

IRTA

RECERCA | TECNOLOGIA
AGROALIMENTÀRIES

Animal Welfare Research in IRTA

Dr. Antonio Velarde
Subprograma de Benestar Animal
IRTA

IRTA – SPONSOR DAY
Nutrició, Salut i Benestar Animal

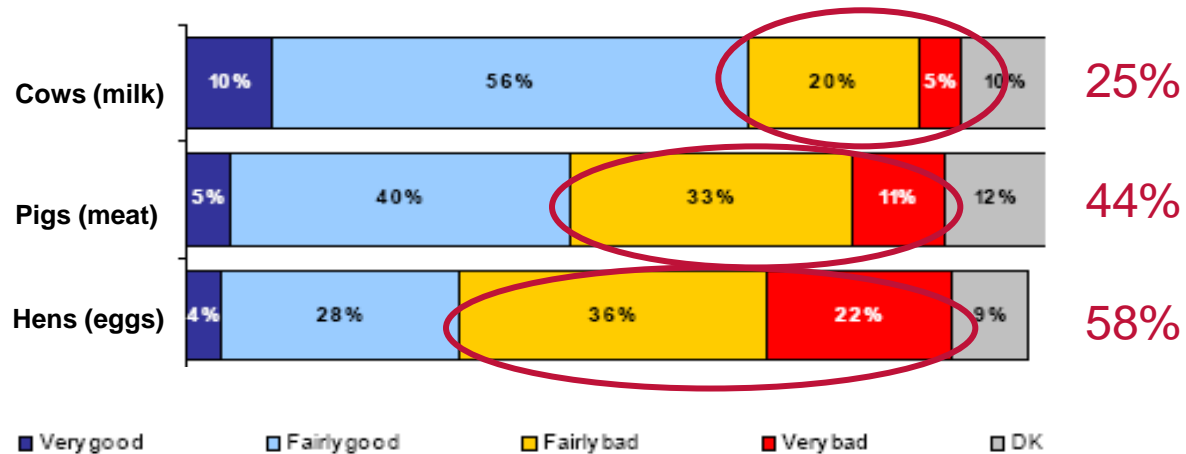


CONTENT

- 1. Public concern**
- 2. A scientific framework to assess welfare**
- 3. Welfare implementation**

Public concern

1. Consumer/public concerns about animal welfare



EU Commission Special Eurobarometer:
Attitudes of consumers towards the welfare of
farmed animals (2005)

**Animal welfare is an important attribute of an overall
'food quality concept'**

Consumer choice

Barriers to consumption 'animal friendly' products

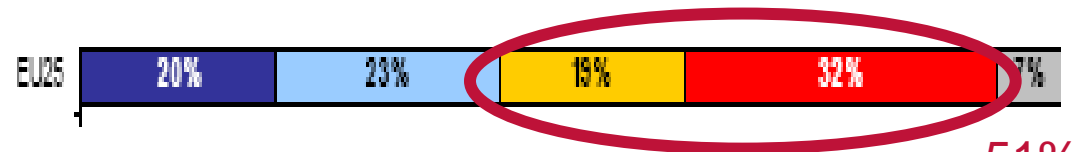
Mean scores for importance
(1=most important)

- information 2.28
- availability 2.53
- influence 3.25
- disassociation 3.37
- cost 3.55

EU FAIR 98-3678 'Consumer concern about farm animal welfare and food choice' (2002)

When purchasing eggs, meat or milk can you easily identify from the label those products sourced from animal welfare friendly production systems?

■ Yes, most of the time ■ Yes, some of the time ■ No, very rarely ■ No, never ■ DK / not applicable



EU Commission Special Eurobarometer:
Attitudes of consumers towards the welfare
of farmed animals (2005)

EU Action Plan (2006-2010)

Five areas of action:

- Upgrading standards and secure enforcement
- Developing Research
- Introducing standardised animal welfare indicators
- Informing and promoting AW (labelling and communication strategies)
- Supporting international initiatives (OIE..)



CONTENT

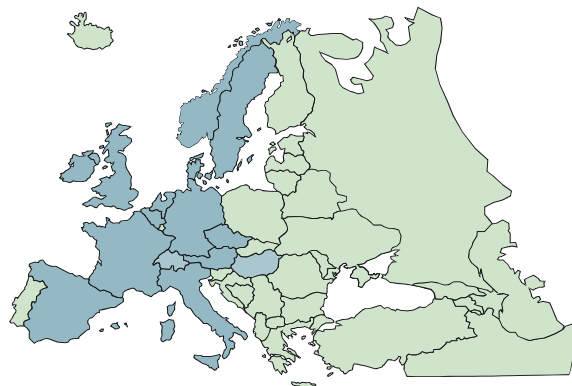
1. **Public concern**
2. **Scientific framework to assess welfare**
3. **Welfare implementation**

Welfare Quality project

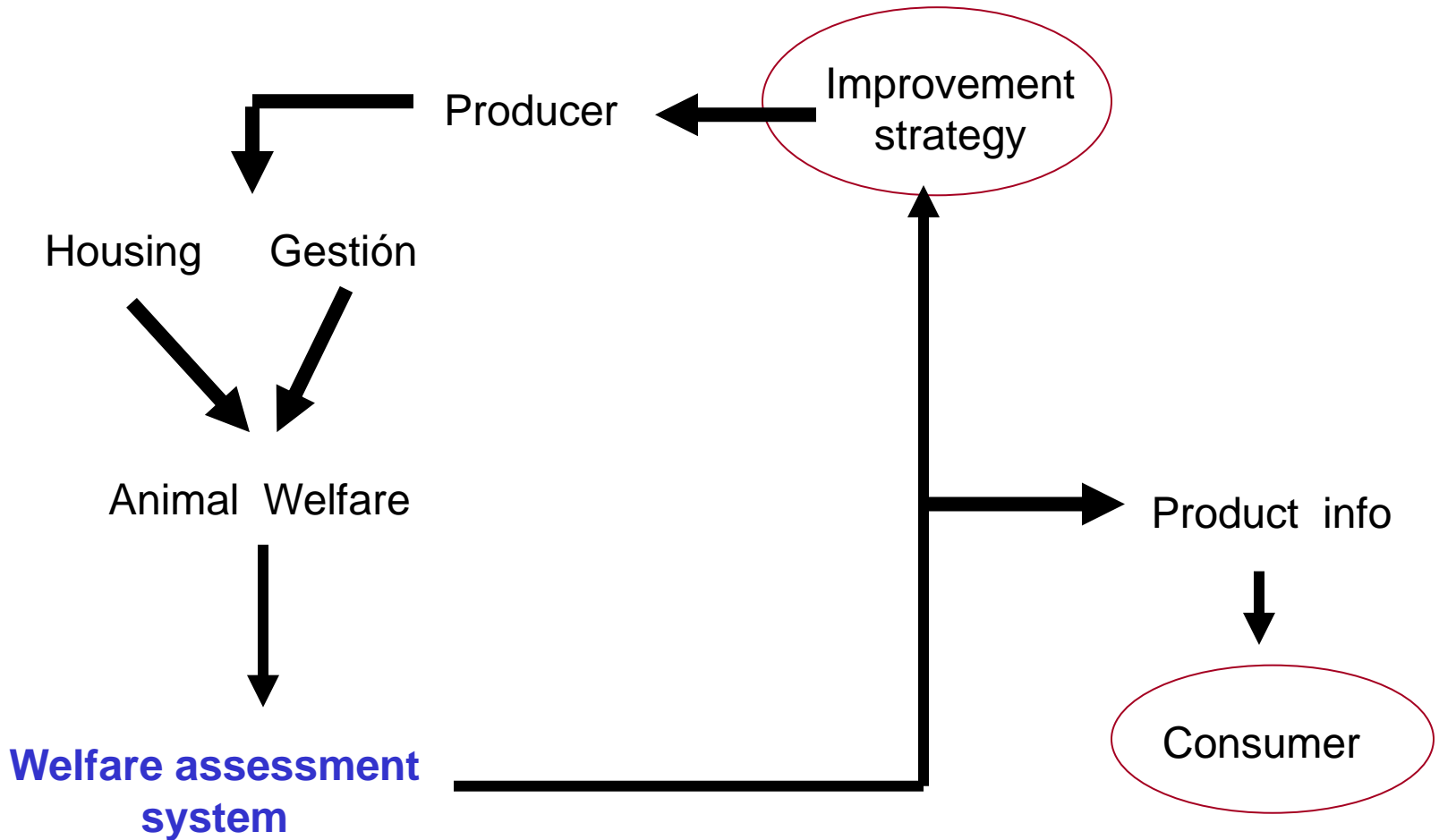


- 17 million Euro with €14.4 million EU contribution
- 44 partners
- 13 European countries
- 4 Latin American countries

www.welfarequality.net



Approach



Aims

Improved animal welfare in Europe

Improve housing and management on farm and during transport and slaughter

Connect animal welfare to informed consumer choices

High EU welfare standards and protection against low standard imports

Product information

Welfare monitoring

Developing a monitoring system to assess welfare quality in cattle, pigs and chickens

Animal welfare assessment system

A multidimensional concept

4 PRINCIPLES

12 CRITERIA

MEASURES

Good Feeding

1. Absence of prolonged hunger

2. Absence of prolonged thirst

Good Housing

3. Comfort around resting

4. Thermal Comfort

5. Ease of movement

6. Absence of injuries

7. Absence of disease

8. Absence of pain induced by management procedures

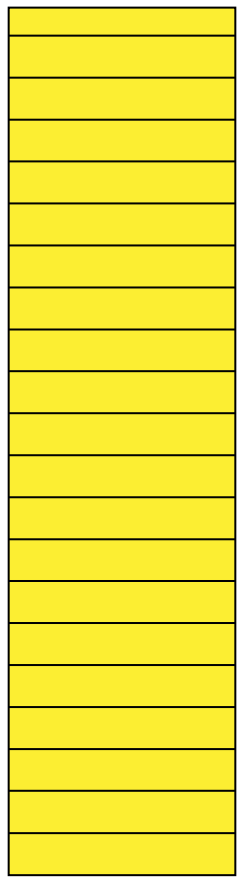
9. Expression of social behaviours

10. Expression of other behaviours

11. Good Human- Animal relationship

12. Positive emotional state

Appropriate Behaviour





General principles:

- AW measures must cover different criteria of welfare
- There is no AW measure that can be used on its own
- AW measures must be valid, reliable and feasible
- Measures can be outcome (animal)-based or input (resource)-based

General principles:

- *Environment or resource based indicators vs. Animal based*

ENVIRONMENTAL- BASED PARAMETERS

- Density
- Feeding, drinking space
- Temperature
- Type of floor. Etc.

MANAGEMENT-BASED PARAMETERS

- Euthanasia criteria
- Castration procedures
- Hygiene
- Management of sick animals. Etc.

ANIMAL-BASED PARAMETERS

- Wounds
- Tail biting
- Body Condition
- Social behaviours.
- Bursitis.
- Panting; Shivering.

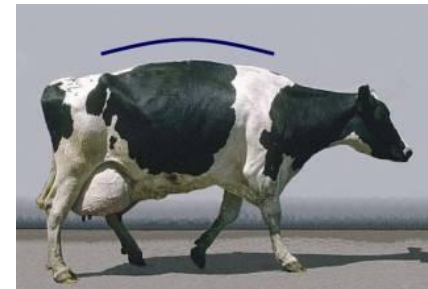
Measures

Measures on resources & management

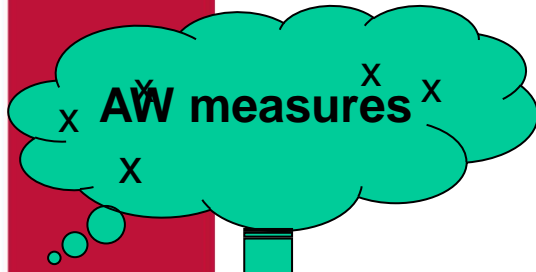
Measures taken into account to diagnose causes of poor welfare and advice farmers/transport drivers on ways to improve animal welfare

Measures on animals: health, behaviour...

Measures to be preferred to assess animal welfare state



Assessment protocols



SENSITIVITY

FEASIBILITY



In a large and representative sample of farms and slaughterhouses around Europe

Positive response from the farmer participants

- Little input on their part
- None of the measures are invasive or involve moving pigs/sows in/out of pens.
- Scope
- Basic principles
- Collection of data
- Calculation of scores

CONTENT

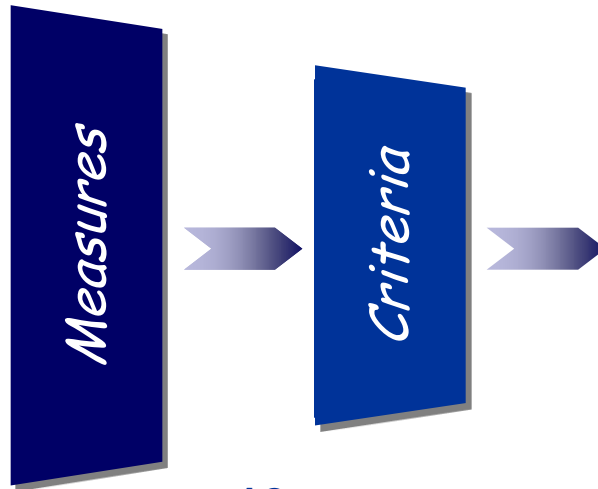
1. **Public concern**
2. **Scientific framework to assess welfare**
3. **Welfare implementation**



Welfare implementation

1. Research tool
2. To provide advice and support to farmer
3. Product information system

Product information system



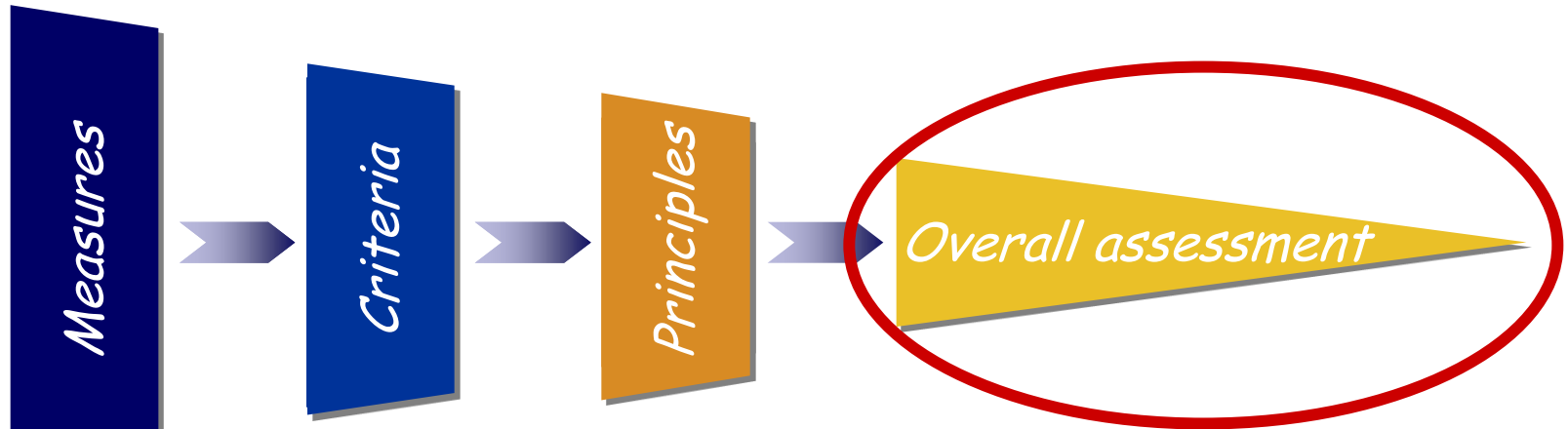
~30
on-farm measures
developed by
animal scientists

12
Preference
dimensions
giving value
judgment

Advice to **farmers**

4 Principles	12 Welfare criteria
Good feeding	Absence of prolonged hunger
	Absence of prolonged thirst
Good housing	Comfort around resting
	Thermal comfort
	Ease of movement
Good health	Absence of injuries
	Absence of disease
	Absence of pain induced by management procedures
Appropriate behaviour	Expression of social behaviours
	Expression of other behaviours
	Good human-animal relationship
	Positive emotional state

Product information system



4
main independent
dimensions
describing welfare

1
Synthetic information
attached to a product

Information to **customers, consumers**

Market differentiation

- **Excellent**
 - very high welfare ⇒ may correspond to a niche market, within a very high quality voluntary label
- **Enhanced**
 - farms with good farming practices but not excellent ⇒ may serve to guarantee good level of welfare within a more general quality voluntary label
- **Acceptable**
 - acceptable welfare level, but insufficient to be used within a voluntary label
- **Not classified**
 - very poor welfare considered as unacceptable

Next step



Training in the use of the tools in a uniform and reliable way

Development of the protocol on commercial conditions (validity, reliability, feasibility)



Assessment on consumer impact



Thank you for your attention

Antonio.Velarde@irta.es