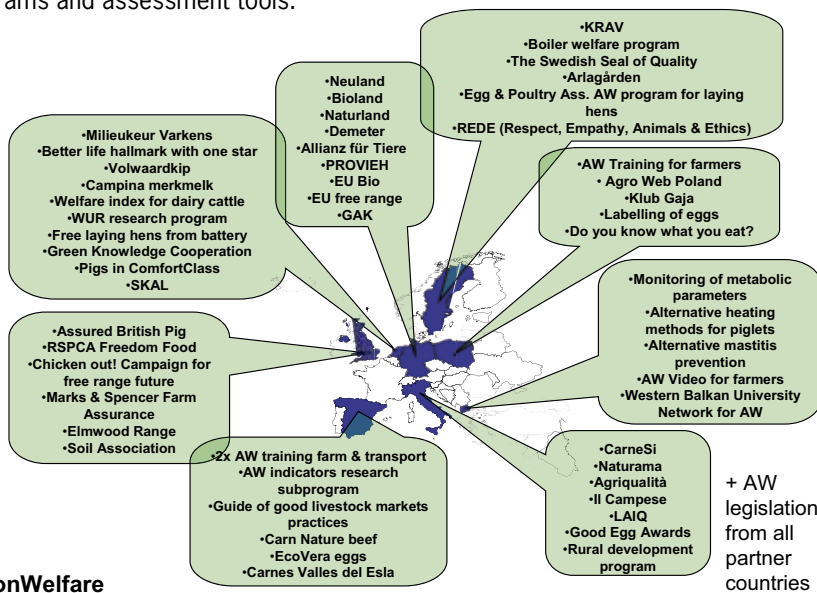


The EconWelfare project is a year on its way now and the first results are available! In this Newsletter you will find an update of Work Packages (WP's) 1 and 2. They focus on initiatives which support the further improvement of animal welfare in Europe.

Workpackage 1: over 60 initiatives described !

What are the current animal welfare initiatives and standards within the EU and in the EU's most important trading countries? This key question in mind, Work package 1 has started with an enthusiastic kick-off meeting in Amsterdam on 23/24 of September 2008. WP 1 examines what has been attained in the field of animal welfare on a private and public level in the past years.

Since then, Forschungsinstitut für Biologischen Landbau (FiBL) (the WP-leader) has compiled a database with over 60 animal welfare standards and initiatives collected by the project partners, always taking into account the cultural and geographic differences within the EU, the importance of livestock production and transport in individual member states and the most important livestock product trade countries. The database now contains details on requirements, objectives, implementation and impacts of each of the identified standards and initiatives. Among them are the animal welfare legislations of all partner countries, 21 initiatives with production standards, 5 of them organic ones, as well as 7 education programs, 5 campaigns and 14 other initiatives like websites, research programs and assessment tools.



The first two WPs of EconWelfare are well on their way, as you can read in this newsletter. In addition the project is working hard on establishing contacts with other stakeholders and stakeholder groups with the EU and beyond. There have been presentations of our project to representatives of the animal welfare unit of the Dutch ministry.

In the UK, the team at Newcastle University has made informal presentations to representatives of the major UK food retailers and pig industry organisations who expressed their interest in the project and willingness to participate in the project as it develops.

Earlier this year members of the project team visited the animal welfare policy support group of DG SANCO at their Brussel's headquarters. Together with members of other DG's we discussed the aims of the project, as well as possibilities for collaboration between working groups from the Commission and EconWelfare. We look forward to picking up these challenges in the near future!

Over the last few months we have had several requests for background information on the project, contact names and addresses and news on developments within the area of animal welfare initiatives. It is for that reason that we have set up our own website, which will serve as a portal for information on the project and its main contributors. We invite you to pay us a visit on www.econwelfare.eu.

We value your opinion, and we invite you to send your comments or questions regarding ways in which animal welfare improvements can be supported to: info@econwelfare.eu. Our team will collate these items and present suggestions in the next Newsletter, and your contributions will help us to present possible ways forward to the European Commission as well as other stakeholders.

I am looking forward to hearing from you!

Hans Spoolder
Coordinator EconWelfare

To ease the insight into the different topics and ranges covered by the initiatives and enhance further activities in the project, the data will be grouped by a newly-developed clustering method. A synthesis of the database will reveal clusters of animal welfare standards and initiatives. Actually, FiBL is organising a workshop with internationally recognised experts in Madrid on 28/29 of September 2009 for this task. The synthesis will ensure that the subsequent activities are based on what is agreed to be current and correct in relation to animal welfare and subsequent discussions can take place on the basis of structured and controllable information. A report containing an overview of clustered animal welfare standards and initiatives and a preliminary assessment of the animal welfare situation will be available in November 2009.

Rahel Kilchsperger and Otto Schmid (FiBL)

EconWelfare

Work Package 2: Stakeholder analysis of strengths and weaknesses of current welfare standards and initiatives

Within this Workpackage of the EconWelfare project actually the partners are working on the two subjects:

1. an analysis of the opinions of consumers, animal welfare organisations and multiple retailers on initiatives advanced in eight countries aiming at a higher animal welfare. For this purpose the standards contained in the initiatives collected in WP 1 are compared with the views of these three groups of stakeholders strengths and weaknesses from a societal point of view are identified.
2. collecting the scientific view on the standards mentioned in the initiatives. This work consists of a consultation of the national and international literature on animal welfare and a linkage of the results of these scientific results to the upgraded animal welfare standards. In this way it is possible to know to which extent each of the standards has a scientific basis.

The work related to the stakeholders' opinions will produce a report with seven sections, dedicated to single animal species: dairy cows, veal calves, beef cattle, sows and piglets, fattening pigs, laying hens and broilers. The delivery of these reports is scheduled for the end of September and will serve as the major input of the European stakeholders seminar programmed in Brussels next November. The scientific view on the standards will also be condensed in one report with chapters dedicated to the same single animal species. After finalising this report in September its contents will be discussed by the European Expert Meeting to be held in Madrid on the 28th and 29th of September.

Finally in the second half of this year the partners will gather the opinions of the representatives of the supply chain: farmers, animal transport companies and processing industry. Their opinion will be asked about the standards contained in the various animal welfare initiatives in Europe. The reports resulting from this exercise will be discussed in national workshops in 2010 for which representatives of the different animal supply chains will be invited.

Kees de Roest and Paolo Ferrari (CRPA)

Acronym project

- EconWelfare
www.econwelfare.eu

Project full title

- Good animal welfare in a socio-economic context: Project to promote insight on the impact for the animal, the production chain and European society of upgrading animal welfare standards.

Funding

- FP7 programme of the European Commission

Projectnumber

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- 1.3 million euro

Duration

- August 2008 - July 2011

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