

# FRCAW Newsletter 54

## June - July 2025

### Editorial

#### Implementation of EU pig welfare regulations in Member States



[Image](#) from the website of the [French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty](#) © Xavier Remongin / agriculture.gouv.fr

To understand how European countries implement and customise EU animal welfare policies to fit with their own regulatory systems and priorities, a [study published in Animal](#) has taken a close look at how four Member States have chosen to meet the minimum standards for the protection of pigs laid down in European Directive 2008/120/EC. The study found differences in the density and restrictiveness of the national applications of the EU regulations on pig welfare put in place by the four countries – Denmark and Germany have established national standards that exceed EU requirements, while France and Spain have elected to adhere more closely to the minimum standards set out in the Directive. The authors link these differences in customisation to the particular political and societal priorities of each country. The issue of implementation has also arisen with the publication of a European Commission answer to a [Parliamentary Question](#) put forward by several MEPs concerned at the continued routine tail docking of pigs in almost all Member States (with the

exception of Finland and Sweden) despite the fact that this practice has been banned since 1994. In its answer, the Commission points to its continued efforts to improve the implementation of this ban through the exchange of information and best practices aimed at ending the use of tail docking. It informs the MEPs that its assessments of the action plans put in place at national level are discussed directly with each Member State, and reminds them that it has a range of enforcement options at its disposal when the ban is not adhered to.

The surgical castration of piglets is declining in Europe, having thus far been abandoned by over a third of EU farms. By 2024 in France, two years after the entry into force in January 2022 of the Decree of 24 February 2020 banning this practice, [51% of male pigs were no longer castrated](#), compared with 28% in 2022. The IFIP (Pig Institute) has been supporting this change by disseminating information on good practice among professionals in the sector and developing alternatives to pig castration. These alternatives include techniques used by abattoirs to detect the unpleasant odour known as boar taint in carcasses from uncastrated males, and the use of immunocastration (which removes the male hormone that causes the unwanted smell released during cooking). A [recent scientific review](#) provides an update on the various ethical, regulatory, economic and technical issues surrounding the practice of pig castration and its abandonment.

## Animal welfare and the environment



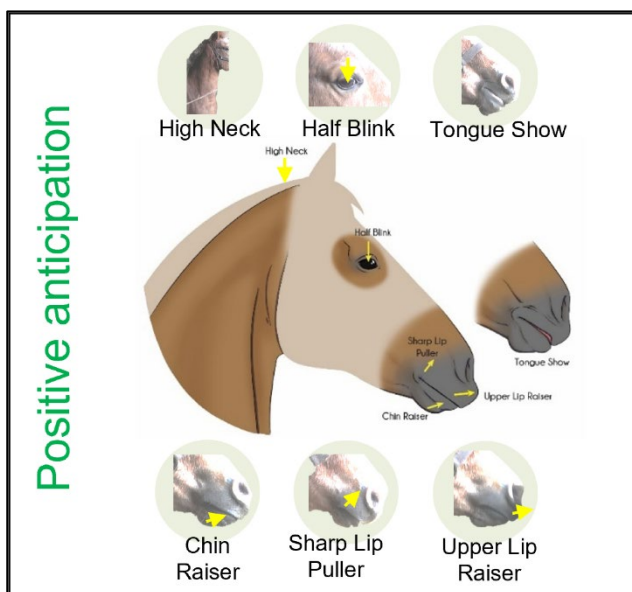
Image from the [Sciences et Avenir](#) website © Vincent M. / BIOSPHOTO

The need to integrate animal welfare into agroecological systems is producing a growing body of research and led, in January 2024, to the creation of the [EUPAHW](#) (European Partnership on Animal Health and Welfare). The partnership sets out to encourage and promote research and collaboration between all key actors, supporting the development of sustainable livestock production systems for society. A recent [review article](#) has identified key sustainability challenges for pig production from the literature. These relate to animal welfare, environmental efficiency and the application of circular bioeconomic strategies that start from the premise that a system can be considered sustainable if it meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Whereas traditional practices often prioritise short-term financial wins, a circular bioeconomy will aim

to align productivity and environmental objectives by optimising the use of biological resources without compromising ethical obligations in terms of animal welfare and social equity. The integration of circular bioeconomic principles, such as the use of human food waste in pig feed or the valorisation of manure, have been shown to be helpful in improving the sustainability of the pig industry. The authors conclude that an interdisciplinary approach, combining support for policy making, scientific innovation, life cycle analysis (LCA) and collaboration with industry is required to achieve sustainable pig farming.

Management of the agricultural landscape can also benefit both sustainability and animal welfare. Widely known for the ecosystem services they provide in supporting biodiversity and soil erosion control, hedges and trees planted in and around fields also have a key role to play in animal welfare. These landscape features provide grazing animals with shelter from the elements, shade in hot weather and areas for scratching, this last being a natural behaviour that stimulates blood circulation, reduces stress and soothes some insect bites. With less exposure to stress factors, animals perform better in terms of milk production and growth. [Agroforestry advisors from the French Chambers of Agriculture](#) are working to support farmers in the maintenance, planting and even the re-design of the layout of hedgerows and trees in their fields, with a view to promoting sustainable agriculture.

## Emotions on the farm, from horses to chickens



[Image](#) adapted from the article by [Phelipon et al. \(2025\)](#)

Looking at an animal's face can provide us with information on its emotional state. To establish whether particular [facial expressions in horses](#) might be specific to either a positive or negative emotional state, twenty horses were filmed as they anticipated two distinct situations: one positive (access to pasture) and the other negative (going alone to a novel environment). Using the statistical network analysis tool (NetFACS) it was possible to identify two separate profiles, showing the interconnections between the 17 FACS primary facial muscular movements found in horses. Each profile matched one of the two situations, as summarised in the conclusion of the study: 'The positive

anticipation face was characterised by a high neck position, half-blinks, sharp lip puller, upper lip and chin raiser movements, and more visible tongue. The negative anticipation face was characterised by a medium neck position, the ears back, flattened more often, as well as more nostril movements by dilating or lifting them and sharp lip puller movements.’ The value of these indicators as tools for understanding the emotional states of equines in response to different situations is demonstrated here. They could, for example, be used in determining the personality traits of horses, contributing to discussions such as that in the recently published [study of positive affective state](#) found in the May issue of Scientific Reports.

Birds, like mammals, are capable of expressing their emotions. In a [study published in Poultry Science](#), researchers demonstrated that chickens were calmer in the presence of humans with whom they had had regular positive interactions (physical contact and stroking). When hens were placed alone in a new environment, the introduction of a human led to calmer behaviours (reduced vigilance and increased foraging) in hens who associated the human with rewarding experiences than in hens who had experienced only visual contact or minimal contact in the preceding two weeks. The results also suggest that positive interactions may lead chickens to perceive humans as social buffers, i.e., as factors that help mitigate stress in challenging situations.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial .....	1
<b>COGNITION-EMOTIONS .....</b>	<b>7</b>
27/05/2025 : Exploring the induction and measurement of positive affective state in equines through a personality-centred lens .....	7
14/05/2025 : Characterisation of facial expressions and behaviours of horses in response to positive and negative emotional anticipation using network analysis .....	7
<b>CONFERENCES-SEMINARS-TRAINING .....</b>	<b>8</b>
26/05/2025 : Diplôme Universitaire en études animales - Faculté de Théologie de Lille.....	8
13/05/2025 : Formation "Transports des Animaux Vivants - CAPTAV bovins, ovins-caprins et porcs" .....	9
<b>ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND HUMAN-ANIMAL RELATIONSHIP .....</b>	<b>10</b>
08/07/2025 : Chickens perceive humans as social buffers and may follow human-given cues: A pilot study .....	10
20/05/2025 : Multibov: un outil et des fiches pour penser l'amélioration du bien-être des vaches laitières .....	11
13/05/2025 : Fish Welfare in the Ornamental Trade: Stress Factors, Legislation, and Emerging Initiatives .....	11
10/05/2025 : Attenuation of Stress Responses to Human Handling Through Habituation in Goats..	11
<b>ETHICS-SOCIOLOGY-PHILOSOPHY-ANIMAL RIGHTS .....</b>	<b>12</b>
11/06/2025 : Bien-être ou bientraitance animale : à qui profitent les mots ? .....	12
12/03/2025 : Professional emotional neutrality and the role of background emotion work in the slaughterhouse.....	13
<b>ANIMAL WELFARE ASSESSMENT AND LABELLING .....</b>	<b>14</b>
07/07/2025 : Le Porc – Étiquette Bien-Être Animal.....	14
10/06/2025 : Decoding vocal indicators of stress in laying hens: A CNN-MFCC deep learning framework.....	14
<b>ANIMAL WELFARE INITIATIVES .....</b>	<b>15</b>
09/07/2025 : EURCAW-Poultry-SFA Newsletter - Edition 12.....	15
26/06/2025 : Newsletter - EURCAW Ruminants & Equines - Volume 10 .....	15
27/05/2025 : Newsletter - EURCAW-Pigs - Edition 13 .....	16
19/05/2025 : Rapport d'activité 2024 - LIT Ouesterel.....	16
<b>INVERTEBRATES.....</b>	<b>17</b>
03/04/2025 : Review: Exploring correctness, usefulness, and feasibility of potential physiological operational welfare indicators for farmed insects : to establish research priorities.....	17
<b>HOUSING AND ENRICHMENT .....</b>	<b>17</b>
15/07/2025 : Positive impacts of a covered veranda on broiler chicken welfare .....	17
01/07/2025 : Replay du webinaire COLOCAVO .....	18
30/06/2025 : Shelter use in horses: Time spent indoors and factors of variation – Results from a one-year longitudinal study .....	18
24/06/2025 : Review - Restricted access to pasture and inadequate grazing in ruminants and equines .....	19
19/06/2025 : Plan « vague de chaleur » : recommandations pour les éleveurs - Ministère de l'Agriculture et de la Souveraineté alimentaire .....	19
13/06/2025 : A systematic review and meta-analysis of physical environmental enrichment to	

improve animal welfare-related outcomes in indoor cattle .....	20
12/06/2025 : A critical review on the welfare of Japanese quail in cage-free housing: Current knowledge and future perspectives .....	20
<b>ONE WELFARE .....</b>	<b>21</b>
04/06/2025 : Modern Pig Production: Aspects of Animal Welfare, Sustainability and Circular Bioeconomy.....	21
29/05/2025 : Les haies pourvoyeuses de bien-être animal .....	22
07/03/2025 : RMT-MAELE .....	23
<b>PAIN MANAGEMENT .....</b>	<b>24</b>
07/07/2025 : Beak trimming of hens: Practices, welfare concerns and alternatives .....	24
05/06/2025 : Quantifying the welfare impact of air asphyxia in rainbow trout slaughter for policy and practice .....	25
27/05/2025 : Plus de la moitié de la production française de porcs mâles non castrés en 2024 .....	25
26/05/2025 : Surgical castration of piglets – challenges and alternatives – a review.....	26
<b>REGULATION .....</b>	<b>26</b>
17/07/2025 : Actualités du Parlement européen (PE) : La présidence danoise informe les commissions du PE de ses priorités.....	26
17/07/2025 : Mise en place d'une liste d'espèces animales non domestiques pouvant être détenues à des fins de compagnie et d'agrément et définition d'un "élevage de conservation" .....	27
15/07/2025 : Assemblée nationale : réponse écrite à la question n°2263 : Transition hors-cage des systèmes d'élevage des poules pondeuses.....	27
15/07/2025 : Parlement européen : réponse écrite à la question E-001682/25 : Loi turque autorisant l'abattage des chiens et des chats errants.....	29
08/07/2025 : Parlement européen : réponse écrite à la question E-001752/2025 : Prosecution of infringements of the Transport Regulation on the protection of animals during transport and related operations.....	30
02/07/2025 : Parlement européen : réponse écrite à la question E-001516/2025 : Respect de la directive sur le bien-être des porcs .....	31
19/06/2025 : Implementation of the European directive on pig welfare: A comparative study of four member states .....	32
18/06/2025 : Rapport d'avancement : Proposition de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil relatif à la protection des animaux pendant le transport et les opérations annexes, modifiant le règlement (CE) n° 1255/97 du Conseil et abrogeant le règlement (CE) n° 1/2005 .....	33
18/06/2025 : European Commission - Have your say .....	33
11/06/2025 : European Commission - Welfare of dogs and cats .....	33
10/06/2025 : Parlement européen : réponse écrite à la question E-001104/25 : Gestion des animaux errants dans l'UE.....	34
03/06/2025 : Assemblée nationale : Réponse écrite à la question n°5678 : Vente des animaux domestiques en animalerie et à la question n°4997 : vente d'animaux sur internet .....	36
03/06/2025 : Assemblée nationale : Réponse écrite à la question n°5528 : Prise en compte du bien-être animal .....	38
03/06/2025 : Agriculture Committee votes on first EU rules on welfare of dogs and cats .....	39
27/05/2025 : Assemblée nationale : Réponse à la question n°2219 : Maltraitance animale dans certains abattoirs français .....	40
20/05/2025 : Assemblée nationale : réponse à la question n°5909 : Transition vers un élevage hors-cage en France .....	41
20/05/2025 : Assemblée nationale : réponse à la question n°4154 : Contrôle des conditions d'abattage des animaux dans les abattoirs.....	43
07/05/2025 : Arrêté du 2 mai 2025 portant extension de l'accord interprofessionnel conclu le 28 février 2025 dans le cadre du Comité national pour la promotion de l'œuf (CNPO) portant création d'une cotisation visant à soutenir la mise en place d'alternatives à l'élimination des poussins mâles .....	44

<b>TRANSPORT, SLAUGHTER, PICK-UP .....</b>	<b>44</b>
30/06/2025 : Deck height did not affect behavioural measures of 'natural movements' and 'adequate ventilation' during 8 h and 23 h transport of weaner pigs.....	44
20/06/2025 : Vigilance canicule : limitations transport bien-être animal.....	45
31/05/2025 : The evaluation of animal welfare indicators based on transport duration and lighting differences in the slaughter of broiler chickens .....	47
29/05/2025 : Humane stunning or stun/killing in the slaughter of wild-caught finfish: The scientific evidence base.....	48
13/05/2025 : European Commission - Overview report on transport of unweaned calves during long journeys.....	48

## Cognition-Emotions

### 27/05/2025 : Exploring the induction and measurement of positive affective state in equines through a personality-centred lens

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

Authors: Loftus, L., Newman, A., Leach, M., Asher, L.

**Preview:** There is increasing focus on how to induce and measure positive affective states in animals and the development of social license to operate has brought this to the forefront within equestrianism. This study aimed to utilise a range of methods to induce and measure positive affect in horses in real-world settings. Twenty healthy horses were scored for personality, exposed to four induction methods (wither scratching, high value food provision, positive reinforcement training and the addition of an affiliative conspecific), and data collected on their behaviour (QBA and ethograms) and physiology (heart and respiratory rate, heart rate variability, eye and ear thermography and salivary cortisol). Analyses identified potentially sensitive and specific behavioural (ear and eye position, QBA items, frustration items) and physiological (RR mean, HF power, LF power, LF/HF ratio, mean HR, RMSSD and pNN50) measures of affective state across the four quadrants of core affect. Individual difference effects were found, and personality traits such as unfriendly, nervous and unresponsive were associated with differing responses to induction stimuli indicating that all four induction stimuli are potentially useful for inducing positive affect depending on their salience to the individual. Research measuring and inducing positive affect in animals rarely considers personality, but this study underscores its importance. The dimensional approach taken allowed for assessment of the broad arousal and valence components of affect without ascribing measures to discrete emotions. Accurate, real-world measures of affect could benefit 116 million equines globally, and exploring ways to promote positive affect in horses can significantly enhance their welfare.

### 14/05/2025 : Characterisation of facial expressions and behaviours of horses in response to positive and negative emotional anticipation using network analysis

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



Authors: Romane Phelipon, Léa Bertrand, Plotine Jardat, Fabrice Reigner, Kate Lewis, Jérôme Micheletta, Léa Lansade

**Preview:** The welfare of an animal is closely linked to their emotional experiences, making it essential to identify reliable indicators of these emotions. This study aimed to identify behaviours and facial movements in horses experiencing contrasting emotional valence, triggered by the anticipation of a positive condition (going to pasture) or a negative condition (going alone to a novel environment). Twenty horses were daily trained to wait in a starting box before being exposed to these two conditions. After one week of positive training or negative training, we analysed horses' behaviours, cortisol variations, and facial movements while they waited in their starting box. First, we confirmed that the two conditions induced contrasting emotional valence, as evidenced by the shorter time taken to approach in the positive condition compared to the negative, and by the higher maximal heart rate and cortisol variation in the negative condition. Then using the Equine Facial Action Coding System (EquiFACS) and network analysis (NetFACS) we revealed distinct behaviours and facial expression profiles. In positive anticipation, the horses exhibited a greater range of behaviours, including shaking their heads from side to side, stepping back, sniffing, and pawing at the ground. Additionally, two distinct facial expression profiles were identified as specific to positive and negative anticipation. In positive anticipation, the horses displayed a higher neck, accompanied by a greater frequency of half-blinks and mouth movements. Conversely, in negative anticipation, the horses exhibited a medium neck, with ears backward accompanied by more flattened ears and expressed more nostril movements. The findings highlight the importance of these indicators in characterising horses' emotions and emphasise their significance for assessing equine welfare.

## Conferences-Seminars-Training

### 26/05/2025 : Diplôme Universitaire en études animales - Faculté de Théologie de Lille

Document type: diploma announcement published by the [Faculté de théologie de Lille](#)

Author: Faculté de théologie de Lille

**Summary:** A multidisciplinary diploma that is the only one of its kind in the Hauts de France region is available in the field of animal studies. It offers complementary approaches from the fields of philosophy, biology, law and religious science, with the aim of bringing together as many different perspectives on animals as possible. The definition and place of animals are crucial questions in the fields of biology, law, philosophy and religious studies. All the more so as they are intrinsically linked to the question of the definition and place of human beings. What constitutes a human or an animal, respectively? What are the consequences of opting for a particular definition of one in relation to the other? Is it possible for us to reflect on the animal without reference to humanity? For that matter, should we speak of 'the animal' or of animals? Would it be better to talk about non-human animals? The various movements and debates currently active in the public arena demonstrate the urgency of these questions. In France, as elsewhere in the world, there has been growing societal concern over the way we treat animals for several years now. Our society is undergoing a process of reflection and cultural transition with regard to the way it uses animals, and considerations on the animal condition are booming! Many people are opting for a vegetarian or vegan diet, while different





French Reference Centre  
for Animal Welfare

movements are campaigning for improved animal welfare and even the complete abolition of all forms of animal use. At the same time, the development of animal studies is making ever greater progress in various fields of research. Against this backdrop, the education and training of people committed to the protection and respect of animals has become a major issue. Science, law, philosophy and religion all have a role to play in this cultural transition in our relationship with animals. These are the objectives of this University Diploma (DU), through a resolutely pluri- and interdisciplinary approach.

Deadline for applications: September 25, 2025

Information and registration

Betty Rondelaere

Continuing Education Project Manager

03 61 76 75 00

[Contact](#)

## **13/05/2025 : Formation "Transports des Animaux Vivants - CAPTAV bovins, ovins-caprins et porcs"**

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

Author: Idele

**Preview:** This training course is certified by the French Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and registered in the Répertoire Spécifique du RNCP, ref 1532. Those who successfully complete the course are awarded the Certificat de compétences des conducteurs et des convoyeurs d'animaux vivants (CCTROV, ex CAPTAV), subject to receiving a pass mark in the assessment component (2020 success rate for candidates entered by the Institut de l'Elevage was 100%).

In-person training: **06/10 to 08/10/2025, Créancey (21)**

**Fees:** 760 euros for 2 days, 920 euros for 2.5 days, 1090 euros for 3 days (without VAT).

**Farmers:** possibility of reimbursement from Vivéa

**Duration :** single species = 14 hours, + 3.5 hours per additional species

**Objectives**

- Describe the key regulatory points on the welfare and transport of live animals
- Take account of the principles of animal behavior during transport
- Transport animals while ensuring their welfare and the safety of those involved
- Explain the importance of animal welfare in guaranteeing meat quality

**Who is the course for?**

Transporters, farmers, business operators

**Program**

- Discussion of driver practices
- Behavior of ruminants
- Regulations and the expectations of society in terms of animal protection and welfare
- French and European regulations on live animal transport and animal health
- Meat with a high pH
- The driver's job, safety and respect for animal welfare
- Health problems that may occur during transport, first aid and treating animals



French Reference Centre  
for Animal Welfare

The training covers 1 - 3 species (cattle, sheep/goats, pigs), depending on the session and participant interests. Typically:

- Days 1 and 2: Species 1
- Day 3 am: Species 2
- Day 3 pm: Species 3

[Sign up](#)

## Animal husbandry and Human-animal relationship

### 08/07/2025 : Chickens perceive humans as social buffers and may follow human-given cues: A pilot study

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

Authors: Vitor Hugo Bessa Ferreira, Elise Calesse, Lucille Dumontier, Fabien Cornilleau, Julie Lemarchand, Auriane Foreau, Maxime Quentin, Léa Lansade, Céline Tallet, Xavier Boivin, Ludovic Calandreau

**Preview:** Positive perception of humans, extensively documented in domestic mammals, remains comparatively underexplored in domestic birds like chickens, with existing studies largely focusing on fear reduction. This research evaluated whether chickens perceive humans positively, accounting for interaction types and breed differences. Two breeds (Lohmann LSL Classic, Brown Classic) experienced physical contact (PC), visual-only contact (VC), or minimal human contact (MC) over 13 days (Days 35–51; PC and VC: 1–2 min/day). Birds were assessed using three behavioral tests. During the separation–reunion test (Days 52–53), individuals underwent two 3-min separations (experimenter absent) and reunions (experimenter present) in an open-field setting. Subsequently, the experimenter attempted up to six standardized capture attempts to catch the birds (the capture test). Lastly, the local enhancement test (Days 120–137) assessed birds' ability to use human presence/gestures to locate food. In the separation-reunion test, PC birds exhibited calmer/positive behaviors, such as reduced vigilance and increased foraging, in the presence of the experimenter compared to being alone. Conversely, MC birds displayed fewer calm behaviors and greater withdrawal when the experimenter was present. Brown birds showed more calm behaviors, reduced movement, and spent more time near the experimenter than white birds. The capture test supported these results, with PC and brown birds being easier to capture. In the local enhancement test, two PC individuals and the brown PC group as a whole successfully used human-given cues to locate food rewards. These results indicate that, as observed in other species, chickens—especially those with positive human experiences—can associate humans with rewarding outcomes. Positive interactions may also lead chickens to perceive humans as social buffers—that is, as factors that help mitigate stress in challenging situations. Although fundamental, this study highlights the potential of breed-sensitive approaches to improve poultry welfare and opens the discussion on adapting human–animal interactions to breed-specific characteristics. These insights can inform welfare-enhancing practices and provide practical tools for on-farm management that benefit both animals and farmers.



French Reference Centre  
for Animal Welfare

This publication was the subject of an [article on the INRAE website](#) on 08/07/2025

## **20/05/2025 : Multibov: un outil et des fiches pour penser l'amélioration du bien-être des vaches laitières**

Document type: article published by [Idele](#)

Authors : Idele, LIT OUESTEREL

**Preview:** The MULTIBOV tool has been developed as part of the LIT OUESTEREL project: it can be used to direct farmers towards levers to improve cow welfare, helping them select the appropriate actions to take. It is accompanied by practical fact sheets describing the various technical solutions available, along with their impacts on the environment and on the farm's balance sheet and working hours and also providing useful references.

This tool has been developed using a multi-criteria assessment of levels of impact measured against reference practices and refined using reports from farmers who have already changed their farming methods. Two equivalent tools are available to help improve the welfare of pigs and broilers.

For further information, go to: [www.assolitouesterel.org](http://www.assolitouesterel.org)

## **13/05/2025 : Fish Welfare in the Ornamental Trade: Stress Factors, Legislation, and Emerging Initiatives**

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

Authors: Maia C.M.; Gauy A.C.d.S.; Gonçalves-de-Freitas E.

**Preview:** The ornamental fish trade involves multiple phases, from acquisition—whether through wild capture or aquaculture—to the final destination, often including long transport routes. Throughout this trade, fish encounter several stressors like handling, improper maintenance methods, high or inadequate stocking densities, poor water quality, and mechanical disturbances during transport. The varying levels of care provided by aquarists also influence the long-term welfare of these animals, with many fish being treated more as ornaments rather than sentient beings. Worsening these issues, there is a lack of scientifically grounded guidance for hobbyists and caregivers, important gaps in legislation concerning fish welfare, and limited oversight in the ornamental trade. Nevertheless, some international organizations and grassroots projects have been working to promote responsible practices and disseminate educational resources. However, the need for efficient welfare standards, legislation, and comprehensive information for all stakeholders involved in this sector remains critical. Here, we synthesize the problems in the ornamental fish trade and suggest some solutions to reduce the impacts of management practices on the welfare of these fish.

## **10/05/2025 : Attenuation of Stress Responses to Human Handling Through Habituation in Goats**

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

Authors: Erukulla T. T., Batchu P., Gurrapu P., Shaik A. Terrill T. H., & Kannan G.

**Preview:** Goats raised on pastures are seldom handled except for purposes such as weighing and providing veterinary care. Regular positive interactions with human caretakers have been reported

to attenuate fear and stress responses to routine human handling; however, this has not been adequately studied in meat goats. This experiment was conducted to determine the effects of habituation to handling on behavioral, physiological, and metabolomic responses in goats when subjected to routine handling. Seventy-two male (uncastrated) Spanish goats (6 mo; BW = 25.2 ± 0.37 kg) were randomly allocated to one of two treatment (Trt) groups: (i) regularly handled by stroking the back of each goat before feeding time for 90 days (handled: H) or (ii) not subjected to handling during the same period, but all other conditions were the same (non-handled: NH). After the 90-day habituation period, the goats were subjected to an arena test in the presence of an observer. Immediately after the test, the goats were subjected to routine veterinary exams that involved blood sampling (0 min) and measuring heart rate (HR), respiratory rate (RR), rectal temperature (RT), and body weight (BW). Blood samples were also collected after the veterinary exam (20 min) to determine physiological and metabolomic responses. Data from the arena test were analyzed using a Mann–Whitney U Test, and blood physiological responses were analyzed using MIXED procedures in SAS with sampling time (Time) as a repeated measure. Unpaired t-tests showed that the increase in BW was higher in the H goats ( $p \leq 0.01$ ) compared to the NH goats over the 90 d habituation period. The approach distance from the observer ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) and frequency of urination ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) were greater in the NH goats during the arena test. HR ( $p \leq 0.01$ ) and RR ( $p \leq 0.01$ ) were higher in the NH group compared to the H group. Plasma cortisol concentrations were higher at 20 min than at 0 min ( $p \leq 0.05$ ), while epinephrine ( $p \leq 0.05$ ), metanephrine, normetanephrine, phenylethylamine, and 5-methoxytryptamine concentrations were higher ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) in the NH goats than in the H goats. A targeted metabolomics analysis showed that six of the eight affected amino acids were lower ( $p \leq 0.05$ ), and six of the seven affected phosphatidylcholines were higher ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) in the NH goats compared to the H goats. The results show that habituation reduces fear and stress responses to routine handling, in addition to increasing BW, which can improve the welfare of meat goats.

## Ethics-Sociology-Philosophy-Animal rights

### 11/06/2025 : Bien-être ou bientraitance animale : à qui profitent les mots ?

Document type: article published in [The Conversation](#)

Author: Marie-Claude Marsolier

**Preview:** Should we talk about "bien être" (well-being) or "bientraitance" (good treatment) when discussing animal welfare? Although closely related, the two expressions in French are neither equivalent nor neutral.

"Bientraitance" is a recent term, which emerged at the end of the last century and was conceived as the counterpart to its opposite "maltraitance" (ill-treatment or abuse), itself derived from the verb "maltraiter". "Bientraitance" is generally taken to mean "the fact of treating an individual well, be it a child, or a person who is elderly, dependent or sick; the sum of a set of individual acts of good treatment". It therefore applies first and foremost to humans in vulnerable situations due to their age, state of health or other forms of dependence. For non-human animals, the Commission d'Enrichissement de la Langue Française defines the expression "bientraitance animale" in a

comparable way: "All those measures put in place to provide an animal with environmental conditions likely to contribute to its well-being [or welfare] or reduce its discomfort, such as suitable food, housing, transport conditions and care."

*Similar words, different perspectives*

It's tempting to equate "bientraitance" with "bien-être", when in fact the two terms have opposing perspectives. "Bientraitance" considers the point of view of the individual who "treats", while "bien-être" considers the point of view of the individual who is "treated". "Bientraitance" consists of a set of practices whose aim is to ensure well-being or welfare, but does not refer directly to this state, it would be described in legal terms as of a legal obligation of means rather than of results. The achievement of well-being is a much more demanding objective than compliance with the protocols of good treatment, protocols which are, moreover, defined by those in charge of applying them, who do not directly experience the consequences. The linguistic symmetry between "bientraitance" and "maltraitance" is misleading here: whereas hitting an animal is bound to cause suffering or discomfort, animal "bientraitance", especially if it is defined through negatives (not hitting animals, management techniques designed to ensure freedom from hunger, thirst, injury and disease, etc.), is not sufficient to ensure a state of "bien-être", whether we consider the original meaning of the term ("a general feeling of pleasure and fulfillment brought about by the full satisfaction of bodily and/or mental needs"), or that recently adopted by the ANSES for non-human animals ("a positive mental and physical state linked to the satisfaction of physiological and behavioral needs, and of expectations"). These considerations on the essential differences between "bientraitance" and "bien-être" have prompted people who care about other animals' living conditions to condemn "bientraitance animale" as a reference and promote "bien-être" in its place for its greater attention to the realities of the situation in which animals find themselves.

*Problematic aspects of bien-être*

That said, the use of "bien-être" animal is not without its own serious issues. Unlike its English counterpart "welfare", bien-être is an intrinsically positive term. Whereas "poor welfare" refers to poor living conditions, "mauvais bien-être" is an oxymoron. "Bien-être animal", used in French regulatory texts to designate the overall living conditions of non-human animals, fails therefore to refer in a coherent and convincing way to what is an often terrible situation, which we should endeavour to make every effort to change. Given the positive connotations of "bien-être", it is hardly surprising that industries which benefit from non-human animals have been quick to appropriate the term. In particular, the livestock industry uses it extensively in its communications, including in the context of slaughter. This is one of the reasons why the term "mal-être animal" ("animal ill-being") has emerged as a general term that applies to the living conditions of non-human animals, the vast majority of which undeniably fall short of well-being. Having refocused our attention on non-human animals by moving from use of the term animal "bientraitance" to animal "bien-être", the time would now appear to have come to face up to the reality of their living conditions by naming these without resorting to pernicious euphemisms.

## **12/03/2025 : Professional emotional neutrality and the role of background emotion work in the slaughterhouse**

Document type: sociological article published in [Agriculture and Human Values](#)

Author: Marcel Sebastian





French Reference Centre  
for Animal Welfare

**Preview:** While most people in Western societies see themselves as emotionally incapable of slaughtering animals, slaughterhouse workers are involved in the killing of animals on a daily basis. This article analyzes how slaughterhouse workers perform emotion work in the context of slaughtering animals. The empirical study, based on 13 semi-structured interviews carried out with German slaughterhouse workers, shows that the successful use of emotion management techniques leads to professional emotional distance towards the act of killing. For the slaughterers interviewed, being emotionally unaffected by killing animals was the result of background emotion work, which was an expression of a professional emotional habitus. Only in rare cases, when disruptive emotions interrupted the familiar routines during work, was the underlying emotion work foregrounded and thus consciously experienced and reflected upon. The article contributes to research on slaughterhouse work by systematically analyzing emotion work techniques used by slaughterers. It is innovative in that it introduces the theoretical approach of background and foreground emotions in workplaces that require professional neutrality to the study of slaughterhouse work. It shows that background emotion work is an essential prerequisite for slaughterhouse work and invites further research on background emotion work in morally tainted jobs. The paper makes an innovative contribution to the theory and research on the sociology of emotions and emotion work, the sociology of human–animal relations, and the sociology of agriculture and food.

Publication leading to [an article on the monitoring blog](#) of the French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty.

## Animal welfare assessment and Labelling

### 07/07/2025 : [Le Porc – Étiquette Bien-Être Animal](#)

Document type: article published in [Étiquette Bien-être Animal](#)

Author: Étiquette Bien-être Animal

#### **Preview: La démarche Étiquette Bien-Être Animal s'étend à la filière porcine !**

This set of technical standards assesses the level of welfare of pigs, from birth to slaughter. The standards and associated requirements are the result of a joint project by all involved in the industry (producers, processors, distributors, animal protection NGOs). It is also based on the results of a number of external consultations (with experts, equipment manufacturers, technical institutes, etc.) and on the performance of field testing to ensure that it works properly and provides relevant information.

311 individual criteria are evaluated, including indicators based on the results of direct observation of the animals.

- 22 criteria are used to evaluate the parental phase (during gestation)
- 39 criteria are applied to the maternity phase
- 23 criteria measure the post-weaning phase
- 42 criteria are applied to fatteners
- 185 criteria are used to evaluate welfare during transport and slaughter

### 10/06/2025 : [Decoding vocal indicators of stress in laying hens: A CNN-MFCC deep learning framework](#)

Document type: scientific article published in [Smart Agricultural Technology](#)

Author: Neethirajan S.

**Preview:** Artificial intelligence is revolutionizing our capacity to interpret and respond to animal emotional states. This study leverages advanced Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) combined with Mel Frequency Cepstral Coefficients (MFCCs) to decode intricate vocalization patterns in laying hens experiencing acute environmental stress. Controlled exposure to realistic auditory stimuli (dog barking) and visual stimuli (umbrella opening) across different developmental stages enabled a critical comparative evaluation of vocal stress responses within a commercial-like experimental setup. Over five weeks, audio data were systematically captured from control and treatment groups, providing insights into vocal behaviors before and after stress induction. Remarkably, younger hens demonstrated significantly elevated vocal activity and more pronounced spectral shifts when stressed, underscoring age-dependent variations in emotional reactivity and coping mechanisms. The CNN model attained a remarkable 94 % classification accuracy, reliably discriminating stressor types, age categories, and exposure conditions based solely on MFCC-derived acoustic signatures. Analysis further revealed that lower-order MFCC features are acutely responsive to stress-induced vocal dynamics, whereas higher-order coefficients remained relatively constant, signifying subtle emotional states. These compelling findings position vocalizations as powerful, non-invasive biomarkers of welfare status in poultry, supporting real-time, AI-driven monitoring solutions. By facilitating early, precise detection of distress signals, this innovative approach holds substantial promise for enhancing welfare standards and management decisions in livestock production. Ultimately, this study presents a robust, scalable methodology poised to advance digital agriculture broadly, turning previously silent animal expressions into essential indicators of their wellbeing and transforming farm animal management into a more ethically responsive practice.

## Animal welfare initiatives

### 09/07/2025 : [EURCAW-Poultry-SFA Newsletter - Edition 12](#)

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

Author: EURCAW-Poultry-SFA

**Preview:** Issue 12 of the EURCAW-Poultry-SFA contains our Questions to EURCAW (Q2E) responses, a [webinar recording](#) of the Spanish version of "Welfare assessment during electrical stunning in rabbits", and many other items.

[Download the Newsletter](#) (pdf in English)

### 26/06/2025 : [Newsletter - EURCAW Ruminants & Equines - Volume 10](#)

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

Author: EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines*

**Preview:** Welcome to the second edition of the EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* newsletter in 2025. In this edition, we share details of our outputs and activities since March 2025 including two



French Reference Centre  
for Animal Welfare

scientific reviews, a Question to EURCAW (Q2E), inspector@work, Meet the Scientist, the 4 EURCAWs meeting and other news related to ruminant and equine welfare.

#### *New outputs*

Since March 2025, EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* has published the following outputs:

- [Review on Thermal Comfort](#)
- [Review on Access to Pasture](#)
- [Q2E Preparedness plans for livestock welfare emergencies during natural disasters](#)
- ...

## **27/05/2025 : Newsletter - EURCAW-Pigs - Edition 13**

Document type: Newsletter from [EURCAW-Pigs](#)

Author: EURCAW-Pigs

#### **Summary:**

- PigStun: Developing non-aversive stunning methods for pigs
- 4EURCAWs Annual Meeting
- Challenges during pig welfare inspection on farm and at transport
- Videos on communication between welfare inspectors and pig transporters
- Q2E on nutrition and tail biting
- ...

## **19/05/2025 : Rapport d'activité 2024 - LIT Ouesterel**

Document type: 2024 activity report from [LIT OUESTEREL](#)

Author: LIT OUESTEREL

**Summary:** Rooted in the three regions of France's Grand Ouest – Brittany, Normandy and Pays de la Loire – the Laboratoire d'Innovation Territoriale (regional innovation laboratory) “Ouest Territoires d'Élevage” (LIT OUESTEREL) is intended to provide a bridge between livestock farming and society. Through a consortium of 65 partners, it designs innovations of all kinds to improve animal welfare and health, also paying attention to the working conditions of livestock production professionals. It sets about this by co-producing its ideas with all stakeholders, following the 'living lab' principles of open innovation, in order to determine new models for farming, transport and slaughter that meet the expectations and needs of all those involved. This project is supported by the France 2030 “Territoires d'Innovation” program and that of the Regional Councils of the three regions. To achieve its goals, the LIT OUESTEREL makes use of the association of the same name, which implements part of the project's operations. For the past five years, a dedicated team has been putting a series of actions in place that are focused on improving farm animal welfare, reducing antibiotic use, and improving working conditions for those in the industry. It works to develop knowledge, tools, practices, and innovations—including products of digital technology—and to translate them into practical applications at farm, transport and abattoir levels. Its work is carried out on a vertical axis of connections, bringing together production sectors, citizens, and consumers, and along a horizontal axis based on cohesion, bringing together all regional stakeholders.

[Download the report](#) (.pdf)

## Invertebrates

### 03/04/2025 : Review: Exploring correctness, usefulness, and feasibility of potential physiological operational welfare indicators for farmed insects to establish research priorities

Document type: scientific synthesis available before publication in [Animal](#)

Authors: M.G. Johnson, M. Barrett

**Preview:** While insects are already the largest group of terrestrial food and feed livestock animals in terms of absolute number of individuals, the insect farming industry is expected to continue growing rapidly in order to meet the nutritional demands of the human population during the 21st century. Accordingly, consumers, producers, legislators, and industry-adjacent researchers have expressed interest in further research and assessment of farmed insect welfare. Operational indicators of animal welfare are those that can be used to putatively assess the welfare of animals in the absence of true indicators of affective state (e.g., valenced/emotional state) and are commonly used for farmed vertebrate livestock species; however, significant behavioral and physiological differences between vertebrates and insects means these indicators must be examined for their correctness, usefulness, and feasibility prior to use with insect livestock. The most valuable operational welfare indicators would (1) correctly correspond to the insect's putative welfare state; (2) provide useful information about what is affecting the insect's welfare; and (3) be feasible for deployment at a large scale on farms. As there are many possible indicators that could be further researched in insects, evaluating the likely correctness, feasibility, and usefulness of these indicators in insects will allow researchers to prioritize which indicators to investigate first for use on farms. Thus, in this review, we explore whether physiological or somatic indicators of farmed vertebrate welfare, including whole-body, immune, neurobiological, and respiratory/cardiac indicators, may be correct, feasible, and useful for assessing farmed insect welfare. We review insect physiological systems, as well as any existing, welfare-relevant data from farmed or closely related insects. We end by proposing a priority list for physiological, operational welfare indicators that are most likely to correctly, usefully, and feasibly assess farmed insect welfare, which may guide indicator validation research priorities for insect welfare scientists.

## Housing and Enrichment

### 15/07/2025 : Positive impacts of a covered veranda on broiler chicken welfare

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

Authors: F. Mocz, J-P. Moysan, L. Warin, A. Keita, V. Michel, M. Guinebretière

**Preview:** In standard broiler production systems, birds do not have outdoor access and spend their entire lives in the same environment. A covered veranda can improve broilers' living conditions by providing access to different environments and to areas with varying space availability (i.e. different

stocking densities), while also allowing them to experience outdoor sensory stimulations and protecting them from predators and the risk of disease. This study aimed to evaluate the welfare and health of broilers with access to a covered veranda. Redbro broilers were randomly assigned to six identical enriched rooms (with elevated platform and alfalfa bales), each containing 2,478 birds (final stocking density of 26 kg/m<sup>2</sup>). Three rooms had access to a covered veranda from 22 days of age (D22), while the other three had no such access (control). Footpad dermatitis, hock burns and gait were assessed on D36. We also measured activity levels (D34 and D37), use of the covered veranda (from D22 to slaughter), litter quality (D34 and D37), as well as feed and water consumption throughout the rearing period. Mortality and body weight were also monitored. Access to a covered veranda did not affect mortality, body weight, litter quality, or feed and water consumption. None of the broilers from either treatment group exhibited gait issues or footpad dermatitis. However, the prevalence of hock burns was lower in the broilers having access to a covered veranda. Additionally, more active behaviors were observed among broilers from the covered veranda group than from the control group. The covered verandas were frequently used, with usage increasing as the broilers aged. Within a day, use was more frequent in the morning and decreased thereafter. Providing access to a covered veranda improved bird welfare without negatively impacting zootechnical indicators.

### **01/07/2025 : Replay du webinaire COLOCAVO**

Document type: recording of the COLOCAVO webinar from [Idele](#)

Authors: Amandine Launay (Institut de l'Elevage - Idele), Valérie Brocard (Idele)

**Preview:** The aim of the COLOCAVO project is to develop working solutions for the group housing of dairy calves while respecting their welfare. What was the purpose of the project? How are dairy calves currently housed in France, and what different group housing systems are in place on the ground? This webinar provides some initial answers to these questions.

[Link to replay](#)

### **30/06/2025 : Shelter use in horses: Time spent indoors and factors of variation – Results from a one-year longitudinal study**

Document type: scientific article published in [Applied Animal Behaviour Science](#)

Authors: Léa Lansade, Julie Lemarchand, Alice Ruet

**Preview:** Stabling is a common lifestyle for horses, yet numerous studies show that it negatively impacts their welfare, leading to behavioural and health issues. In this study, we aimed to determine how much time horses choose to spend inside their stalls when given the option to be inside (in shelters/stalls) or outside at pasture. Using permanently installed night-vision cameras inside the stalls, we recorded 53 horses across 20 sites in temperate climates (France, Belgium) over a full year. We analyzed their stall presence and activity (lying down, observe, stand at rest, eat, etc.) for 72 consecutive hours each month over 12 months. The results show that, on average, horses spend only 3 h per day inside, and not consecutively (entering 2.5 times per day). There is a strong seasonal effect: horses spend twice as much time in their stalls in summer than in winter. This finding is notable as it contrasts with the usual advice of stabling horses in winter and turning them out to pasture in summer. In winter, horses predominantly return to their stalls late at night (00:00–06:00) to eat and



lie down, while in summer, they return in the afternoon (12:00–18:00) to rest standing. Contrary to expectations, presumably rustic breeds (ponies) spent more time inside, and age had no effect on this, indicating that stalls are essential for all types of horses. Additionally, the larger the shelter (in sq m per horse), the more it is used. Stalls fully enclosed with a single access door are also associated with higher usage in summer, winter, and autumn, compared to an open shelter. The use of blankets in winter or fly masks in summer is not associated with a reduction of the time spent in the stalls, suggesting that these accessories do not substitute for shelter. There is also significant inter-individual variability among horses: the ideal is to allow them the freedom to come and go as they please in order to best respect their agency and individual needs.

## **24/06/2025 : Review - Restricted access to pasture and inadequate grazing in ruminants and equines**

Document type: synthesis published by [EURCAW Ruminants & Equines](#)

Authors: Brunet Valentin, Fusi Francesca, Bernardo Tiziano, Canali Elisabetta, Ruet Alice, Faye Bernard, Aubé Lydiane

**Preview:** Pasture access allows ruminants and equines to graze or browse plants, and also provides opportunities to express a large behavioural repertoire, generally increasing animal welfare. Indeed, animals at pasture spend more time moving and exploring, can express social facilitation with their conspecifics, can have improved lying comfort and better social interactions with conspecifics. Pasture access also improves expression of feeding behaviour by increasing the time spent foraging and allows animals to choose their preferred feed. Finally, several benefits on health parameters have been reported, such as a decrease of locomotion disorders, skin lesions, mastitis, and also the possibility of self-medication against parasitism. When access to pasture is restricted (no access at all or no access after a period of grazing), there is generally an increase of abnormal behaviours, which may be associated with changes in physiological and health parameters, indicative of impaired welfare. However, pasture access for ruminants and equines may also present some risks. Nutritional deficiency may occur depending on several factors such as climate, soil properties, variation in feed quality or botanical composition of pasture that can lead to insufficient forage intake (quality or quantity), and also the presence of toxic plants. Thermal stress is another major issue due to extreme hot and cold weather conditions. Ruminants and equines may also be at risk regarding locomotory and health disorders (e.g. parasitism). Finally, to ensure adequate access to pasture, recommendations are provided on feed, water, shelter, disease prevention and walking tracks and roads.

## **19/06/2025 : Plan « vague de chaleur » : recommandations pour les éleveurs - Ministère de l'Agriculture et de la Souveraineté alimentaire**

Document type: article published by [MASA](#)

Author: French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty (MASA)

**Preview:** Meteorologists agree that heat waves will come earlier in the season, and will be increasingly frequent, intense and long-lasting. Measures to anticipate and prepare for future

heatwaves are therefore essential. The French National Heatwave Plan, which has been in place since the Summer of 2003, has now become an Interministerial Heatwave Management Plan, extending to the livestock sector. The plan includes a national information campaign intended for:

- livestock and pet farming professionals;
- animal transporters.

Its purpose is to help owners protect and manage the welfare of their animals, particularly in the event of a heat wave.

To find out how to get ready, the following documents are available:

[Government recommendations for pet owners](#)

[Itavi recommendations on laying hens](#)

[Interbev recommendations on the transport of animals](#)

[Itavi recommendations on broiler chickens](#)

[IFIP recommendation sheets](#)

[CNIEL recommendations on ventilation in dairy buildings](#)

## **13/06/2025 : A systematic review and meta-analysis of physical environmental enrichment to improve animal welfare-related outcomes in indoor cattle**

Document type: meta-analysis published in [Animal Welfare](#)

Authors: Unsal G, Johnson KF, Stergiadis S, Bennett R, Barker ZE.

**Preview:** This systematic review aims to evaluate the effectiveness of various physical environmental enrichment items such as brushes, ropes, teats, chains, balls, cowhides/blocks, at improving the welfare of indoor-housed calves, heifers, and cattle. This review of 33 peer-reviewed papers and one industry report evaluated different welfare-related outcomes following physical environmental enrichment, including feed intake, lying time, play and exploratory behaviour, aggression, stereotypic behaviour and cross-sucking behaviour. The results of the meta-analysis revealed that calves and heifers enrolled in experimental studies using enrichment items had significantly improved growth rates, and increased locomotor play, but the overall reduction in cross-sucking behaviour was small and non-significant. The effect of enrichment on feed intake, aggression/stereotypic behaviour, play behaviour, cleanliness score contrasted between studies, with some reporting improvements while others showed no effect of environmental enrichment in these parameters. The risk of bias assessment revealed limitations in researcher blinding, sequence generation, and allocation concealment across the literature assessing the effectiveness of environmental enrichment on animal welfare. Overall, this review underscores the significant positive impact of physical enrichment on the welfare and behaviour of indoor-housed cattle, while highlighting the need for further research to optimise enrichment strategies across different cattle age groups and housing conditions.

## **12/06/2025 : A critical review on the welfare of Japanese quail in cage-free housing: Current knowledge and future perspectives**

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

Authors: Jansson DS, Hedman FL, Yngvesson J, Keeling L, Henriksen R

**Preview:** The Japanese quail (*Coturnix japonica*) is an increasingly popular species in poultry production. Concern about poultry welfare, including quail, has resulted in a stronger focus for farms to transition to cage-free housing as highlighted by the 2020 European Citizens' Initiative 'End the Cage Age'. Knowledge about how to design cagefree housing to accommodate Japanese quail's behavioral and physiological needs is scarce, and there are currently no standardized regulations regarding this type of housing for quail in the EU. Based on available literature, we review current information on the specific needs and requirements of quail to facilitate the transition to cage-free systems. Overall, the literature shows that Japanese quail spend most of their time on the ground, often pecking, scratching, or hiding under cover, that they will lay eggs in nests if these are provided and appropriately designed, and that they dustbathe if given substrate to do so. However, information about optimal group size, stocking density, nest design, and appropriate litter substrates have not been sufficiently well researched in non-cage systems, and neither has the design of cage-free housing when large groups of quail are housed together. Additionally, guidelines regarding successful management of the reportedly high level of agonistic behavior performed by male quail housed in groups is missing, as well as instructions on the ideal sex ratio in large breeding flocks. In addition to controlled experimental studies to fill specific knowledge gaps in these areas, we suggest precision livestock farming technologies such as real-time image analysis and modelling using artificial intelligence to gather this information on farms and/or in research studies. We also suggest using genomic selection to tackle the high levels of agonistic behavior reported in male Japanese quail by identifying the genetic architecture underlying this trait to facilitate faster selection against it. While phasing out caged housing for Japanese quail has been suggested to ensure better animal welfare, this review highlights that more information and research are needed to guarantee that this transition doesn't introduce new welfare and general managing problems in quail. We suggest that knowledge and experience about this transition from other poultry species, especially laying hens, can be used to facilitate the transition.

## One Welfare

### 04/06/2025 : Modern Pig Production: Aspects of Animal Welfare, Sustainability and Circular Bioeconomy

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

Authors: Sossidou EN, Baniyas GF, Batsioulas M, Termatzidou S-A, Simitzis P, Patsios SI, Broom DM.

**Preview:** Modern pig production must balance efficiency, animal welfare, and environmental sustainability while embracing circular bioeconomy principles. This review critically examines the scientific literature from the past decade, focusing on the environmental impacts of pig farming, animal welfare considerations, and circular bioeconomy strategies. Key challenges include the ethical treatment of pigs, regulatory frameworks, and the sector's contribution to climate change through emissions and resource use. Sustainable pig farming relies on innovative housing systems, welfare-oriented management practices, and legislative measures that improve animal welfare. Moreover, integrating circular bioeconomy strategies, which include manure management for biogas

production, alternative feed ingredients, and wastewater recycling, enhances resource efficiency while reducing environmental footprints. Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) methodologies provide insight into the environmental impacts of different production systems, guiding policymakers and producers toward more sustainable practices. Despite these advances, further research is needed to optimize feed alternatives, improve manure treatment technologies, and explain how to improve animal welfare standards. This review highlights the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in achieving sustainable pig farming and underscores the need for continued innovation in aligning productivity and environmental aims.

## 29/05/2025 : Les haies pourvoyeuses de bien-être animal

Document type: article published by [Chambres d'Agriculture France](#)

Author: Chambres d'Agriculture France

**Preview:** We often associate the presence of hedgerows and isolated trees with the biodiversity benefits they bring and their function in reducing soil erosion. Their role in animal welfare and the consequent improvement in livestock performance is more rarely mentioned, though this is far from negligible. The climatic upheavals we are currently experiencing, whether in the form of droughts or bad weather, are causing problems for herds on pasture. Hedges and trees in open fields can provide shelter from the wind and rain, and shade in hot weather. On some particularly exposed sites, wind intensity can be reduced by 30-50%. Animals themselves naturally seek out shelter. This thermoregulatory behaviour leaves them less exposed to heat stress and can improve their performance, whether in terms of Average Daily Gain (ADG) for beef cattle and sheep, or milk production. The same applies to poultry and goats for which paddocks or outdoor runs are provided. In excessively hot weather, for example, the behavior of cows changes - rumination is recorded as taking longer, the heart rate also slows, and grass intake is significantly reduced, all of which have an impact on growth and milk production. According to VetAgro Sup, a cow is considered to find itself under heat stress at 22°C and 50% humidity. A well-documented publication on the topic, produced by agroforestry advisors in the Hauts-de-France region, has recently appeared.

### *Provision of an essential scratching surface*

On top of the protection they provide against climate-related hazards, trees and hedges also provide scratching surfaces, an often underestimated contribution to animal welfare. The natural behavior of scratching stimulates blood circulation, acts to relieve stress - particularly where there are dominance relationships - and alleviates some parasite bites.

### *Other related benefits*

These are, of course, in addition to other more frequently mentioned benefits such as :

- maintenance of biodiversity
- combating soil erosion and water run-off
- creation of carbon sinks...

### *Support from the Chambers of Agriculture*

Whether you are interested in the upkeep or new planting of hedges and field trees or in creating a planting plan (particularly in the case of land consolidation), the 140 agroforestry advisors at the Chambers of Agriculture can provide independent, relevant help and advice for your thoughts and projects. Please feel free to contact them.

## 07/03/2025 : RMT-MAELE

Document type: information note published by [RMT MAELE](#)

Author: Ifip-Institut du porc

**Preview:** RMT MAELE has created a database of key statistics on the role of livestock farming in the French agri-food system. This project has enabled the creation of a set of coherent data on:

- the process of feeding livestock, including the surface areas involved and competition with human foods
- animal excretion and effluent production, with the various uses to which waste is put
- the gaseous emissions associated with livestock farming
- carbon storage
- production of animal products and co-products, with their uses, particularly in human foods.

Livestock farms are integrated into a comprehensive vision of :

- agriculture involving a complete farming system that encompasses all land use for crops including those linked to livestock farming
- the French diet, involving all products consumed including animal products

Data sheets are available for consultation from March 15 to July 1, 2025 at the following link: [RMT-maele](#).

They can be viewed and downloaded and you can also register comments if you log in. Comments will be taken into account as part of the finalization process for the output of the Joint Research Network's most recent 5-year cycle, producing a booklet containing key figures on the role of livestock farming in the French agri-food system. 20 information sheets have been made available. *3 sheets relate to the method used by RMT MAELE to establish the key figures for livestock farming in France:*

- Sheet 0 - Global approach
- Sheet 1 - Ferme France élevage (French Livestock Farming)
- Sheet 2 - Typical Livestock farming case studies

*10 sheets from MAELE RMT set out the key statistics for livestock farming in France:*

- Sheet 3 - Animal feed and flows of raw materials
- Sheet 4 - Gross production of livestock manure
- Sheet 5 - Animal products and sub-products from livestock farms
- Sheet 6 - Symbiotic fixation of nitrogen from livestock farms
- Sheet 7 - Carbon storage and livestock farms
- Sheet 8 - Gaseous emissions associated with livestock farms
- Sheet 9 - Valorization of livestock effluent
- Sheet 10 - Water and energy consumption by livestock
- Sheet 11 - Competition between animal feed and human food
- Sheet 12 - Consumption of animal products for human consumption

*7 sheets provide expert opinions on specific issues:*

- Sheet 13 - Nutritional and dietary recommendations in France - MS Nutrition
- Sheet 14 - Dietary scenarios with healthy, sustainable diets - MS Nutrition
- Sheet 15 - In vitro meat - Auzalide35
- Sheet 16 - Environmental footprint of livestock effluent – Agrosolutions



- Sheet 17 - Farmers' perceptions of the attractiveness of the profession - IDELE/IFIP/ITAVI
- Sheet 18 - Current and potential resources to create livestock feed - IDELE/IFIP/ITAVI
- Sheet 19 - Factors affecting changes in the consumption of meat products in France - IFIP

## Pain management

### 07/07/2025 : Beak trimming of hens: Practices, welfare concerns and alternatives

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

Authors: Harliqueen Jacinto, Marisa Erasmus

**Preview:** Beak trimming is common in the management of laying hens, involving the removal of a portion of a bird's beak to minimize harmful behaviors. While beak trimming helps reduce injuries among birds, the technique has also raised animal welfare concerns. Thus, farmers and researchers are continuing to explore ways to manage hens without the need to trim their beaks. (...)

#### *Types of pecking*

- Gentle Feather Pecking (...)
- Severe Feather Pecking (...)
- Vent Pecking and Cannibalism (...)

#### *Methods of beak trimming*

(...) There are two main methods:

- Hot Blade Trimming (...)
- Infrared Beak Treatment (...)

#### *Welfare concerns*

While beak trimming helps prevent serious injuries, it raises several welfare concerns spanning from the early days as chicks to maturity as laying hens.

- Pain (...)
- Changes in behavior (...)
- Difficulty in eating and foraging (...)
- Social interactions, hygiene, and health (...)

#### *Alternatives to beak trimming (...)*

- Breeding calmer hens
- Environmental enrichment
- Management strategies
- Improving diet quality
- Provision of good foraging opportunities (...)

#### *Changes in regulations*

In many countries, regulations exist to limit or ban beak trimming. For example, some European countries like Denmark, Sweden, and Norway have completely banned the practice (Jung & Knierim, 2018). Other countries encourage farmers to adopt alternative methods, such as improved management practices and environmental enrichment, to reduce the need for beak trimming. In other countries, such as the United States, beak trimming is practiced as a method to reduce and prevent

injurious pecking and is not prohibited by federal law, although certification programs and animal welfare organizations (...) permit beak trimming only under strict guidelines.  
(...)

## **05/06/2025 : Quantifying the welfare impact of air asphyxia in rainbow trout slaughter for policy and practice**

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

Authors: C. Schuck-Paim, W.J. Alonso, P.A. Pereira, J.L. Saraiva, M. Cerqueira, C. Chiang & L.U. Sneddon

**Preview:** The effective improvement of animal welfare requires quantitative methods to compare diverse impacts across practices and policies on a common, relatable scale. The Welfare Footprint Framework (WFF) fulfills this need by providing a standardized welfare impact measure: cumulative time in affective states of varying intensities. To this end, WFF estimates rely on documented syntheses of existing research, including behavioral, neurophysiological and pharmacological indicators. We apply this framework to quantify the welfare impact of air asphyxia during fish slaughter, using rainbow trout as a case study. Based on a review of research on stress responses during asphyxiation, we estimate 10 (1.9–21.7) min of moderate to intense pain per trout or 24 (3.5–74) min/kg. Cost-effectiveness modelling shows that electrical stunning could avert 60–1200 min of moderate to extreme pain per US dollar of capital expenditure, but commercial performance remains variable. Percussive stunning demonstrates reliable effectiveness, but still faces implementation challenges. These findings provide transparent, evidence-grounded and comparable metrics to guide cost–benefit decisions and inform slaughter regulations and practices in trout (and potentially other species). With over a trillion fish slaughtered annually, they also demonstrate the potential scale of welfare improvements achievable with effective stunning methods.

This publication was the subject of an [article in Science Post](#) on 20/06/2025

## **27/05/2025 : Plus de la moitié de la production française de porcs mâles non castrés en 2024**

Document type: article published by [Acta](#)

Author: Acta (technical agricultural institutes)

**Preview:** In Europe, more than a third of farms no longer castrate their pigs. In Spain, Europe's leading pig producer, 80% of male pigs are left uncastrated. In Germany, the majority of farmers continue to castrate their pigs under general anaesthetic using isoflurane - a practice authorized in that country but banned in France. Nevertheless, 15% of German male pigs on farms are uncastrated and, since 2023, production of immunocastrated pigs has been increasing, now representing 3 to 5% of males and offering an alternative that appeals to certain markets. In France, [a decree and declaration published in January 2022](#) prohibit live castration without anaesthesia. In 2024, 51% of French male pigs were longer castrated, compared with 28% in 2022, and close to 3% will be immunovaccinated. The IFIP (Institut du Porc) is supporting this transition by disseminating best farming practices and uses for meat from entire or immunocastrated males, notably through regional events and presentations to professionals from the industry. In addition, as

a participant in the European WELFARMERS program, IFIP is leading research on how to avoid the pain associated with castration.

## **26/05/2025 : Surgical castration of piglets – challenges and alternatives – a review**

Document type: scientific synthesis published in [Annals of Animal Science](#)

Authors: Zalewska Anna, Batorska Martyna, Więcek Justyna, Rekiel Anna, Sońta Marcin

**Preview:** The European Declaration on Alternatives to Surgical Castration of Pigs stipulated that from 2012, surgical castration could only be performed using anesthetics and/or analgesics, and that it would be completely abandoned by 2018. Many Member States disagreed with the conditions set out in the Declaration. The issue of surgical castration arouses serious controversy among consumers due to their concerns over animal welfare and rearing conditions. According to the Council Directive 2008/120/EC of 18 December 2008 laying down the minimum standards for the protection of pigs, surgical castration can be performed without anesthesia until the seventh day of a piglet's life. Castration is considered painful and can have many adverse health and production consequences. Alternatives to surgical castration include immunocastration or the fattening of entire male pigs. However, these methods also evoke many emotions in both consumers and pork producers. The most common concerns relate to the presence of boar taint in pork, and the appearance of aggressive and sexual behavior within herds. Despite ample literature sources from recent decades, it is difficult to definitively determine whether it is possible to completely eliminate the surgical castration of male pigs. While the use of anesthesia and/or analgesics appears to meet the welfare requirements for pigs, it also poses practical and economic challenges to producers

## **Regulation**

### **17/07/2025 : Actualités du Parlement européen (PE) : La présidence danoise informe les commissions du PE de ses priorités**

Document type: news item from the [European Parliament](#)

Author: European Parliament

**Preview:** Ministers are holding a series of meetings in parliamentary committees to present the priorities of the Danish Presidency of the Council. Denmark holds the Presidency of the Council until the end of 2025. This text will be updated regularly as the hearings take place.

*Agriculture and Rural Development Committee*

On 15 July, Jacob Jensen, Minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, said that the Presidency will focus on easing the administrative burden for farmers while continuing to promote the green transition and animal welfare. Concluding the current negotiations on the common agricultural policy (CAP) simplification package and starting discussions on the post-2027 CAP will also be priorities. Several MEPs called for fair conditions between farmers inside and outside the EU in connection with the Mercosur Agreement and animal welfare. They asked how the presidency will help

guarantee the EU's protein and fertiliser self-sufficiency and support organic farmers. Others raised the issue of ensuring that the green transition does not compromise the agriculture sector's sustainability. (...)

#### *Environment, Climate Change and Food Safety Committee*

On 15 July, Jacob Jensen, Minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, highlighted the need to simplify EU legislation for farmers and food producers, and to promote innovation through tools such as new genomic techniques, on which the Presidency aims to strike a deal with Parliament. He stressed the importance of making the EU's agri-food sector more competitive while maintaining high standards of sustainability and food safety. Other priorities include an EU strategy for plant-based proteins, animal welfare, and action to tackle antimicrobial resistance. MEPs raised questions about the future of the CAP, demanding greater fairness, increased support for smaller farms, and clear targets for pesticide reduction. MEPs also enquired about trade agreements, such as with Mercosur, and a possible ban on PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances). (...)

### **17/07/2025 : Mise en place d'une liste d'espèces animales non domestiques pouvant être détenues à des fins de compagnie et d'agrément et définition d'un "élevage de conservation"**

Document type: article published by the [French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty](#)

Authors: Céline Couderc-Obert (IGEDD), Catherine Lhote (IGEDD), Philippe Steinmetz (CGAAER)

**Preview:** Videos of servals lounging like cats on a private sofa are currently in circulation. To combat the impulsive acquisition of such animals, the Animal Welfare Act of 2021 provides for the establishment of a list of non-domestic species that may be kept without a formal licence application, as companion animals or for pleasure and leisure activities. In order to propose how this list should be compiled, a task and finish group from the CGAAER and the IGEDD has been established.

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

### **15/07/2025 : Assemblée nationale : réponse écrite à la question n°2263 : Transition hors-cage des systèmes d'élevage des poules pondeuses**

Document type: Answer to question 2263, published in the [Journal officiel de la République française](#)

Authors: question : Mme Cyrielle Chatelain (Isère (2e circonscription) - Écologiste et Social). Answer: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty.

**Question :** Ms Cyrielle Chatelain draws the attention of the Minister of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry to the situation of caged laying hens on French farms. Following the adoption of the so-called EGalim law in 2018, it is now forbidden to install new caged layer hen farms or increase the capacity of existing farms. This ban, specified by Decree no. 2021-1647 of December 14, 2021, applies to both the creation of new buildings and the conversion of existing buildings for cage rearing, as well as to any redevelopment intended to increase the number of hens reared in cages in existing facilities. Logically, these regulations should lead to a gradual reduction in the proportion of eggs

from cage-based farms, unless there is an overall drop in national production. However, according to figures from the Comité national pour la promotion de l'œuf (CNPO), while total egg production has risen by 4% in 2023, the proportion of eggs produced in cages has paradoxically increased, rising from 23% to 27% from the end of 2022 to the end of 2023. In view of this unexpected development, she would like to know whether any breaches of the regulations have been reported since the decree came into force, and what steps have been taken to remedy the situation. She would also like to know what control mechanisms have been put in place to ensure compliance with these legal obligations.

**Answer:** The European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) "End the Cage Age", calls on the Commission to bring forward legislation to ban the use of cages for laying hens, rabbits, pullets, broiler breeders, breeder laying hens, quail, ducks and geese, farrowing crates and stalls for sows, and individual pens for calves. In its response to the ECI, the Commission undertook to present, by the end of 2023, a legislative proposal to phase out and eventually ban the use of cage systems for all animals mentioned in the initiative. The improvement of animal welfare and combating animal abuse are priorities for this government. There is a strong and growing societal expectation on the part of consumers and citizens regarding animal welfare issues, and this expectation must be met. Improving animal welfare is a key factor for the future of the European livestock industry. France supports the Commission's proposal to determine the ways in which cages are to be phased out, based on scientific advice and an impact analysis. The approach adopted, which takes into account social, economic and environmental impact assessments, as well as changing consumer needs and expectations, is highly appropriate. On March 10, 2023, the French government launched a preliminary stakeholder consultation as part of the review announced by the European Commission of its existing legislation on animal welfare and protection. Its aim was to identify the points of convergence between the many players involved in animal protection in France, and to promote the practical experience and particular needs of the French population. Several principles underpin the government's action. A first, key challenge lies in the prevention of distortions to the level playing field. To this end, we are focusing on two levers: support for European harmonization, and a way to ensure that animal welfare requirements within the European Union are matched by equivalent rules for animals whose products are imported. Second, transition has a cost. This additional cost must be shared between all those involved in the livestock industry production and distribution chain, including distributors and consumers. Last, the government wishes to provide sufficient future visibility for operators, particularly those who are starting out, to enable them to plan ahead and invest. To this end, the government is supporting a number of research projects, some of which aim to bring the use of cages to an end. One example is the project led by the Institut Technique des Filières Avicole, Cunicole et Piscicole (ITAVI) to develop group enclosures for rabbit farms, which is supported by public funds as part of the sum of 500,000 euros per year allocated since September 2023 by the Ministry to animal welfare associations and professionals in the rabbit farming industry. In June 2023, "cage-free" farming was estimated to represent between 10 and 12% of total farming activity in this sector. Another such project is the CAREFUL project, which aims to create a cage-free industry for fattened palmipeds. These projects complement the progress achieved through industry plans to reduce the number of hens kept in cages, a practice that has been steadily declining since 2018. As early as October 2019, the Comité National pour la Promotion de l'Oeuf (CNPO) announced that it was ahead of schedule in meeting its commitment to a situation where 50% of



chickens are raised on farms using approaches other than intensive cage-based production. To date, poultry farms have continued the transition process, with less than 33% of laying hens in France still in cages in 2022. In other words nearly three-quarters of hens were being farmed in alternative systems by then, while the overall figure for Europe was 58% in 2021. France is this ahead of its European partners, and well on the way to ending the use of cages. No inspections specifically directed at chicken farms are currently carried out, but they do occur during animal protection and health inspections, since farmers of laying hens are required to declare the arrival of each new batch of birds to the departmental directorates responsible for population protection (DDPP). In most départements, animal protection inspectors in the poultry sector know of caged laying-hen farms, it is one of the methods that can be declared in CERFA 13989\* 04 applications, and such farms are regularly inspected under the health charter.

## **15/07/2025 : Parlement européen : réponse écrite à la question E-001682/25 : Loi turque autorisant l'abattage des chiens et des chats errants**

Document type: Response from the [European Commission](#) to question E-001682/25

Authors: question : Sebastian Everding (The Left), Anja Hazekamp (The Left), Petras Auštrevičius (Renew), Erik Marquardt (Verts/ALE), Tilly Metz (Verts/ALE), Tomáš Kubín (P/E), Maria Zacharia (NI). Answer: Mrs Kos on behalf of the European Commission

**Question:** In 2024, the Turkish Government adopted legislative changes, which will lead to mass killings of stray dogs. It is estimated that there are approximately four million street dogs in Türkiye that are now to be put down.

Türkiye is not a member of the EU, but it does have aspirations to join, and as a member, it would have to conform to the very high standards of animal welfare to which EU Member States must adhere. Not only does Türkiye need to progressively align its legislation, implementation and law enforcement with EU standards in this area, but there is also an urgent need for awareness-raising among Turkish citizens.

1. What measures is Türkiye taking to align its animal welfare legislation with the prevailing animal welfare legislation in the EU?
2. What steps is the Commission taking to encourage Türkiye to protect these helpless animals and to raise awareness on animal welfare among Turkish citizens?

**Answer:** The welfare and management of stray dogs are not regulated at EU level. The Commission provides financial support to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) for the implementation of the platform on animal welfare for Europe<sup>[1]</sup> and its fourth action plan (2024-2026), which aims to improve animal welfare, through priority topics, including stray dog population control. Türkiye, as a member of WOAH and of the platform, participates in training and capacity-building activities related to dog population management, all of which are supported by the Commission. The goal of the platform is to help member countries progressively comply with WOAH standards on animal welfare. The Commission also supports WOAH's work to adopt and revise the existing standards, such as those related to dog population management. As a WOAH member, Türkiye should implement international animal welfare standards, including those on stray dog population management<sup>[2]</sup>.

[1] <https://rr-europe.woah.org/en/Projects/animal-welfare-platform-europe/>.

[2] C'est-à-dire le chapitre 7.7 (Gestion de la population canine) du Code sanitaire pour les animaux terrestres de l'OMSA.

## **08/07/2025 : Parlement européen : réponse écrite à la question E-001752/2025 : Prosecution of infringements of the Transport Regulation on the protection of animals during transport and related operations**

Document type: Reply from the [European Commission](#) to question E-001752/2025

Authors: question : Marianne Vind (S&D). Answer: Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission

**Question:** Article 25 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 requires Member States to lay down and enforce effective penalties for infringements of the rules on the protection of animals during transport. For long journeys, a journey log must be drawn up and submitted to the authority of the country of departure within one month after the journey concerned has been completed<sup>[1]</sup>. Logs identify infringements in particular. However, the regulation does not specify how authorities should act in the event of infringements outside their jurisdiction. Article 28 only stipulates that notification must be given to authorities that gave authorisation to the transport operators concerned, but not, for example, to authorities in transit countries.

Documents provided by Animal Protection Denmark show that cases involving foreign firms are usually dropped, either because Denmark does not have jurisdiction or because of a lack of proportionality between resources and the expected penalty. The information available suggests that there are similar practices in other Member States.

In the light of the above:

1. Does the Commission have an overview of Member States' prosecutions in these cases, and does the Commission regard it as compatible with EU law<sup>[2]</sup> for Member States not to prosecute in such situations?
2. How should Member States fulfil their obligations under EU law in this respect?
3. Does the Commission intend to bring infringement proceedings against Member States that fail to prosecute, or what measures is the Commission considering introducing in the forthcoming revision of the Transport Regulation so as to ensure that infringements established on the basis of return journey logs are prosecuted regardless of where they are committed and of where transport operators are based?

[1] See Annex II, point 8.

[2] Including Article 25 of the Transport Regulation and the duty of loyalty under Article 4(3) TFEU.

**Réponse en anglais (original) :** 1. Current EU legislation on the protection of animals during transport<sup>[1]</sup> requires Member States to impose penalties if necessary. An overview of their enforcement actions is regularly made publicly available by Member States, but this information is not detailed enough for the Commission to identify specific cases, such as penalties imposed following the notification of infringement through a journey log.

2. According to the Official Controls Regulation (OCR)[2], it is the responsibility of Member States to take the appropriate actions in the event of non-compliances established by their risk-based controls, including controls of journey logs submitted within one month after the journey concerned has been completed. In the case of a non-compliance that concerns more than one Member State, the OCR contains detailed rules and procedures for administrative assistance and cooperation, which require, among others, to inform the competent authority of the Member State concerned[3]. The Commission has recently launched a Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (iRASFF) animal welfare module, which constitutes the IT tool that Member States must use to implement certain provisions of the OCR on administrative assistance and cooperation[4]. Filing a non-compliance in this module requires the notified Member States to take certain obligatory actions[5], including actions to ensure compliance with the rules on the protection of animals during transport.

3. In its proposal for a regulation on the protection of animals during transport, the Commission introduces a new approach to harmonise sanctions in case of infringements of the rules on animal transport[6]. The debate is ongoing. The Commission remains open to work with the co-legislators in this area.

[1] Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 of 22 December 2004 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations, OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1-44.

[2] Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products (Official Controls Regulation), OJ L 95, 7.4.2017, p. 1-142.

[3] See in particular Title IV of the Official Controls Regulation.

[4] In particular, Articles 105 and 106 of the Official Controls Regulation.

[5] Article 50 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety and Articles 102 to 108 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.

[6] Chapter IX 'Sanctions', Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of animals during transport and related operations, COM/2023/770 final.

## **02/07/2025 : Parlement européen : réponse écrite à la question E-001516/2025 : Respect de la directive sur le bien-être des porcs**

Document type: Reply from the [European Commission](#) to question E-001516/2025

Authors: Question : Sebastian Everding (The Left), Anja Hazekamp (The Left), Tilly Metz (Verts/ALE), Thomas Waitz (Verts/ALE), Günther Sidl (S&D), David Cormand (Verts/ALE), Cristina Guarda (Verts/ALE), Anthony Smith (The Left), Maria Noichl (S&D), Niels Fuglsang (S&D), Sigrid Friis (Renew), Elisabeth Grossmann (S&D), Friedrich Pürner (NI), Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (Renew).  
Answer: Mr. Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission

### **Question : Compliance with the pig welfare directive**

The routine tail-docking of pigs has been prohibited in the EU since 1994. The Commission recognised in 2021 that the 'tail-docking of pigs is a routine practice in 26 out of 28 Member States

and approximately 150 million pigs annually are subject to this practice. With the exception of a few Member States, such as Finland and Sweden, most EU Member States did not comply with the ban or with providing adequate enrichment materials'[1]. The Commission has previously asked the Member States to establish national action plans for the prevention of the routine tail-docking of pigs and provide quantifiable data to measure the progress made in this area.

1. What effective steps does the Commission plan to take to ensure that Member States secure compliance with the ban on routine tail-docking?
2. Will the Commission publish the assessments it has made of each Member State's action plan?
3. Is the Commission now prepared to launch infringement proceedings against Member States that are making no serious attempt to enforce this legislation?

[\[1\]](#) Commission Staff Working Document of 31 March 2021 entitled 'Evaluation of the European Union Strategy for the Protection and Welfare of Animals 2012-2015' (SWD(2021)0076).

**Answer:** 1. The Commission is consistently working to identify tools that can help farmers transit to rearing undocked pigs. In parallel, the Commission is engaging in discussions with Member States to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices to rear undocked pigs. The Commission has established an animal welfare working group under the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed — Section on Animal Health and Welfare, which met in September 2024 and in May 2025, with the topic of tail docking on the agenda of both meetings[1].

2. The results of the assessment of each Member State's action plan will be addressed to their respective competent authorities.

3. The Commission has a range of options as regards its enforcement efforts and has certain discretion in deciding on launching infringement procedures against Member States. In the case of tail docking, enforcement options are currently being examined in the context of the new Commission mandate.

[\[1\] https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/animal-welfare/animal-welfare-expert-group\\_en](https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/animal-welfare/animal-welfare-expert-group_en).

## **19/06/2025 : Implementation of the European directive on pig welfare: A comparative study of four member states**

Document type: pre-publication of a scientific article in [Animal](#)

Authors: J. Kuenzler, C.S. Vogeler

**Preview:** Farm animal welfare is an important component of the transition towards sustainable food systems. The success of the recent European Citizen's Initiative "End the Cage Age" has shown that animal welfare is also a public concern. Yet, despite the existence of European Union (EU) legislation on farm animal welfare, little is known about how member states implement these laws, leading to potential enforcement gaps. This raises the question of how member states customize EU animal welfare policies and what drives these variations. Our study investigates this issue by analyzing the implementation of a European pig welfare directive in four member states: Denmark, France, Germany, and Spain. Drawing on the concept of customization, we assess differences in the density and restrictiveness of national regulations compared to EU standards and explore potential drivers, such as public opinion and political party positions. Our findings reveal significant variation, with Denmark and Germany exceeding EU standards through stricter and denser regulations, while France and Spain adhere more closely to the minimum requirements. These differences align with

varying public and political priorities at the national level. The results highlight the critical role of national contexts in shaping the implementation of EU policies and provide insights for designing more effective animal welfare legislation. Our study underscores the need for a deeper understanding of the interplay between public opinion, political dynamics, and regulatory frameworks to enhance the welfare of farmed animals across the EU.

## **18/06/2025 : Rapport d'avancement : Proposition de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil relatif à la protection des animaux pendant le transport et les opérations annexes, modifiant le règlement (CE) n° 1255/97 du Conseil et abrogeant le règlement (CE) n° 1/2005**

Document type: progress report published by the [Council of the European Union](#)

Author: Council of the European Union

**Preview:** On June 10, the Polish government, which holds the rotating EU Council Presidency from January to July 2025, published a progress report on the proposal for a new regulation on the protection of animals during transport. The report includes, among other actions and revisions, proposed re-drafted versions of Chapter VI (Conditions for transport of terrestrial animals) and the corresponding Chapter V of Annex I (Journey times, extreme temperatures, rest periods and watering and feeding intervals).

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

## **18/06/2025 : European Commission - Have your say**

Document type: public consultation published by the [European Commission](#)

Author: European Commission

**Preview:** Based on scientific evidence, stakeholder feedback, assessment of economic & social impacts, and taking into account societal demand, this initiative is a step in the revision of the EU animal welfare legislation, including to follow-up on the commitment to phase-out the use of cages for certain animals.

To uphold EU values, it will pursue, in line with international rules, a stronger alignment of animal welfare production standards applied to imported products.

Feedback period: 18 June 2025 - 16 July 2025 (midnight Brussels time)

The Commission would like to hear your views: This call for evidence is open for feedback. Your input will be taken into account as we further develop and fine-tune this initiative. Feedback received will be published on this site and therefore must adhere to the feedback rules.

[More about call for evidence](#)

In order to contribute you'll need to register or login using your existing social media account.

[Give feedback](#)

## **11/06/2025 : European Commission - Welfare of dogs and cats**

Document type: article published by the [European Commission](#)



Author: European Commission

**Preview:** On 7 December 2023, the Commission adopted a [proposal for new rules on the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability](#), as well as stricter rules for the protection of these animals during transport, via a [respective proposal](#). The demand for dogs and cats has grown considerably in recent years, leading to an increase in trade and online sales of these animals. Animal welfare standards currently vary across Member States and there is evidence suggesting suboptimal welfare conditions in the supply of dogs and cats in the Union, as well as evidence of illegal trade in these animals. The proposal aims to establish uniform EU rules for the welfare of dogs and cats that are bred or kept in breeding establishments, in pet shops and in shelters. For the first time, minimum standards will apply for the housing, care and handling of these animals across the EU. Strict traceability requirements, along with possibility for automated checks when supplying takes place, notably through online means, will make it easier for authorities to control the breeding and trade of these animals and for prospective owners to verify the origin of their future pet, while increasing the chances that it will be physically and behaviourally healthy. Member States will need to offer training for animal handlers and anyone buying a dog or cat will be informed about the importance of responsible ownership. Imports of dogs and cats will have to meet equivalent welfare standards. The legislative proposal is based on an analysis of the problems related to the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability, and on an assessment of the impacts of the main proposed changes. The findings are summarised in a [Staff Working Document](#) which builds on evidence collected from various Commission and external reports, such as the [report from the European Food Safety Authority on the welfare aspects related to housing and health of cats and dogs in commercial breeding establishments](#), but also on evidence gathered in the context of consultations activities with stakeholders. The [work of the voluntary initiative on the health and welfare of pets \(dogs and cats\) in trade](#), under the EU Platform on Animal Welfare, also contributed to the process. From December 2023 to 15 March 2024, the proposal was submitted to public feedback through the Commission's [Have your say portal](#). The results are available in the [Summary of feedback on commission proposal for new rules on the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability](#).

## **10/06/2025 : Parlement européen : réponse écrite à la question E-001104/25 : Gestion des animaux errants dans l'UE**

Document type: Reply from the [European Commission](#) to question E-001104/2025

Authors: Question: Nikos Pappas (The Left). Answer: Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission

### **Question: Management of stray animals in the EU**

Protecting stray animals is of vital importance to their welfare and to public health in the European Union. Article 13 of the TFEU recognises that animals are 'sentient beings' and the Commission recently put forward a proposal for a Regulation on the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability' with the aim of establishing a single legislative framework for ensuring animal welfare and the uniform and more effective management of animals across all Member States. However, the current lack of a common legislative framework means there are significant discrepancies between national policies, with some states having developed systematic actions to monitor and care for stray animals,

while others, such as Greece, continue to face challenges due to limited resources and the failure to properly implement protection measures. In view of the above, can the Commission say:

1. How does it intend to manage stray animals in the EU that do not live in shelters? Are there plans for a single policy on sterilising, keeping a record of and protecting stray animals with a view to ensuring their well-being and preventing abandonment?

2. What EU financial instruments can be used to manage and protect stray animals and is the Commission considering the possibility of setting up a funding mechanism to support targeted actions in this field?

**Answer:** 1. In line with international standards<sup>[1]</sup> and for reasons of subsidiarity, the management of stray dog and cat populations remains under the responsibility of the Member States, including on policies for reproduction control, record keeping and protection. The proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability of 2023<sup>[2]</sup> includes provisions on the management of dogs and cats kept in shelters, which are considered “former” strays<sup>[3]</sup>, and they are registered in a national database in the name of the person responsible of the shelter. The proposal also requires the display of a warning regarding responsible ownership, when advertisements are placed on online platforms. This measure could contribute to decreasing the abandonment of owned dogs and cats, that is a common source of stray animals.

2. Even though the welfare of stray dogs is not governed at EU level as mentioned in the Commission’s reply to PQ E-001939/2021<sup>[4]</sup>, some concrete actions have been taken. In particular, the Commission remains the main financial donor of Regional Platform on Animal Welfare for Europe of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH)<sup>[5]</sup>. This Platform is a key regional mechanism to facilitate the implementation of the WOAH standards on animal welfare, including on dogs’ population management<sup>[6]</sup> by the 53 countries of the Regional Commission for Europe. The Commission also prepares the EU position on the WOAH international standard for dog population management.

<sup>[1]</sup> World Organisation for Animal Health, Terrestrial Code, Chapter 7.7. Dog Population Management: ‘Considering that sources and drivers of free-roaming dogs and management goals differ across communities, dog population management should be individually tailored to local and national contexts or “these recommendations for dog population management measures are described in detail in Articles 7.7.14. to 7.7.24. and should be implemented in accordance with the national context and local circumstances.

<sup>[2]</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52023PC0769>.

<sup>[3]</sup> There is a typing error in the proposal which reads “formal” instead of “former” stray.

<sup>[4]</sup> [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-001939-ASW\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-001939-ASW_EN.html).

<sup>[5]</sup> <https://rr-europe.woah.org/en/Projects/animal-welfare-platform-europe/about-the-platform/>.

<sup>[6]</sup> [https://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Health\\_standards/tahc/current/chapitre\\_aw\\_stray\\_dog.pdf](https://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Health_standards/tahc/current/chapitre_aw_stray_dog.pdf).

## **03/06/2025 : Assemblée nationale : Réponse écrite à la question n°5678 : Vente des animaux domestiques en animalerie et à la question n°4997 : vente d'animaux sur internet**

Document type: Answer to questions 5678 and 4997 published in the [Journal officiel de la République française](#)

Authors: questions : M. Philippe Fait (Pas-de-Calais (4e circonscription) - Ensemble pour la République) et M. Bruno Bilde (Pas-de-Calais (12e circonscription) - Rassemblement National).  
Answer: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty.

**Question 5678 :** Mr. Philippe Fait asks the Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty to clarify how the ban on the sale of dogs and cats in pet shops, provided for by the Law of November 30, 2021, which came into force on January 1, 2024, is being applied. This ban, which constitutes Article L. 214-6-3 of the French Rural and Maritime Fishing Code, is intended to combat impulse purchases of animals, prevent abandonment and encourage responsible adoption. However, it appears that some establishments are finding ways around this ban by continuing to sell animals from the rear of commercial premises, or by carrying out online sales accompanied by in-store collection, thereby failing to apply the spirit of the law. For example, reports have been received of a pet shop where dogs and cats are still being sold in contravention of the law. Moreover, it would appear that there are no penalties for breaching this ban, as Decree 2022-1354 of October 24, 2022 setting out the penalties for the 2021 law contains no specific provisions for the punishment of such fraudulent practices. In the absence of a clear system of penalties, pet shops that fail to comply with the law are continuing to operate with impunity. Given this situation, he would like to know what measures the Minister intends to take to ensure compliance with the ban on the sale of dogs and cats in pet shops, and to ensure stricter controls of the establishments concerned. He would also like to know whether the Minister intends to add a clause to the regulatory framework including specific penalties for any infringement of Article L. 214-6-3 of the French Rural Code. Last, he asks about the possibility of abolishing the current derogation that allows pet shops to sell animals online. This would strengthen the original purpose of the Law and avoid this circumvention of the ban.

**Question 4997:** Mr. Bruno Bilde draws the attention of the Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty to the abuses linked to the sale of animals on the internet. Since 2016, the sale of pets has been prohibited to private individuals. Since January 1, 2024, pet shops have been banned from selling dogs and cats on their premises. However, some have discovered an alternative sales method by setting up a *click and collect* system, which allows pets to be sold online with in-store collection. A pet should not be treated as a simple object to be bought online. The provenance of these animals is often questionable. Given that their births have not come under the oversight of the authorities through official channels, this type of online marketing can lead to numerous health problems, neglect and abuse. What is more, the sale of animals on the Internet via a *click-and-collect* system encourages impulsive, purchasing without reflection, creating the conditions for future abandonment. He asks what measures the Minister intends to take to ensure that the current legislation is properly applied and to combat the illegal trade in animals.

**Answer:** For several years now, the Government has been committed to animal welfare, responding to strong and legitimate expectations among the general public, and it condemns all acts of abuse

towards animals, whether on farms, in slaughter establishments or in private homes. In particular, since 2020 and thanks to the France Relance plan, over 36 million euros have been allocated to support animal protection associations and veterinary medicine. 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 training to be more thorough for employees who come into contact with pets, provision of information for new purchasers, monitoring of animal identifications for online sales offers, and the strengthening of penalties for acts of abuse. To extend the positive momentum kick-started 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. Through it, the French government seeks to support and gain maximum benefit from current and future initiatives in three areas of activity: preventing and combating pet abandonment, improving the management of canine and feline strays, and preventing and combating pet abuse. The plan is structured around concrete measures that contribute to five key areas of practice: gaining an understanding of the current situation and identifying levers for action; informing, questioning and training; facilitating synergies between those involved in animal protection; making the regulations more effective in the protection they provide; and pursuing new funding mechanisms. Several actions under this plan have already been completed, are in progress or are planned for the near future, notably to increase responsible behaviors in those involved in pet purchases. In application of the law of November 30, 2021 to combat animal abuse and strengthen the bond between animals and humans, pet shops have been prohibited from selling or giving away dogs and cats on their premises since January 1, 2024. They may, however, display cats and dogs belonging to animal protection foundations or associations in the presence of volunteers from these foundations or associations. The final clause in Article L. 214-8, Paragraph VI of the French Rural and Maritime Fishing Code allows pet shops to sell pets online for a fee. The same article stipulates that the rules applicable to the layout and use of "premises, installations and equipment are specified by order of the Minister for Agriculture, taking into account the characteristics of each activity".

A forthcoming revision of the decree of April 3, 2014, setting out the health and animal protection rules to be followed in activities related to domestic pets, will provide a more precise framework for holding facilities, in this case for dogs and cats. Until the revision comes into force, 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. In addition, with regard to online sales, the law to combat animal abuse has introduced a requirement for advertisers to carry out prior checks in relation to sales offers for dogs, cats and ferrets, whether for a fee or free of charge. Only verified advertisements containing all mandatory information can be authorized and placed online. This mandatory information, concerning both the animal and its owner, must be checked through reference to the national database for domestic carnivore identification. To this end, the French Ministry of Agriculture has worked with Ingenium Animalis, the company in charge of the identification database, to set up a tool to verify this mandatory information. This tool has been available to advertisers since May 2024. Use of the tool will provide people wishing to acquire a dog or cat through an online transfer offer (purchase or sale) with a guarantee of the animal's origin, the accuracy of its description and the consent of the registered owner. Although failure to check advertisements is punishable by a fine of 7,500 euros, making private individuals



aware of the importance of this requirement remains a major challenge to the measure's success. The government is therefore determined to step up its efforts to protect animals, and will remain attentive to reports of stray, abandoned or abused animals. The last of these may lead to prosecution, both in mainland France and in the French overseas territories.

### **03/06/2025 : Assemblée nationale : Réponse écrite à la question n°5528 : Prise en compte du bien-être animal**

Document type: Answer to question 5528 published in the [Journal officiel de la République française](#)

Authors: question : M. Jean-Michel Brard (Loire-Atlantique (9e circonscription) - Horizons & Indépendants). Answer: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty.

**Question:** Mr. Jean-Michel Brard draws the attention of the Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty to the consideration of animal welfare in the marketing of food products of animal origin. The Law on the transparency of information on agricultural and food products was promulgated on June 10, 2020. It makes it compulsory for consumers to be informed on the provenance of the products they consume, but the issue of animal welfare and in particular the conditions under which animals are reared but also slaughtered remain of secondary concern. Despite this, successive Ministers of Agriculture have always assured us that animal welfare is of paramount importance. He therefore asks whether the French government intends to study the introduction of labelling on all food products to inform consumers on the welfare status of the farm animals they choose, for both raw and processed products.

**Answer:** For several years now, the French government has been committed to animal welfare, responding to strong and legitimate expectations from the public, condemning all acts of animal abuse, whether in livestock farming, abattoirs or in private homes. The government is aware of French consumers' expectations regarding the origins of the products they consume. In this respect, labels or symbols on non-pre-packaged products play a particularly important role in providing information on the origins of products and farming conditions. To date, France has favored a voluntary approach to animal welfare labelling, enabling producers who so wish to highlight practices that go beyond simple compliance with European legislation. What is more, labelling must not detract from the value of complying with European legislation on animal welfare, already one of the most stringent in the world, compared with imported products that fail to meet this standard. Further, while there is currently no specific animal welfare labelling system, it is important to point out that some official quality and origin identification signs or labels include criteria relating to farming conditions. In some cases, these are clearly noted, as in the case of "free-range eggs", but for the most part this information is not made particularly explicit on labels. As part of the roadmap resulting from the "États généraux de l'alimentation", the French National Food Council has been tasked with examining the possibility of experimenting with labelling relating to livestock farming methods. This could take the form of labelling similar to that which already exists for eggs, but for all animal production sectors. In particular, this project will enable us to establish what is needed to improve the information provided to consumers by providing this sort of label. In addition, the French Food, Environmental and Occupational Health Safety Agency (Anses), being conscious of the many private initiatives in the field of animal production welfare standards, has commissioned its own scientific collective expertise





French Reference Centre  
for Animal Welfare

to provide a basis for guidelines that would ensure both the relevance of labelling standards with regard to animal welfare and harmonization between the various standards. In addition to Anses, INRAE (the French national research institute for agriculture, food and the environment), the national veterinary schools and Ifremer (the French research institute for the exploitation of the sea) took part in this expertise.

### **03/06/2025 : Agriculture Committee votes on first EU rules on welfare of dogs and cats**

Document type: press release published on the [European Parliament](#)'s news website

Author: Hana Raissi

**Preview:** On Tuesday, the Agriculture Committee adopted its position on EU standards for the breeding, housing, and handling of cats and dogs. The first EU rules for the welfare and traceability of dogs and cats were adopted with 35 votes to 2 and 9 abstentions.

#### *Who must comply*

MEPs propose the new rules would cover those who are responsible for breeding or selling dogs and cats in establishments and shelters; and those placing dogs and cats into foster homes. They would however not apply to private dog and cat owners.

#### *Microchipping of dogs and cats in the EU*

The rules would mean that all dogs and cats held by breeders, sellers and shelters, or offered for sale or donation online, must be individually identifiable with a microchip. Microchipped dogs and cats should be registered in interoperable national databases. MEPs say identification numbers of microchips, along with information about the corresponding national database, should be stored in a single index database operated by the Commission.

#### *Dogs and cats from third countries*

To close potential loopholes that would let dogs and cats enter the EU as non-commercial pets but which are then later sold in the EU, MEPs want to extend the rules to cover not only imports for commercial purposes but also non-commercial movements.

Dogs and cats imported from third countries for sale would have to be microchipped before their entry into the EU, and then registered in a national database within two working days after their entry. Pet owners entering the EU would be obliged to pre-register their microchipped animal on an online database, at least five working days before arrival.

#### *Breeding and welfare of dogs and cats*

Breeding between parents and offspring, grandparents and grandchildren, as well as between siblings and half-siblings, must be prohibited. Puppies and kittens may not be separated from their mothers until they are at least eight weeks old unless there is a specific veterinary justification. To prevent exploitation, the regulation caps the number of litters per female and introduces mandatory rest periods between pregnancies.

MEPs want a ban on the breeding of dogs or cats that have excessive conformational traits leading to a high risk of detrimental effects on their welfare, as well as a prohibition on these animals - together with mutilated dogs and cats - being used in shows, exhibitions, or competitions. (...)

## **27/05/2025 : Assemblée nationale : Réponse à la question n°2219 : Maltraitance animale dans certains abattoirs français**

Document type: Answer to question 2219, published in the [Journal officiel de la République française](#)

Authors: question : M. Jean Laussucq (Paris (2e circonscription) - Ensemble pour la République).  
Answer: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty

**Question:** Mr. Jean Laussucq questions the Minister of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry on the operational failures observed in certain French abattoirs, particularly in light of the recent investigation by L214 into the Maurienne abattoir. This investigation revealed extremely serious failures in practice, highlighting, in particular, cases where conscious animals still able to feel pain are slaughtered, or are even butchered while still alive. This abattoir supplies Super U, Intermarché and E.Leclerc stores in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, as well as local butchers, and also sells meat directly from the farms of origin. Since the promulgation of the French Law on a level playing field in the agricultural and food sector, and healthy, sustainable food accessible to all, each abattoir has been required to appoint an Animal Welfare Officer (RPA), responsible for ensuring that animal protection rules are applied. Regular audits are also mandatory to ensure that operations are organized so as to comply with the principle of sparing animals "any avoidable pain, distress or suffering". However, these legal provisions would appear to be largely insufficient, as demonstrated by the case of the Maurienne abattoir, which clearly fails to comply with these legal regulations. Mr. Olivier Falorni's proposed law of November 9, 2016, which set out to call into question the conditions under which animals destined for human consumption are slaughtered in French abattoirs, would appear to have had the measure of these failures. It would be useful for the government to take into account the right of parliamentarians to visit abattoirs. He would like to know whether discussions are currently underway to put an end to certain practices that are contrary to the legal requirements for abattoirs.

**Answer:** It should first be pointed out that, despite the sometimes shocking nature of the images, and although anomalies in animal handling and slaughter operations may be observable that justify the suspension of operations at the Maurienne abattoir, the L214 video does not show animals being cut up alive, contrary to what has been reported in the press. There are currently 226 abattoirs in France. The number of abattoirs has fallen by 16% over the last six years. This decline in numbers is due not only to the difficult economic climate facing the slaughter industry, but also to the closure by the authorities of abattoirs that fail to comply with the regulations where there is no prospect of bringing them up to standard. Currently, slaughtering is a free and competitive market activity, carried out for the most part by private operators, who hold the prime responsibility for ensuring compliance with the regulations. However, each abattoir closure has an impact on local and regional coverage, and on the possibility for livestock farmers to have their animals slaughtered close to their farms. Nevertheless, the slaughter of animals is one of the most closely monitored economic activities in any sector. Indeed, government agents are permanently on hand to carry out checks during all phases of slaughter. This monitoring activity currently employs the equivalent of 1,265 full-time staff. Departmental population protection (DPP) officers are present in abattoirs on a daily basis, carrying out regular checks on meat quality, production hygiene and animal welfare. In addition, full animal protection inspections are carried out at least once a year, or more frequently if the abattoir is

identified as posing a particular risk. These inspections are followed up by reports and, where necessary, lead to proportionate administrative and legal actions, up to and including the closure of the establishment.

The French food authority (Direction Générale de l'Alimentation, DGAL) monitors abattoirs at national level and, since early 2022, it has increased its capacity for intervention by setting up a national inspection unit to support local authorities in the most complex cases. This force can be mobilized at the request of the Departmental Prefect, who alone can take the decision to close an abattoir. Through this system, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty is fully committed to ensuring the application of the three key realms of action that were defined since 2021 for abattoirs: provision of support to sustain investment and maintain a relevant network of abattoirs; day-to-day monitoring that is strengthened where needed following risk analysis; and the application of proportionate penalties in line with the nature and seriousness of recorded non-compliance. With regard to actions taken by the industry, third-party audits are carried out on animal protection measures by the clients of abattoirs as part of the conditions of business. In addition, in the past few years, the industry has set up a system of voluntary animal protection in abattoirs using an evaluation grid developed in collaboration with animal protection associations. Last, some associations, such as OABA (œuvre d'assistance aux bêtes d'abattoirs), have their own auditors who are invited by abattoirs to carry out an assessment of the conditions of killing. Because these actions are not widely publicised, citizens tend to view abattoirs as "black boxes", despite the fact that society has accorded abattoir operators the right to slaughter livestock for meat production. The high ethical stakes involved in this right to kill sentient living beings for society's food needs must be accompanied, for the people's elected representatives, by the possibility of ensuring that this right is being exercised properly. Unlike prisons, most abattoirs operate under private law. A legal expert report was therefore requested to assess whether this right of third-party access to abattoirs runs counter to the principle of private property. The Ministry of Agriculture is particularly aware of the suspicion with which abattoirs are currently regarded, but is also fully conscious of the indispensable place they occupy in the food chain, and it remains committed to providing the complete transparency necessary to maintain the confidence of French citizens concerning slaughter activities. The survival of the meat industry depends on it.

## **20/05/2025 : Assemblée nationale : réponse à la question n°5909 : Transition vers un élevage hors-cage en France**

Document type: answer to question 5909 published in the [Journal Officiel de la République française](#)

Authors: question : M. Pouria Amirshahi (Paris (5e circonscription) - Écologiste et Social). Answer: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty

**Question:** M. Pouria Amirshahi questions Mme Minister for Agriculture and Food Sovereignty on the transition to cage-free farming in France. Thanks to the 2018 EGALIM law and Decree 2021-1647 of 2021, the construction and expansion of buildings for this type of farming are now prohibited. As a result, the proportion of hens raised in cages was reduced from 70% in 2015 to 27% by the end of 2023. The industry is aiming to bring this down to less than 10% by 2030. Many European countries have already put an end to cage farming: the Czech Republic, Luxemburg, Austria and

Germany have all banned the practice, in a clear commitment to animal welfare. Meanwhile, a number of major retailers and caterers have pledged to stop using cage-produced eggs by 2025. Moreover, in response to the "End the Cage Age" citizens' initiative, signed by over 1.4 million European citizens, the European Commission has pledged to put forward an EU-wide ban on cages. This expectation is widely shared by French society, with 89% in favor. This transition can only be fully successful if farmers receive effective support. Many are still worried about the lack of visibility regarding the financial and technical aid to enable them to adapt their farms. He would therefore like to ask what measures the government intends to put in place, with what resources and within what timeframe, to guarantee the effective transition to cage-free farming in France, and to ensure that the European Commission keeps its commitment to ban this practice throughout the Union.

**Answer:** In an ever-changing world, animal welfare and climate issues have become major societal concerns in many countries. The "End the Cage Age" European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) called on the European Commission to bring forward legislation banning the use of farrowing crates and stalls for sows, cages for laying hens, rabbits and palmipeds, and calf crates. In its response to the European Citizens' Initiative, the Commission undertook to present, by the end of 2023, a legislative proposal to phase out and eventually ban the use of cage systems for all animals mentioned in the initiative. Improving animal welfare and combating animal abuse are priorities for the French government. There is a strong and growing societal expectation on the part of consumers and citizens on animal welfare issues, and this must be met. Improving animal welfare is a key factor for the future of the French and European livestock industries. France supports the Commission's proposal to determine the manner in which cages will be phased out, based on scientific advice and an impact analysis. Accordingly, on March 10, 2023, the Government initiated a preliminary consultation with stakeholders as part of the review announced by the European Commission of legislation on animal welfare and protection, with the aim of identifying points of convergence between the many players involved in animal protection in France, and promoting the French experience and particular features to European actors. Several principles underpin the government's action. First, one of the challenges is to preserve a level playing field. To this end, we are concentrating on two levers: support for European harmonization, and ensuring that animal welfare requirements within the European Union are matched by equivalent rules for animals whose products are imported. Second, transition has costs. These additional costs must be shared by all involved in the livestock industry, including distributors and consumers. Last, the government wishes to give sufficient advance visibility to operators, particularly to the next generation, so they can plan for the future and invest. With just under 27% of hens still farmed in cages, France is ahead of its European partners and well on the way to ending the use of cages. The poultry industry is also committed to this goal, with a target of 10% of hens still in cages by 2030. To this purpose, the French government is supporting a number of research projects, some of which are aimed at ending cage use. Investment aid schemes such as the Competitiveness and Adaptation Plan under the second pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy and the France Relance Plan offer support to farmers who plan to change their production methods from caged to free-range poultry. Generally speaking, investment aid is required to support farmers wishing to make the transition to cage-free farming, and government-sponsored work must help French farming to achieve the transition needed to meet society's expectations in terms of animal welfare and adaptation to climate change.

## **20/05/2025 : Assemblée nationale : réponse à la question n°4154 : Contrôle des conditions d'abattage des animaux dans les abattoirs**

Document type: answer to question 4154 published in the [Journal Officiel de la République française](#)

Authors: Question : M. Karim Benbrahim (Loire-Atlantique (1<sup>re</sup> circonscription) - Socialistes et apparentés). Answer: Ministère de l'agriculture et de la souveraineté alimentaire

**Question:** Mr. Karim Benbrahim questions the Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty on how slaughter conditions are monitored and controlled in abattoirs. Recent witness statements, investigations and reports on the slaughter conditions of animals in certain abattoirs have brought to light practices that have created concern among citizens committed to animal welfare, rousing them to respond. In the light of these revelations, it would appear essential to ensure transparency over the methods used to slaughter animals in French abattoirs. While there is no question of casting suspicion on all abattoirs, it does appear important to ensure that controls on abattoirs are effective, so that the State can identify those establishments that do not comply with French regulations, in the interests of animal welfare, but also in the interests of the profession. The conditions under which animals are slaughtered must be subject to rigorous, regular checks to ensure compliance with all the standards required by the regulations. He therefore asks what measures have been put in place to carry out this monitoring, and what steps are envisaged to strengthen the resources allocated to the government departments responsible for carrying out such controls. Building a sustainable agriculture and agri-food industry is essential to the ecological transition that must be achieved.

**Answer:** It should first be pointed out that, despite the sometimes shocking nature of the images broadcast from French abattoirs by certain groups, the narrative put forward by these associations is often exaggerated compared with the actual facts on the ground. In truth, in the latest videos posted online, although actions are shown in relation to animal handling and the operation of certain equipment that do not comply with the norms, these videos show neither animals being butchered while still alive, nor any serious abuse, contrary to reports in the press. Slaughtering animals is one of the most closely monitored economic activities in any sector. Government agents are permanently on hand to carry out checks at all stages of slaughter. This monitoring activity currently involves the equivalent of 1,265 full-time posts in French abattoirs. Agents from the DDPPs (departmental directorates in charge of population protection), who are on duty in abattoirs on a daily basis, carry out regular checks on meat quality, production hygiene and animal welfare. Further, full animal protection audits are carried out at least once a year, or more frequently if the abattoir is identified as posing a particular risk. Reports are made of these inspections and, where necessary, proportionate administrative and penal steps are then taken, up to and including closure of the establishment. The Direction Générale de l'Alimentation (DGAL) monitors abattoirs at national level and, since early 2022, has strengthened its capacity to intervene by setting up a national inspection force (FINA) to support local government services in the most complex cases. This force, which was formed as part of the 2021 abattoir plan referred to in the question, can be brought in at the request of the Departmental Prefect, who alone has the power to decide on the closure of an abattoir. To date, FINA has intervened at 26 abattoirs, taking the steps necessary to bring them into conformity



with the regulations. Where serious failings are found, administrative procedures (suspension of an establishment's licence, closure, etc.) may be implemented, along with legal penalties. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty is particularly aware of the current lack of trust directed towards abattoirs, but is also fully aware of the indispensable role they play in the food chain. It remains steadfast in its determination to provide the full level of responsiveness required to maintain citizens' confidence in the abattoir system, and to impose sanctions proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the failings observed on operators who fail to comply with the animal protection requirements that apply to all. The survival of the meat industry depends on this.

### **07/05/2025 : Arrêté du 2 mai 2025 portant extension de l'accord interprofessionnel conclu le 28 février 2025 dans le cadre du Comité national pour la promotion de l'œuf (CNPO) portant création d'une cotisation visant à soutenir la mise en place d'alternatives à l'élimination des poussins mâles**

Document type: ministerial order published in the [Journal Officiel de la République française](#)

Author: French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty

**Preview:** The interprofessional agreement concluded on February 28, 2025 by the professional organizations that form the CNPO, which created a contribution system to support the implementation of alternatives to the killing of male chicks, has been extended to include the period from March 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026. The document can be consulted here :

<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/eli/arrete/2025/5/2/AGRT2510063A/jo/texte>

The interprofessional agreement was published in the Bulletin Officiel of the French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty (BO Agri), and can be consulted at the following address:

[https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/boagri/document\\_administratif-a7946eca-68e9-44d6-a48d-4f883c0fa8b0](https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/boagri/document_administratif-a7946eca-68e9-44d6-a48d-4f883c0fa8b0)

## **Transport, Slaughter, Pick-up**

### **30/06/2025 : Deck height did not affect behavioural measures of 'natural movements' and 'adequate ventilation' during 8 h and 23 h transport of weaner pigs**

Document type: scientific article published in [Applied Animal Behaviour Science](#)

Authors: Cecilie Kobek-Kjeldager, Line D. Jensen, Leslie Foldager, Marianne Kaiser, Karen Thodberg, Mette S. Herskin

**Preview:** Annually, more than 30 million weaner pigs cross borders between EU member states mainly transported for further production. The current EU regulation states that the internal deck height of the transport vehicles must on no account hinder natural movements and provide adequate ventilation but without including specific norms. The aim of the present study was to examine impact of deck height (60 vs 80 cm and 70 vs 90 cm) on behaviour reflecting natural movements and

adequate ventilation during 16 short (8 h) and 16 long (23 h) journeys of 20–25 kg pigs, mimicking commercial conditions. A secondary aim was to describe the behaviour progressed from departure to arrival including the driver break during short journeys. To address the aim, the first task was to select appropriate behavioural measures that could robustly be annotated with the limited vertical space. As a consequence, head butting against the ceiling and drinking behaviour were omitted in pilot observations. The final behaviours were body posture including huddling and huddling location analysed using 15 min interval instantaneous scan sampling. The frequency of aggression and a pig standing on another pig was recorded using continuous sampling during selected 20 min recording sessions (in total 160 and 120 min for short and long journeys, respectively). During short journeys, this included recording sessions placed immediately before, during and after the mandatory break of the livestock driver. Mixed effects models were used to analyse effects of deck height and the following co-variables: hour since departure, microclimatic conditions and vehicle speed. No effect of deck height was found on any of the selected behavioural measures. When examining behaviour of the pigs before, during and after the break, no differences in lying behaviour were found, but for one of the vehicle elements, the trailer, an increase in aggressive behaviour was observed during the break. Overall, the results showed a complex pattern of relations affecting the behaviour of the pigs, such as the microclimatic conditions and driving speed interacting with hour since departure. These findings varied to some extent depending on vehicle element (lorry or trailer) and journey duration (8 h or 23 h, with the associated different stocking densities). Taken together, the results showed that increasing the deck height did not lead to detectable changes in the behaviour of the weaner pigs, but that many other factors influenced the behaviour of weaners during transport and may thus also influence their welfare.

## **20/06/2025 : Vigilance canicule : limitations transport bien-être animal**

Document type: article published by [Les GDS de Poitou-Charentes](#)

Author: GDS

**Preview:** Please find below the annual heatwave warning issued by the DGAL to DDPPs and professional partners.

"Weather forecasts for France predict a major heatwave, with the Charente-Maritime region being placed under an orange heatwave alert (Charente, Deux-Sèvres and Vienne are also affected) from 12 noon on Friday June 20. The intensity of this heatwave calls for particular attention to animal welfare when transporting animals.

*For transport within France:*

- no "avoidable suffering" (Article 3 of European Regulation 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport, regulation attached) including, in particular, temperatures inside vehicles that are deemed to be excessive, regardless of the hour or outside temperature;
- no transport between 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. in accordance with the Decree of July 22, 2019 "restricting the transport by road of live vertebrate animals during heatwaves" (see attached, possible derogations exist, depending on the fitting of vehicles with specialist equipment and whether the transport destination involves a place of veterinary care, or an abattoir with individual authorization)

*For transport within the EU, or to third countries outside the EU:*

- no long journeys should be planned at those times of the year when weather conditions are almost always unsuitable. -> Article 5 of Regulation 1/2005: "The transport organizer must ensure that welfare conditions are not compromised by insufficient coordination of the various stages of the journey, and that account is taken of the weather conditions at the start and throughout the journey" (including that part of the journey that takes place within France )
- professionals who choose to ignore these recurrent warnings will be denied the right to load animals at the point of departure by the DDPP export certification services (unless the former can demonstrate that the transport conditions permit sufficient mitigation of the risks associated with high temperatures) on the grounds of unnecessary suffering (1/2005, Article 3)."

#### *Further information*

A webpage is available that provides details of the rules to be followed for such animals during a heatwave: <https://www.interbev.fr/canicule>

Order concerning heatwaves and animal transport: [Arrêté du 22 juillet 2019 canicule](#)

Regulation on the protection of animals during transport : [R UE 1-2005 transport BEA](#)

## **19/06/2025 : Transport d'animaux en période de canicule : la réglementation - Ministère de l'Agriculture et de la Souveraineté alimentaire**

Document type: article published by the [MASA](#)

Author: French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty

**Preview:** In an Order dated July 22, 2019, the French Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty restricted the transport of live terrestrial vertebrate animals on national territory during periods of extreme heat. The ministerial order prohibits movement between 1pm and 6pm in Départements placed on orange alert and above. Exemptions are possible (specially fitted vehicles, etc.). For long journeys lasting more than 8 hours, only journeys with temperatures below 30°C are authorized. The Order, dated July 22, 2019, contains the following:

The transport of live animals is strictly regulated. During heatwaves, as at any other time of the year, [Article 3 of EC regulation 1/2005](#) stipulates that "No person shall transport animals or cause them to be transported in such conditions as to be likely to cause them injury or unnecessary suffering". Animals must therefore be protected at all times from bad weather, sunlight, heat and cold. They must not be transported in extreme temperatures that could cause avoidable suffering. The European Union regulations also require the inspection and approval of vehicles used for long-distance transport. The main checks performed ensure that:

- vehicle ventilation systems are in place, enabling the temperature inside the compartments to be kept between 5°C and 30°C, with a tolerance of 5°C depending on climatic conditions;
- temperature sensors are installed, enabling the driver to monitor temperatures inside the compartments at all times;
- a system is in place that records these temperatures, the results of which must be made available to the inspection teams.

In addition, all animal transport organizers must take weather conditions into account when planning a journey. Subsequent checks may be carried out by official agents (to ensure in particular that the maximum permitted temperatures have not been exceeded).

During periods of extreme heat (temperatures in excess of 30°C), it is generally difficult to maintain temperatures inside the compartments housing the animals within the regulatory range (between 5°C and 30°C, +/- 5°C), a fortiori when extended stops are planned (e.g. at transfer points, or at the various borders that are crossed). As a result, throughout Europe, monitoring agents are asked not to authorize transfers or exports when the weather forecast for the journey exceeds 30°C, unless the organizer can provide guarantees of his or her ability to keep the vehicle's internal temperatures within the regulatory range.

European Regulation [CE 1/2005](#): Since January 5, 2007, this regulation has governed the transport of live vertebrate animals for commercial purposes within the European Union and for journeys beginning in EU Member States. An update is currently being reviewed within the European Union. European Regulation EC 1/2005 remains fully applicable during this revision process. For further information, go to the [European Commission website](#)

### **31/05/2025 : The evaluation of animal welfare indicators based on transport duration and lighting differences in the slaughter of broiler chickens**

Document type: scientific article published in [Open Veterinary Journal](#)

Authors: Siska W., Latif, H., Purnawarman T.

**Preview:** The preslaughter process is a critical point in implementing animal welfare principles in poultry slaughterhouses. The duration of transportation from the farm to the poultry slaughterhouse and differences in lighting in the preslaughter room can affect animal welfare. This study aimed to evaluate animal welfare indicators by measuring corticosterone hormone concentration, bleeding time, and carcass quality in broiler chickens considering differences in transport duration and lighting conditions in the preslaughter room. This study used a completely randomized design with four treatments and two replications. A total of 40 chickens were sampled. The study was conducted across four treatments: (1) transport duration from the farm to the poultry slaughterhouses  $\leq 2$  hours; (2) transport duration from the farm to the poultry slaughterhouses  $\geq 2$  hours; (3) blue lighting; and (4) white lighting. For treatments (1) and (2), 10 chickens from different farms were used for each replicate. Treatment groups (1) and (2) received treatments (3) and (4) using blue light-emitting diode (LED) lights with an intensity of 18 lux and white LED lights with an intensity of 321 lux for 15 seconds. Treatment groups (3) and (4) each consisted of 5 chickens per replication exposed to blue or white light in the preslaughter room. The average concentration of corticosterone hormone in blue and white light was 21.329 ng/ml and white light was 26.742 ng/ml. The average bleeding time under blue lighting was 187.15 seconds, and under white lighting, it was 203.05 seconds. Blue-light lighting can maintain carcass quality by 100% compared to white-light lighting, which produces varying quality. Corticosterone hormone concentration, bleeding time, and carcass quality were influenced by lighting. The use of blue light preslaughter significantly improved the corticosterone hormone concentration, bleeding time, and carcass quality compared with white light. Overall, blue lighting resulted in better animal welfare indicators for broiler chickens in poultry slaughterhouses. Blue lighting is recommended for implementation at poultry slaughterhouses.

## **29/05/2025 : Humane stunning or stun/killing in the slaughter of wild-caught finfish: The scientific evidence base**

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

Authors: James KL, Aparicio SP, Jayasuriya NS, Herath TK, Lines J, Sneddon LU, Amarasinghe US, Randall NP

**Preview:** An estimated 0.9 to 2.5 trillion individual wild finfish, destined for human or animal consumption, are captured globally each year by commercial fisheries. The majority of wild-caught fish die either from asphyxiation or evisceration; slaughter methods considered inhumane. Humane stunning or stun/killing may improve the welfare of wild-caught fish at the time of slaughter by rendering fish immediately insensible to pain, stress and suffering. Reducing fish stress during slaughter may also improve product quality. This study systematically mapped and narratively evaluated scientific research regarding humane stunning or stun/killing of wild finfish caught for food and feed on a commercial scale. Multiple knowledge gaps were identified: Key humane stunning parameters have only been scientifically tested, in terms of fish welfare and/or flesh quality, for a minority of wild-caught fish species and stunning methods. More species-specific protocols and use of brain activity measurements to accurately assess state of consciousness on application of the stunning method are required. More scientific testing of stunning methods in commercial wild-capture settings is needed to validate findings of controlled laboratory studies and ensure the methods are practical in fisheries. Research is needed to better understand the potential economic benefits of humane stunning for fishermen. From a donor perspective this review highlights the need to support more primary research into the feasibility and implementation of humane stunning or stun/killing in wild-capture fisheries.

## **13/05/2025 : European Commission - Overview report on transport of unweaned calves during long journeys**

Document type: audit report from the [European Commission](#)

Author: DG Health – European Commission

**Preview:** The report describes the outcome of a two-year Commission project looking at Member States' approaches to ensuring the protection of unweaned calves during long-distance transport. The rules for transporting unweaned calves over long journeys are stricter compared to those for other animals. Competent authorities recognise these animals as vulnerable and acknowledge the higher risk associated with their transport. However, inconsistencies in categorisation, documentation and enforcement create challenges for effective oversight.

Authorities generally ensure adequate verification of planning and compliance with journey times and resting periods, but enforcement varies.

The lack of a clear, harmonised and legally binding approach to defining and recording whether a calf is unweaned complicates official controls, their verification and analysis and hinders enforcement. In practice, authorities can use the age (under two months old) and weight (around 50 kg or not more than 80 kg) of the calves as proxies, but without standardised documentation, verification remains difficult.



Ensuring adequate hydration during transport remains a challenge, as drinking systems on vehicles are often unsuitable for unweaned calves. While the feeding of calves at control posts and final destinations is generally adequate, feeding practices at departure and during transit are less clearly regulated. The use of electrolyte solutions (which aid hydration but lack nutritional value) instead of milk replacers reduces some health risks but does not fulfil the requirement of nourishing the calves every nine hours.

Journey logs play a crucial role in monitoring compliance, but their effectiveness is limited by incomplete record-keeping and a lack of real-time verification. Transit and destination authorities often lack access to journey log data, making it difficult to confirm adherence to travel and rest time requirements.

Mortality rates of calves during transport in the EU are low. However, gaps in vehicle categorisation, verification of fitness for transport, and enforcement at assembly centres can create risks for calf welfare.

Transport by ferry presents additional challenges, particularly due to prolonged fasting periods. For journeys involving long ferry legs, calves are not fed at the required intervals.

The report highlights areas where Member States' authorities could strengthen official control systems to better enforce protection for calves during long journeys.