

FAWAC

ANNUAL REVIEW 2008



Department of
**Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food**

An Roinn
**Talmhaíochta,
Iascaigh agus Bia**



FARM ANIMAL WELFARE ADVISORY COUNCIL



STATEMENT FROM CHAIRMAN

It is a pleasure to present the annual Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council's (FAWAC) review for 2008.

Since it was established (2002) FAWAC has become recognised for its crucial role in promoting animal welfare. FAWAC brings together a diverse range of interests and enables representatives from different backgrounds to exchange views, and seek consensus on various issues and developments relevant to the care of farm animals. It provides considerable useful advice to the Minister and has been particularly successful in publishing a series of guidelines on such diverse areas as dairy and beef farming, horses, ponies and donkeys, best practice during transport and the code of practice on broiler chickens.

I would like to express my appreciation to the present Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Brendan Smith TD, and his predecessor Mary Coughlan TD, for their endeavours to enhance good animal welfare practices among the community.

The Minister is fully committed to promoting good practices that respect the welfare of all animals. In this connection the Department is progressing a number of animal welfare related commitments from the Programme for Government including consolidation of responsibility for the welfare of all animals (including non-farm animals) within the Department and the introduction of a comprehensive Animal Health and Welfare Bill to update existing welfare legislation to protect the welfare of animals. FAWAC considers that such a Bill offers the possibility of a great advance on the present legislative framework.

FAWAC is cognisant of the importance of research in farm animal welfare, and works closely with relevant public bodies, organisations, individuals and companies. These linkages are vital in delivering its programme. Effective communication with stakeholders is also essential in the delivery of animal welfare issues. To this end I would like to thank all parties involved.

I am very grateful to all our members of FAWAC and to those who serve on its sub-groups for their considerable support and co-operation. I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to those who made presentations to FAWAC throughout the year. Their presentations greatly enhance the work of FAWAC. The excellent support of the staff of the Animal Welfare Division of the Department is gratefully acknowledged.

Ag súil go mbeidh dea-thoradh ar ár gcuid oibre amach anseo.

Professor Patrick Fottrell

Chairman

June 2009

MEMBERSHIP OF THE FARM ANIMAL WELFARE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Chairman: Professor Patrick Fottrell

Former President of the National University of Ireland, Galway.

Members

Mr Heber Mc Mahon*

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (DAFF)

Mr Martin Blake

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (DAFF)

Mr Stephen Foley

Committee for Irish Livestock, Dealers, Exporters, Hauliers and Shippers

Ms Mary-Anne Bartlett

Compassion in World Farming (CIWF)

Ms Colette Connor

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Northern Ireland (DARDNI)

Mr Tom Doyle

Irish Co-operative Society Association (ICOS)

Mr Lorcan McCabe

Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association (ICMSA)

Mr Kevin Kinsella

Irish Farmers Association (IFA)

Mr Richard Kennedy

Irish Farmers Association (IFA)

Mr John Bryan

Irish Farmers Association (IFA) replaced during the year by **Michael Doran**

Dr Alison J Hanlon

School of Agriculture, Food Science and Veterinary Medicine, University College Dublin (UCD)

Dr Bernadette Earley

Teagasc – The National Agriculture and Food Development Authority

Mr Mark Beazley

The Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ISPCA)

Mr Sean O'Laoide

Veterinary Ireland Vice President of the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe

Mr Dermot Sparrow

Veterinary Ireland

Ms Barbara Bent

Wexford Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (WSPCA)

*Mr Heber McMahon replaced Mr Dermot Ryan, during the year. Council thanks Mr Ryan for his significant contributions and wishes him every success in the future.

Secretary: Mr Tom Farrell

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (DAFF)



What does the Council do?

Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council (FAWAC)

- Established in 2002
- Provides a forum for various interest groups to meet, exchange views and reach consensus on the broad challenges facing farm animal welfare in Ireland
- All members have a common purpose and share the view that animal welfare is an issue of very high importance.

Members are drawn from the following groups:

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (DAFF),

Committee for Irish Livestock, Dealers, Exporters, Hauliers and Shippers,

Compassion in World Farming (CIWF),

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland (DARDNI),

Irish Co-operative Society Association (ICOS),

Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers (ICMSA),

Irish Farmers Association (IFA),

School of Agriculture, Food Science and Veterinary Medicine, University College Dublin (UCD),

Teagasc The National Agriculture and Food Development Authority,

The Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty Animals (ISPCA),

Veterinary Ireland,

Wexford Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (WSPCA).

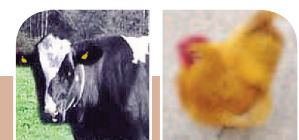
It's terms of reference are: -

- To identify ways in which the welfare of farm animals can be further improved and to prioritise areas requiring attention.
- At the request of the Minister/Department, to consider and advise on proposals for EU and national legislation relating to farm animals.

- To consider ways of increasing public awareness and development and dissemination of information relating to welfare of farm animals at home and abroad.
- To provide any other advice relevant to the welfare of farm animals as the Minister may seek from time to time

The Council has adopted the best farm animal husbandry practices and welfare standards, which take account of the basic needs, known as the FIVE FREEDOMS:

Five Freedoms	
1	Freedom from hunger, thirst and malnutrition
2	Freedom from discomfort
3	Freedom from pain, injury and disease
4	Freedom to express normal patterns of behaviour
5	Freedom from fear and distress



FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

In 2008 the Council held five meetings. The Sub-groups met on thirteen occasions during the course of the year.



Minister Brendan Smith, TD with Council Members

PUBLICATIONS 2008

Animal Welfare Guidelines for Beef Farmers (Amended Version)

Code of Practice for the Welfare of Broiler Chickens
FAWAC Annual Review 2007

CONTACT US

For further information about FAWAC please contact:

The Secretary
Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council
Dept of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
4 Centre, Agriculture House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2
Ireland

Tel: 00 353 1 6072049
Fax: 00 353 1 6767126

Email: fawac@agriculture.gov.ie
Website: www.fawac.ie

The minutes of all Council meetings and FAWAC publications are posted on the FAWAC Website.

FAWAC Working Groups

The Council carries out detailed reviews in small sub/working groups, which provide detailed research and advice for discussion and endorsement by Council. These groups consider written advice and take verbal evidence from those with specific expertise to assist Council in its role in promoting animal welfare issues. Current Sub-groups deal with Education, Early Warning Systems and Equine welfare.

Farm Animal Welfare Education Sub-group

The work programme includes a Sub-group on Education, to compile guidelines on welfare codes for farmers. Six meetings were held during the year. The group discussed a number of issues which were raised by Council. To date the Education Sub-group has been responsible for producing seven publications aimed at providing sound welfare and management practices. The Sub-groups dealt with the following issues during 2008.

On-Farm Slaughter

Following consultation with relevant stakeholders, the Education Sub-group are currently completing the guidelines on 'Guidance for Veterinary Practitioners and Farmers on Managing Acutely Injured Livestock On-farm' and expects to publish its findings in 2009.

Broiler Welfare

Minister Brendan Smith, TD launched the Guidelines Booklet "Code of Practice for the Welfare of Broiler Chickens" in September 2008. In a short address to Council, the Minister thanked the Chairman, Professor Patrick Fottrell, and the members of the Council, particularly the Education Sub-group for their work in producing the broiler guidelines, which follow in a series of other publications relating to various aspects of animal



Minister Brendan Smith, TD at the launch of the Code of Practice for the welfare of Broiler Chickens.



welfare. The Minister also expressed his appreciation of the ongoing and very valuable work being done by the Council and for the advice provided.

Pig Welfare

The Education Sub-group are currently engaged in the production of a booklet "Code of practice for the Welfare of Pigs". The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has recently issued the last in a series of three Scientific Opinions concerning the welfare of farmed pigs. The three reports should be of significant help when drafting the booklet. The Council will continue to monitor developments in this area.

Equine Welfare

The Equine Welfare Liaison Sub-group met on two occasions during the year. Following consultation with stakeholders discussions took place on horse welfare and particularly identification and registration of equines. The main concerns are disease, traceability, lack of demand for equines at mart sales and a rise in the number abandoned. The Equine Sub-group are considering the above issues and will be making recommendations to Council in the near future.

Members of the Equine Welfare Liaison Group

Mr Sean O'Laoide, Chairperson, (Veterinary Ireland)
 Ms Barbara Bent, (Wexford SPCA and ISPCA)
 Mr Heber McMahon, (DAFF)
 Mr Michael Sheahan, (DAFF)
 Ms Irene Dunne, Secretary, (DAFF)

Members of Education Sub-group

Mr Sean O'Laoide, Chairperson, (Veterinary Ireland)
 Ms Barbara Bent, (WSPCA)
 Dr Bernadette Earley, (Teagasc)
 Mr Dermot Sparrow, (Veterinary Ireland)
 Mr Michael Flynn, (IFA)
 Mr Niall O'Nuallain, (DAFF)
 Mr Richard Kennedy, (IFA)

Early Warning /Intervention System Sub-group(EWS)

The Early Warning/Intervention System (EWS) was introduced in 2004 by FAWAC and involves the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Irish Farmers' Association and the Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. It's objective is to provide a framework within which farm animal welfare

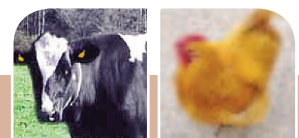
problems can be identified before they become critical or overwhelming. This has proved to be a very successful animal welfare initiative and the positive approach adopted by its participants has brought a greater awareness to the diverse causes of animal welfare problems and has allowed for intervention at an earlier stage thereby preventing chronic welfare scenarios to develop for at-risk animals. The EWS Steering group met once and the regional EWS met on four occasions this year. EWS is now operating throughout the country.

The scheme has been one of the most successful animal welfare initiatives with which the Department has been involved in recent years and demonstrates the benefit of a collaborative approach to issues in which all parties have a keen interest. Efforts continue to extend the involvement of other agencies/groups such as An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive, the Local Authority Veterinary Service and the Private Veterinary Practitioners.

A comprehensive review of EWS operations during the past twelve months is been carried out. There is a clear view among its participants that the system is reducing the number of animal welfare cases countrywide.

Members of Steering Group on Co-Operation

Mr Heber McMahon Chairman, (DAFF)
 Mr Michael Flynn, (IFA)
 Mr Pat Murray, (IFA)
 Mr Sean O'Leary, (IFA)
 Ms Elizabeth Tilson, (IFA)
 Ms Barbara Bent, (Wexford SPCA)
 Mr Mark Beazley, (ISPCA)
 Mr Niall O'Nuallain, (DAFF)
 Mr Michael Fallon, (DAFF)
 Mr Garry O'Hagan, (DAFF)
 Ms Irene Dunne Secretary,(DAFF)



Early Warning System 2008



TOPICS OF DISCUSSION DURING 2008

Ritual Slaughter Without Stunning

One of the issues currently under consideration is the welfare of ritual slaughter without stunning. A working-group of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Animal Health and Welfare (SACAHW) will consider the welfare aspects of this issue and Council is seeking suitable premises to demonstrate the use of a stun assurance monitor.

Fur Farming

A working-group of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Animal Health and Welfare (SACAHW) presented a report on "Welfare aspects of the slaughter of fur-producing animals in Ireland". Council acknowledges the work of the Chairman, Albert Costelloe together with the other members of the working-group in compiling the comprehensive report. The report together with comments from Compassion in World Farming and Irish Fur Breeders Association will be sent to the Minister.

European Forum of Farm Animal Welfare Councils (Euro-FAWCS)

Council was represented at the forum in January 2008 in the Czech Republic. Presentations were made relating to the practical workings of the different councils including FAWAC Ireland.

FAWAC Web Page

As part of our activities to increase awareness of FAWAC the webpage is being redesigned and updated. It will be finalised early 2009. Our website had over thirteen and a half thousand hits during 2008.

The Animal Health and Welfare Bill

A new Animal Health and Welfare Bill drafted in 2008 will update existing welfare legislation on the welfare of animals.

Following the public consultation process initiated earlier in the year on the draft bill, several submissions/comments were received containing wide-ranging observations and are now being examined. The consultation phase will conclude in early January 2009 and arrangements will then proceed with drafting of the legislation having regard to all comments received.

Presentations received by Council

"The UCD Review of Horse Welfare in Ireland 2007-2009"

by Joe Collins The Veterinary Faculty in UCD

"Current Issues in Equine Welfare"

by Joe Shortall DAFF and Michael Sheahan DAFF

"Refining Current Systems of Early Warning and Prevention of On-Farm Animal Welfare Incidents"

by Patricia Kelly Veterinary Inspector (DAFF)



APPENDIX - PUBLICATIONS

2008 Animal Welfare Guidelines for Beef Farmers (Amended Version)

2008 Code of Practice for the Welfare of Broiler Chickens

2007 Best Practice for the Welfare of Animals During Transport

2007 FAWAC Annual Review

2006 FAWAC Annual Report

2005 FAWAC Annual Report

2005 Animal Welfare Guidelines for Horses, Ponies and Donkeys

2005 The Use of Electro-Immobilisation on Live Farm Animals in Ireland - A Report by the Scientific Advisory Committee on Animal Health and Welfare

2004 Report on the availability of veterinary medicines in Ireland

2003/2004 FAWAC Biennial Report

2003 Animal Welfare Guidelines for Beef Farmers

2003 Animal Welfare Guidelines for Sheep Farmers

2003 Animal Welfare Guidelines for Beef, Sheep and Dairy Farmers

2003 Animal Welfare Guidelines for Dairy Farmers

All publications are available on the FAWAC website: www.fawac.ie



Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council,
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food,
4 Centre, Agriculture House, Kildare Street, Dublin 2.

Tel: 01 607 2049 • Fax: 01 676 7126

Web: www.fawac.ie • Mail: fawac@agriculture.gov.ie

