# Minutes of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council

**Venue:** Department of Agriculture and Food, Agriculture House, Kildare St., Dublin 2

Date: 23rd June 2005

Present: P Fottrell (Chairperson), J Cahill, T O’Donnell, M A Bartlett, B Earley, K Kinsella,

S O’Laoide, A McCarthy, C Connors, J Stack, A Hanlon, D Sparrow, B Bent, M Blake,

Teresa O’Halloran (Secretary).

**Apologies:** T Doyle**,** D Deane, S Foley.

# FARM ANIMAL WELFARE GUIDELINES ON HORSES, PONIES AND

# DONKEYS PRESENTED TO MINISTER COUGHLAN TD

The Chairman, P Fottrell, presented to Ms Mary Coughlan TD, Minister for Agriculture and Food, a copy of the latest publication by Council entitled *‘Animal Welfare Guidelines for Horses, Ponies and Donkeys’*. Press release issued no. 124/05.

Minister Coughlan TD, formally addressed Council.

# MINUTES

Minutes adopted with some amendments.

A discussion of Item 1 followed. It was agreed that a small group of Council members would meet with the Islamic Cultural Centre, Dublin, to explore the possibility of reaching a compromise regarding ritual slaughter without stunning. Details regarding position of other EU Member States on ritual slaughter were circulated however these did not include Netherlands and France. It was agreed that the position in these two countries together with that of New Zealand be obtained for next meeting.

Secretary reported to Council that there are no figures for the number of animals ritually slaughtered without stunning, for Ireland. CIWF responded that some years ago, numbers had been given by the Minister in response to a Parliamentary Question, which were calculated from meat export destinations, and suggested that Council could get similarly calculated updated figures. Copy of PQ to be forwarded to Secretary for circulation to members.

# 3. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND WORK ROGRAMME

Chairman suggested a revised schedule of dates for future Council meetings and asked that a copy of these, together with the work programme, be circulated to all members.

**4. MATTERS ARISING**

Report on the Availability of Veterinary Medicines in Ireland: Following questions as to how this report is progressing, it was agreed that a DAF representatives would update council at the next meeting.

Report on the Use of Electro-Immobilisation in Ireland: DAF stated that report had been forwarded to the Minister and that she is keen to move it ahead. DAF to engage with stakeholders to discuss legislation under which recommendations contained within report could be implemented. A general discussion took place regarding the impact of implementing these recommendations, particularly with regard to restraint of larger animals and health and safety issues.

Chairman asked that report remain confidential until it is available on website. Letter to issue to Chairman of Scientific Advisory Group on Animal Health and Welfare acknowledging his contribution to work of council.

# 5. WORK PROGRAMME

**Farm Animal Welfare Education Guidelines:** Chairman thanked Chair and all members of this sub-group for their input into the publication of *Animal Welfare Guidelines for Horses, Ponies and Donkeys.* Letter to issue to Chairman, Teagasc, thanking him for use of Teagasc material.

Feedback from council members regarding impact of these guidelines was very positive. Chair reported that the group is to meet again soon to prepare similar guidelines outlining best practice for broiler breeders’/farmers. This follows the publication by the EU of a proposed Directive laying down minimum rules for the protection of chickens kept for meat production.

It was agreed that CIWF could make a submission/presentation to the sub-group.

**Working Group on Co-operation (EWS):** Chair of this group reported that a meeting had taken place on 16th March at which the participating counties in the pilot scheme reported back on their experiences following their first winter in operation. All groups did very good work; there was very good co-operation and support from all parties involved. Overall, it was a very positive first report and it was agreed that EWS would be rolled out to all other counties in the autumn. DAF/ISPCA/IFA have all been contacted regarding nominating a representative for the remaining counties and it is hoped to hold a meeting in September for a further exchange of views and to discuss the way forward.

A general discussion took place. It was suggested that the number of cows dying during calving might be on the increase. If this was so, it may be related to the fact that more farmers were engaged in off-farm employment.

# 6. PROGRAMME FOR 2005/ NEXT MEETING

A general discussion took place on the programme. Details to be circulated as per point 3 above.

# 7. AOB

*On-farm slaughter of 4,000 pigs*

Address by representative of Minister to council outlining events at a Co. Waterford farm regarding the slaughter of approximately 4,000 pigs. Matter sub-judice; report confidential. This was followed by showing of a video of these events taking place on the farm. A lengthy discussion pursued during which many members voiced their concerns that a situation such as this could be allowed.

DAF undertook to revert to council with an update on its further enquires into the matter.

*CIWF video re. slaughter of Cattle in Lebanon*

CIWF reported on and showed a video of animals being killed at a slaughterhouse in Lebanon (report and video available to council members). It was reported that Irish cattle were slaughtered under similar conditions in these slaughterhouses. A general discussion followed and it was agreed that DAF would revert to council with suggestions as to how it might be possible for Ireland to influence the Lebanese authorities. UCD representative pointed out that the OIE are currently putting together standards/guidelines on welfare and suggested that members of council could submit their opinions with a view to council making a submission to OIE.

*Use of Calving Jacks*

Discussions took place on an article published in the Irish Farmers Journal on 26th March 2005 entitled ‘Avoid calving disasters’. Concern was express by some members about the use of calving jacks and some queried if it was a component of training for ‘Green Cert’ by Teagasc. UCD and Teagasc representative to provide information on this issue.

*Animal Welfare Guidelines for Horses, Ponies and Donkeys*

It was agreed to grant permission to organisations that had requested permission to use this publication.

Farm Animal Welfare Council, UK

It was agreed that invitation should issued to FAWC UK to address council.

CIWF Trust International Conference

*and*

*UCD 150 Years Conference*

Council received summary reports of these events.

*Annual Report*

Copy of draft report to be circulated for the purpose of accuracy checks only.

# NEXT MEETINGS

Dates suggested: -

25th August 2005

27th October 2005

15th December 2005 to include lunch