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

Venue: Fitzwilliam Hotel, Dublin.

Date: 25th August 2005.

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

S O’Laoide, A McCarthy, J Stack, D Sparrow, B Bent, S Foley, TJ Flanagan (representing T Doyle), M, Flynn (representing D Deane), Teresa O’Halloran (Secretary).

Apologies: B Earley, A Hanlon, C Connors, M Blake, T Doyle, D Deane.

Chairman welcomed M Flynn, IFA, who represented D Deane. D Deane, whose farm earned the top award in the Bord Bia Quality Beef Producer competition 2004, was unable to attend due to open day on his farm. Chairman extended his congratulations to Mr Deane on his success.

Chairman also welcomed TJ Flanagan, ICOS, who represented T Doyle.

# 1. MINUTES

Minutes adopted with one amendment.

# MATTERS ARISING

***Ritual Slaughter Without Stunning***

Chairman felt that Council had received a very constructive presentation from Mr Ali Selim, Islamic Cultural Centre Dublin (ICCD), on the matter of ritual slaughter without stunning and welcomed an invitation from him to visit the Centre for further exploratory talks. It was agreed that a small group of Council members would meet with members of the ICCD. The group, to be chaired by S O’Laoide, will consist of two representatives from the farming organisations and two from the welfare organisations.

Details regarding position of France and Netherlands on ritual slaughter were provided. Secretary still trying to obtain New Zealand position and hopes to have this for next meeting.

***Veterinary Medicines***

Discussions on this item reported at No 3 below under heading ‘Update Re. ‘Report on the Availability of Veterinary Medicines in Ireland’.

***Electro-Immobilisation***

DAF stated that the Minsiter was keen to move the matter forward in light of recommendations from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Animal Health and Welfare and in this regard had written to all of the stakeholders involved, (as represented at FAWAC), inviting them to put forward their views on the matter. Chairman requested that Council be updated via email before next meeting.

Secretary to ascertain when it would be appropriate to make available on the FAWAC webpage this and other reports prepared for or by FAWAC.

# 3. WORK PROGRAMME

**Farm Animal Welfare Education Guidelines – Broiler Welfare**

Chair reported that a meeting had taken place on 18th August and that a further meeting was scheduled for 6th September. Discussions at present were at an exploratory stage and it would take a few more meetings before a working document would emerge. Chair re-affirmed that the terms of reference/work of the group is non-legislative/non-policy formulating; the final document will be aimed at those in the industry. CIWF pointed out that they would have difficulty affiliating themselves to a FAWAC publication condoning intensive farming of broilers and asked that this be noted. Intensive systems such as this, did not in their opinion, exercise the five freedoms that Council has adopted. Chairman pointed out that all parties within Council must agree any publication.

A general discussion took place as to impact of FAWAC publications and the possibility of initiating a public awareness campaign. It was agreed that this item be put on the agenda for the next meeting and that perhaps a small group would look at how Council could make a bigger impact with the education programme.

**Working Group on Co-operation (EWS)**

Chair reported that a meeting had taken place on 8th September with a view to rolling-out EWS on a national basis. Another meeting is planned for mid-October. September meeting identified that not all organisations had the resources or a contact person in every county to enable a national roll-out. ISPCA operated as a voluntary organisation; they asked if it would be possible for them to refer some calls to the local IFA county representative. Overall, ISPCA expressed reservations about a national roll-out and would have preferred if it were done on a gradual basis i.e. rolled-out to a further six counties. They were of the view that there was a greater risk if something goes wrong of it having a negative impact on the whole of the programme. Veterinary Ireland suggested that local Private Veterinary Practioners could possibly help where ISPCA did not have resources. Chairman suggested that perhaps this matter could be resolved at October meeting. He expressed his gratitude to all involved and wished them well in their deliberations.

**Update Re. ‘Report on the Availability of Veterinary Medicines in Ireland’**

A major discussion took place regarding current developments in this area, particularly in light of publication by the Department of Agriculture and Food of draft legislation entitled *Animal Remedies Regulations 2005.* The Department has requested submissions from interested parties before 12th September. Council expressed serious concern that the recommendations contained in the above report might not be taken on board and that this could have serious consequences from an animal welfare perspective. All felt that it was critical that the concerns of Council be taken on board before any legislation in this area is adopted.

It was agreed that Chair of Veterinary Medicines Working Group would forward documents outlining concerns re. proposed regulation to Secretary to circulate to Council members, and that Chairman would write to Minister seeking urgent meeting.

Council also expressed concern that DAF had not acknowledged receipt of the report. DAF representative stated that report is receiving consideration.

# PROGRAMME FOR 2005/2006

A general discussion took place on what the new programme might consider. These included animal transport, training and education courses for transporters, marts and markets, battery caged hens, consumers and animal welfare, school programmes, fur farm visit, broiler welfare Directive, transport of horses and horse welfare.

It was agreed that Secretary would contact Teagasc and FÁS to establish if these organisations are planning training programmes to meet requirements of the new transport regulation.

It was also agreed that a new programme would be drafted and looked at in more detail at Oct/Dec meetings.

# AOB

It was agreed that an invitation would issue to Mr Paddy Rogan, Chief Veterinary Officer, DAF, to address Council on the subject of on-farm deaths and to Bord Bia/Teagasc on consumer attitudes towards animal welfare.

It was also agreed to request an update on animal transport.

The proliferation of ragwort around the countryside and the danger that this presented to animals was also discussed. DAF stated that this came under the Noxious Weeds Act 1936 and agreed to revert to Council on the matter.

*On-farm slaughter of 4,000 pigs*

DAF reminded Council that this matter is sub-judice and provided Council with an update of events. This was followed by a wide-ranging debate on the events that took place on-farm and on other matters surrounding the incident. Some members of Council called for an independent enquiry into the matter however Chairman advised that it would be preferable to await outcome of legal proceedings. Others made reference to the video of these events; DAF stated that it was not aware of this video being made permanently available to DAF. Chairman asked DAF that the concerns voiced today be conveyed to the appropriate people within DAF. Reference was also made to EU review of slaughter of animal’s legislation and Chairman advised that details of this be circulated to Council and suggested that perhaps Council’s concerns could be discussed within this context.

*Slaughter of Cattle in Lebanon (CIWF Video)*

Chairman asked DAF if influence could be brought to bear on the Lebanese authorities. DAF reported that it had been in contact with other EU countries on the matter but there was little to report due to it being the holiday season. DAF hopes to have something more concrete to report at the next meeting. CIWF agreed to forward its contacts to DAF. CIWF also reported that it was expecting a reply from the EU Parliament re. request to remove export refunds on these type of exports and agreed to update Council of outcome.

*Re-opening of Egyptian Market*

CIWF sought clarification if re-opening of market included live shipments? DAF to respond to this query at next meeting.

*Use of Calving Jacks*

Information supplied by Teagasc presented in folders (it was also emailed).

Farm Animal Welfare Council, UK

It was agreed that Chairman would contact FAWC UK.

# NEXT MEETINGS

Dates suggested: -

27th October 2005

15th December 2005 to include lunch