committees have tabled over 3,000 amendments to the Commission's proposed text—many of them conflicting, and some threatening to unravel the entire revision. While a few decision-makers are pushing for tighter safeguards, others are lobbying to scrap the proposal altogether. The revision was prompted by a damning 2022 parliamentary inquiry, which laid bare systemic enforcement failures and called for urgent change. It aimed to prevent the kinds of tragedies witnessed in recent years: cattle being stranded at sea for months; hundreds of sheep drowning off the coast of Romania; pregnant cows trapped in trucks for weeks at the sweltering Turkish border. Despite strong cross-party support during the last mandate, today's Parliament is more fractured—and pressure from industry lobbies is tilting the scales. One set of amendments to Article 27, which sets time limits, proposes extending

allowable journeys to a whopping 111 hours. At the other end of the scale, stricter caps—up to four hours maximum—or improved rules on rest breaks and welfare checks during transport are tabled. The debate is just as fierce when it comes to temperature limits and the transport of unweaned animals. Opponents argue that tougher rules could cripple rural economies.

But what about the cost to animal lives? “Despite years of mounting evidence, including the EU’s own scientific studies and NGO investigations, the European Parliament appears to be buckling under pressure from industry lobbies,” says Gabriela Kubíková, Policy Advisor at the European Institute for Animal Law and Policy. “It continues to refuse a simple truth—that Regulation 1/2005 fails to protect animals, and its current drafting makes effective enforcement virtually impossible. After countless tragedies on roads and at sea, the EU must adopt strong, ambitious, and future-proof rules that protect these sentient beings from immense suffering – not a law that merely shields the industries profiting from that suffering.” Thankfully, the European Commission seems to agree. Andrea Gavinelli, Head of the Animal Welfare Unit, has acknowledged that the 2005 regulation has “reached its technical and administrative limits,” adding that no amount of enforcement can fix its “structural shortcomings.” While meaningful improvements—such as significantly shorter journey times, robust protections for vulnerable animals including those at the end of their productive lives, unweaned young, and pregnant individuals, and a ban on transport during extreme temperatures—would be welcome, our ultimate goal remains clear: a total end to live exports to third countries. In the meantime, measures to prevent animal suffering to some degree—the mandatory re-import of animals who were denied entry to a third country, only allowing transport on vessels flying white flags, and requiring the presence of a qualified veterinarian—would ensure that animals wouldn’t be stranded on borders for weeks, would only be transported on ships in a good condition, and could be euthanised properly by a skilled specialist to prevent suffering if they are sick or injured. Isn’t it time these measures, at least—a bare minimum to alleviate animal suffering—became a reality?

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Abstract: The main aim of this thesis is to develop a practical guide for veterinary practitioners, to assist them in carrying out emergency slaughter. It first examines how the regulations governing emergency slaughter have evolved from their inception in 1933 to the present day. A questionnaire for veterinary students and veterinarians was drawn up, regardless of whether they had already performed emergency slaughter. The questionnaire revealed a glaring need for training in this field as part of the veterinary training curriculum. It also revealed that veterinary students feel unprepared to carry out emergency slaughter, while even vets who have already performed such an operation report that they lacked confidence on the first occasion. The third section contains a compilation of all available information that might assist in performing emergency slaughter. This information covers every stage of emergency slaughter, from regulations on practices (including stunning and bleeding) to the economic implications of this type of slaughter. A practical guide for veterinary practitioners is

provided that can be consulted directly in the field, and contains all the essential information necessary for the optimal implementation of emergency slaughter.